

having a knowledge of the political situation in this country expected we should get seats at first attempt. In all my experience of elections (and it is a long one) I have never known such an absence of indication of how the people were voting. Usually there is a display of window bills, by means of which the occupant of the house declares his preference. This time it was rare indeed to see any bills on show. My Labor opponent at Hanley, a local trade union secretary and the sitting Member, confessed to me that he could not understand what was happening. At the last election (May, 1929) every house in his own street had his bill on show; this time there were only three. Trade unionist and Labor party members had made up their minds to vote "national," and the voting showed that many of them did, but they lacked the courage to proclaim the fact. All the usual calculations were quite upset, and it was a very remarkable thing that we were able to get 1,347 electors to go to the poll on their own account and vote for us.

London, England.

J. W. GRAHAM PEACE.

#### DUNCAN'S ARGUMENT AND LOGIC PLEASED FRANKLIN EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

It may be of interest to you to know that on Nov. 16 the Hon. George H. Duncan addressed the Franklin Business Association on the subject of "Rational Form of Taxation." The meeting was a splendid gathering of the members of the association and their friends, to whom the subject of a single tax and the proposition of the taking of the rental values of land by the community in lieu of the present form of taxation was but little known, and to most a new and never heard of proposition.

The speaker handled the subject interestingly, and by convincing argument and logic held the attention of his audience for an hour. That his presentation was well received was evidenced by the fact that at the conclusion of his address many of his hearers showed their interest by requesting further information on the subject, its effect and application, all of which inquiries were ably met by the speaker.

It gives me great pleasure to be able to say that his coming to Franklin has stirred up an interest in this community.

Franklin, Mass.

M. J. VAN LEEUWEN.

#### THE RUSSIAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The world-heralded Five-Year Plan, notwithstanding the obstacles to be overcome, is prosecuted rigorously, with the assurance that it will be practically completed on time. The development of the petroleum industry that was planned for five years has been completed in three. The hydroelectric development on the Dneiper River is up to schedule. Nine of the largest turbines in the world have already been installed, and when the project is completed more than 900,000 h. p. will have been developed. Three or four modern steel plants are in process of erection, and much more work is being done on railways, irrigation, telegraph lines, bridges, highways and dwelling houses. There are not enough skilled workers to be found among the Russians to operate the mills and factories, they will be found in other countries and the skilled operation of the plants assured.

The "hurry-up" processes in connection with the plan have, however, resulted in neither economy nor efficiency, and the wants and necessities of the workers have been poorly supplied. Living conditions have been getting steadily worse for several years. The hardships which the people undergo must be a strain on both their vitality and their loyalty. The communistic distribution of commodities seems to be a failure. It is truly pitiful to see long lines of would-be purchasers tending from the doors of a government store along the streets and highways, hoping to reach the counter before the small stock of newly arrived goods has been sold out. One may be obliged to wait months to buy such trifles as a comb or spool of thread. The waste of time in these shop lines must be something enormous.

A large percentage of the workers one meets in Russia would like

to buy a watch, but the state watch factory in Moscow, which was formerly the Hampden Factory of Canton, O., U. S. A., is the only source of supply, the tariff duty on watches being prohibitive. The obvious remedy for these conditions would be the reinstatement of the private watch dealers or the repeal of the tariff law. It may not be too much to expect a reform of this kind from a government that has shown so much wisdom as the Russian Government.

In the World War the Russian losses were greater than those of any country engaged. The war was followed by a revolution; the revolution was followed by famine, and the famine by the War of Intervention, which was financed and the equipment supplied by Russia's former allies. Notwithstanding all of these misfortunes, Russia now has no war debt, no real depression, next to no unemployment problem, and will have a surplus for the present year estimated at three-quarters of a million dollars, at the same time carrying out a system of internal improvement on a scale never before approached. These achievements of Russia, while other great countries of the world are struggling with war debts, budget deficits, crime, depression and unemployment, indicate economic wisdom of a high order.

X.

Moscow, U. S. S. R.

#### IN MEMORY OF "JIM" BROWN

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

It is with deep sorrow I received your letter telling me of the passing away of our dear friend and co-worker James R. Brown. His earnestness and self-sacrifice, combined with his abilities and whole-souled devotion to our cause, make him irreplaceable. Well may we all mourn his loss. We can but be grateful he was spared us the long period during which he did work no other could do. Such a life must have deeply inspired many to begin, and carry on, our work; and these too have inspired others. Therein some compensation lies. It is so many years since I was at the M. S. T. Club, not since the days when George, Post, Croasdale and other saints of the old days were there; but the fragrant memory remains. James R. Brown bore their mantle on his shoulders, and most worthily, as you also are now doing. May worthy successors follow till victory crowns the day. It is coming!

F. T. HODGKISS,

Melbourne, Australia.

President Henry George League.

#### HEARS THE BELL RINGING BUT CAN'T FIND THE STEEPLE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

There appeared in *Harper's Magazine* for November an article by Arthur C. Holden entitled "The Crisis in Real Estate." After telling what had happened to the real estate market during the depression, and giving reasons as he understands them for the situation, he condemns the present basis of holding land so far as the struggling home owner or apartment house owner is concerned. He also condemns land speculation and expresses the hope that the depression will have served the purpose of destroying the fetish of the necessity of being a land owner.

He says that land value should be based on the use to which the land may be put, but he suggests that very few fortunes have been made by holding land for future rise in value because of the taxes, interest, etc. He bases his authority for the statement on the report of the Arner Committee of 1922. He evidently never heard of holding land without owning the buildings on it and by the appropriate leases getting off scot free from taxes, interest, liability for damage, and at the end of thirty years or more coming into possession of the buildings on the land, and this without the payment of one cent.

It seems a pity that one who understands the real basis of land value should fall into the trap set by the land speculators as to profits to be made in the mere holding of land, but Mr. Holden is an architect and not out to buy land or he might have been presented with a different set of statistics by the real estate dealers.

He says in closing that the only sound basis for the reorganization