

News—Foreign.

TORONTO.

Our civic elections have come and gone, and tho' we have not won all that we wanted to we are still better off than we were last year.

Ald. Dr. Noble and Mr. W. A. Douglass, both Single Taxers, were nominated for the city council, and Ald. Noble was re-elected. Of the present council five of the twenty-four aldermen are pledged to submit our \$700 exemption to a vote of the people. Our active campaign this Fall has all centered about this plan of exempting dwellings from taxation to the extent of \$700 of their assessed value, and we have succeeded in making quite a stir over the matter.

A special committee of the legislature met in November to consider the new assessment bill before the house. When the members of this committee met we had time allotted to us to address them. As a result of our letters they knew the lines along which we would talk and comprehended us much better than they otherwise would have done. We urged upon them the taxation of franchises and the granting of local option to municipalities to the extent of the \$700 exemption of dwellings. Our deputation was exceedingly well received, and numerous compliments were showered on us from the chairman and members, and from the press.

We also sent a deputation to the city council to ask that body to submit the question to the people. There is a resolution to this effect before them, made by Ald. Noble, but they are all afraid of it and every time it comes up they "refer it back." What they will do now that the elections are over is a matter of speculation.

We have put out five thousand tracts on the question and Ald. Noble has put out an additional five thousand of them in his own ward. In fact he fought and won his election on it.

Our annual series of Sunday afternoon meetings commences in the Grand Opera House on January 3rd. This season we are to have a definite series of eight lectures and intend to throw the very best talent into them all. Our speakers are all arranged ahead and Rev. Mr. Cooley of Cleveland is to start them going.

In our last letter we reported the commencement of "The Canadian Single Taxer." Three issues have now appeared and the success of the venture is pretty nearly assured. We are making it as bright and full of news as is possible and we think our American friends would find it interesting, as it contains reports of the work that is going forward in one of the "hottest" centres on the continent.

Good progress has been made by the Direct Legislation movement here. This year we have practically all the aldermen pledged to adopt such rules of procedure in

the council as will establish this much needed reform in our city government.

During the coming year we propose to take advantage of this and work up an initiative petition to compel the aldermen to submit the \$700 exemption to the people.

This shows the advantage of other reform to Single Tax. Direct Legislation is our first step, for it will enable us to secure such legislation as the people want. There will then be some use in educating them.

WALTER H. ROEBUCK, Sec'y.

MONTREAL.

Looking back over the calendar year which closes to-night, I am not sure that I can point to any particular event which has occurred among us during that time and find therein any specific gain to the cause of Single Tax. And yet I and the other members of our Association, not only do not feel at all discouraged but believe we have every right to feel quite hopeful regarding the effect of our year's work. Still, there are associations in Canada, such as that very energetic one in the city of Toronto, which can point to tangible results. And this is the age when tangible results count, faith in the unseen working out of principles being yet in swaddling clothes.

Outside of a few public meetings and the visit of Mr. Bellangee, of the Fairhope Colony, we have, perhaps, not done any special propaganda work with the direct object of advocating the Single Tax. Yet, if I were asked what I considered the most prominent or interesting events to Single Taxers during the year, in this community, I should point to the Morgan store incident, and to that of the fight for the extension of the Street Railway franchise. And I should give as my reasons the fact that in both instances the interest of the public, if not its passions, were aroused to an unusual extent for the city of Montreal, proclaiming a slowly awakening belief that there is something the matter somewhere.

Perhaps I could not do better than to review the events referred to. The Morgan Departmental Store matter was fully explained in the *Single Tax Review* of the second quarter of this year. In short, the Morgans considered themselves overtaxed, but failing to convince the city officials of this, they cast about for a means of reducing the value of their building. This being one of the handsomest of its kind in the city, was, in accordance with the plan pursued by most corporations and governments, compelled to bear heavier taxes than its less beautiful brethren. So the Morgans determined to build around it (they having sufficient land for the purpose) a plain brick shell, it having been explained to them that valuations for the purpose of taxation were generally made from the exterior appearance. The public became interested, then