

- Sun. 27.—Men's Meeting, Peel Institute, Hugh Myddelton School, Clerkenwell: Fredk. Verinder. 3.30.
 Mon. 28.—Executive. 8.
 Kingston L. and R. A.: W. Pettit.
 Tues. 29.—Stepney L. and R. A., Philpot Street and Commercial Road: W. Pettit. 8.15.
 Wed. 30.—Kingston L. and R. A.: J. W. Graham Peace.
 Thur. 31.—New Southgate, Beaconsfield Road: W. Pettit. 8.15.
 Kingston L. and R. A.: J. W. Graham Peace.
 FREDK. VERINDER, Gen. Sec.

UNITED COMMITTEE.

During the month, Mr. Madsen addressed meetings at Wandsworth (two), Thornton Heath, Palmer's Green, and Putney. Mr. Douglas spoke at Purley, Wandsworth, and Croydon.

THE LAND VALUES GROUP.

A meeting of the Land Values group was held on June 12th. Mr. C. E. Price presided, and among those present were Sir W. Byles, Sir J. McCallum, Sir Harry Verney, Mr. R. Harcourt, Mr. Higham, Mr. Neilson, Mr. E. Jones, Mr. Outhwaite, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. P. W. Raffan (hon. secretary). The chairman reported that the Executive of the group had interviewed the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reference to the introduction of a Revenue Bill to secure the rectification of anomalies in the valuation set up by the Finance Act, 1909-10. Mr. Lloyd George expressed his sympathy with the objects of the deputation, and promised to introduce a Revenue Bill and press it forward during the present Session of Parliament.

The question of the forthcoming land campaign was also discussed, and a strong expression of opinion was given to the effect that the substitution of the taxation and rating of land values for the present system of rating improvements should form a leading feature of the campaign. A further meeting of the group is to be called when the Revenue Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN.

THE INTERNATIONAL SINGLE TAX CONFERENCE. At Ronda, Spain, on May 26th, 27th, and 28th.

The First National Single Tax Conference ever held in Spain may be regarded as having begun on the N.D.L. "Prinz Eitel Friedrich," from Southampton to Gibraltar, so far as one group of visitors was concerned—Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fels, Dr. Felix Vitale of Montevideo, and the writer, who conveyed the greetings of the English and the Scottish Land Values Leagues. There were not sufficient English-speaking folk on board to allow a "public meeting" to be organised, but there was much to discuss. On landing at Gibraltar the party was pleasantly surprised at the absence of even a casual Customs examination—there are, it seems, low taxes on narcotics and intoxicants imported, but we were not suspected of desire to import anything useful. The system of Government at Gibraltar appears to be by Sanitary Commissioners, who are nominated by the Grand Jury, who are nominated by the Military Governor from among the leading landowners or landholders. The streets, &c., are very well kept and clean, but of course wages are very low and rents astonishingly severe. Fifteen shillings a week is paid to many municipal employees, and there are practically no opportunities of advancement for the native population, all the best positions being kept for imported English workmen,

BOOK REVIEW.

"MY STORY," BY TOM L. JOHNSON.*

It is not our purpose now to give an extended review of this book; that has already been done in our columns (April, 1912, p. 301). No review can possibly reveal a tithe of the interest that attaches to this fascinating book. That Tom L. Johnson was one of the greatest men America has yet produced will be freely granted by all who are acquainted, be it only a little, with his career; and his talents were so varied and brilliant that he might have won the highest fame in any pursuit he liked to take up. He was a great business man, a great mathematician and inventor, and above all a great and single-minded champion of popular rights. To his long fight against Privilege in Cleveland only one word can be applied—it was titanic. That, if he had chosen, he might have been a great writer on economics and political matters the brief foreword to this book, where in six pages he has characterised the nature of the struggle between Privilege and Democracy, is sufficient evidence. Some day too, perhaps, his merits as an engineer and inventor will become world-famous when a firm is discovered that has the courage to develop that invention of his which his friends called "greased lightning" and which proved the possibility of smooth, safe, and noiseless travelling at the rate of three or four hundred miles an hour.

But we must call a halt, and refer our readers to the book itself. It is a reprint from the original plates, on good paper, and with more than forty excellent illustrations. The binding is neat and attractive, and in every way the book is an excellent example of the printer's art.

F. C. R. D.

*MY STORY. By Tom L. Johnson. pp. 326+xii. J. M. Dent and Sons, Limited, Aldine House, London. W.C. 4s. 6d. net.

who are well looked after. I heard of girls in prosperous shops working for 14 hours a day at duties which in England would be men's work for even less than the wages mentioned above. Not only by reason of the absence of check on land monopoly, the low cost of living, and the generous expenditure in a very limited area of British Naval and Military taxes, are overcrowding and rack-renting the curse of "The Rock"; but it is a direct policy of the military administration to buy up where possible, or refuse to renew, leases of house property with the direct intention of lessening the numbers of the civilian native population, whose 12,000 mouths are considered a serious danger in event of a siege, but who will not emigrate to an area enjoying a system of food taxes and equally monopolised land. It is not necessary to enlarge here on the uselessness of Free Trade without Land Value Taxation as a remedy for public suffering—if any doubt it, they can profitably study the case of Gibraltar as contrasted with Spain—the alien bureaucracy well paid, technically efficient, personally honest, entirely unsympathetic, and exploiting the working masses with astonishingly profitable results, by reason largely of low cost of living and unqualified land monopoly.

I was told of one Foreign Consul who with his father had made it a policy to buy up "house property" at any price for many years, and was now so rich that he was

forced to invest his money in buying up tracts of land in the south of Spain in anticipation of railway extension from Algeciras to Tarifa, owing to the increased value of his landed property and the restrictive policy of the Military Governor! This story is suitable for use as a tract by the Cobden Club!

The moral value of Free Trade is not to be denied, even in this incomplete state. Not only are the Gibraltarians passionately attached to their home, but I had it repeatedly that in the fairly large population of registered and municipally inspected "Unfortunates" there are no local girls—all come in from neighbouring areas, where it is thought right for Customs officials to paw men and women all over to make sure that they are not carrying any article of food or merchandise on their person. This I saw, as a sample of the beastly, degrading influence that tariffs exert; and Mr. Fels made it the subject of a very telling speech at Ronda.

At Gibraltar the delegates were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Metcalfe, of the Irish Land Values League, and crossed the Ferry to Algeciras. The Customs officials were very polite, but caused the party to miss the last train for the day. There was a pretty and hopeful incident to relate here. Dr. Vitale had a large box of his Georgist writings in Spanish, original and translated: these it seems were subject to alternative rates of tariff, and the higher was at first demanded; but Dr. Vitale could readily "talk a bird off a tree," and after a personal call on the chief Customs officer the lower rate was conceded, following an exchange of autographed copies of their writings—for one of the officials is the author of a book on, I think, THE POSITION OF ROMANTIC POETRY IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION. For in Spain a Customs officer may also be a gentleman of letters and glad to read good work on the Single Tax!

Before we left we had the pleasure of seeing his Excellency the Governor of Algeciras with I do not know what staff, escort, bands, &c., on his way to the Empire Day festivities in Gibraltar. From my notebook emerge two details: (1) That in Gibraltar Empire Day lasts for a week; (2) That this official's full title is "Governor of Algeciras and of Gibraltar, at present in temporary occupation of the English." But neither seem to trouble over any legal points, and the two Governors of Gibraltar get on very well when they meet, I believe. The railway, from Algeciras by Ronda to Bobadilla is fairly new and very well laid out, by an English company, recently sold out to the French one which runs the other railways of Andalusia. No one can help noticing in Spain the very large amount of French capital which is invested in public utilities and services: and there may be a very bad time in international diplomacy ahead of our brothers in Spain when they begin to cut away some useless exploiters, as one fears for trouble in Denmark from German mortgagees when land value taxation begins to take effect. The French "capital" in Spain is very badly directed. I saw one town with five companies to supply it with light and with water, and none of them very good or very cheap—all of French control.

The Ronda Railway is not only well built where for many years a line was said to be impossible, but the company has also established good hotels of not undue charges at several points. Passing up the gorges of the Guadiaro River we came a few miles from Ronda to Arriate, a station of a scattered farming area. Here some weeks ago a Single Tax address had been given by Mr. Albendin, the promoter of the Spanish League, and well received by the public. And here were a group of the residents—not knowing when we would come, they had waited on two days for every up train, just to tell of their sympathy and trust in the teachings of the great Henry George, and to welcome the visitors who had come to forward the truth he proclaimed. A very touching, direct little speech;

and as the train pulled out to their cheers "Viva Fels!" "Viva El Impuesto Unico!" one felt a very warm heart-throb for these Single Tax fruit growers, exploited by landlords and tariffs almost beyond endurance.

At Ronda a perfectly arranged reception awaited the party. A crowd of fully 1,000 people was present, including the local trade unions with their handsome banners, the town band of about 36 performers (who played the Land Song very creditably), and the local organising committee—Mr. Albendin, who is as genial as he is able and devoted; the Alcalde, or Mayor, Mr. Ramon del Prado y Camara, with the head and dignity of a Roman Emperor and the tongue of a Croasdaler; the Amaya brothers—Francisco Rubio, who as an expert journalist does very much work in connection with the Spanish League's monthly Review, and who turns out a splendid series of penny leaflets with George's great speeches, &c., in excellent Spanish; and Diego Hoyos, a leading business man of the district. Mr. Baldomero Argente alone "disappointed" us, then and later. This man at a very early age fought his way into Parliament (the Cortes) as a Single Tax Liberal, and remains the head of the Land Values Group in the Chamber. He has made the best Spanish translation of "Protection or Free Trade" and written a short and accurate biography of Henry George and appreciation of his works and his work: for years in the Madrid Press he has almost every day brought out propaganda articles on the Single Tax from every point of view of remarkable merit and freshness. He won the confidence of Señor Canalejas, and at his murder was able to announce his conversion to the principles of the Single Tax in place of the barren anti-Clericalism of his earlier days. This confidence has been renewed by Count Romanones, whose policy speech at New Year put unequivocal Single Tax in the very foremost place, and so won over the great bulk of the Republican Party to friendly relations with the King and his Liberal Cabinet. Mr. Argente has used every effort to get help for our cause, and a State grant was promised for the Conference, but later withdrawn by a hostile subordinate Cabinet Minister in whose department it fell. In March the Premier appealed to Mr. F. M. Lacausta on behalf of the Single Taxers of North Spain for continued educative work and constant personal support. At the end of April Mr. Argente was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Premier, and, to the dissatisfaction of his Croasdaler brothers, had to withdraw largely from Georgist public agitation.

Our Congress took place on May 26th—28th. On the 30th Count Romanones resigned, but after full advice had been taken by the King the Cabinet was reconstituted as before, thus silencing criticism (by the Conservative Opposition) as to absence of a "mandate" for the Single Tax. On June 11th a Liberal split developed and the Single Tax Premier resigned again, and, receiving the staunch support of the young King (who, I believe, is as wise as he is brave), he has reformed his Cabinet, excluding three of the old Ministers, one of whom was he who would not carry out the grant to the Conference. At the time of writing I have not heard what position Mr. Argente now has, if any. It was a keen but a necessary disappointment to miss meeting such a colleague.

I understand that the new Finance Minister is Sr. Ruiz Jimenez, who as Alcalde of Madrid recently ordered a Bill to be prepared to authorise Valuation and Rating of Site Values as an alternative to existing Metropolitan taxes—a further proof of the Premier's good faith and devotion to justice.

Some of my readers may have come across Ward's THE TRUTH ABOUT SPAIN—a valuable and accurate book, but already largely obsolete, as a history of British Liberalism ending in March, 1909 would be—owing in each case to the outburst of Henry George feeling. As

an example of the results of the Georgist policy of the Romanones Cabinet (of which Mr. Argente's position is a pledge), let us consider two men—Emiliano Iglesias and Luis Zurdo Olivares, who were two of the Catalanian, Nationalist, Republican, Secularist, Educationist leaders who were tried for their lives with Francisco Ferrer, as Ward records, and had a very narrow escape for it by the fall of the Tory (Maura) Cabinet alone. To-day Iglesias and Olivares send to the Congress devoted messages of adherence, too busy agitating for the Single Tax even to attend a meeting at Ronda—Iglesias as a member of the executive of the Single Tax Committee of Madrid, of which other members are, *e.g.*, a professor in a Clerical high school; Olivares as carrying out his indignant open letter to "Citizen" Alejandro Lerroux, Single Taxer and M.P. for Barcelona—that it is not fitting for Republicans to adopt the Single Tax because the party leader says he is convinced of it—that it is the duty of Republican leaders to go about all the Republican clubs and explain to the people why they should personally accept it, and accept the Georgist policy of the "dynastic" Liberal Cabinet. And in this spirit he is carrying out a most brilliant and most important series of meetings in Republican Catalonia. Can we not see the healing influence of a policy of economic justice at once in even such old obstinate ulcers as religious and form-of-government disputes in Conservative Spain?

To resume our narrative. After a few words of welcome and greeting, in which Dr. Vitale acted with much success as interpreter, we proceeded to the comfortable hotel Reina Victoria, the growing crowd being most cordial and polite, and were amazed at the beauty of the view from the crest of the steep cliffs of the Tajo, 500 feet down to the river below, with its mills and electric power station, controlled by a friendly company. We got here an idea of the municipal taxation of Spain. A large building, such as this, has to pay £60 business tax, £60 property tax, food taxes from ½d. on a small bird to 1s. on a measure of wine or oil, and some police taxes as for vehicles, passports, &c. A site as such pays nothing, no matter how valuable, and I cannot learn of any levy on ground rents: it seems the tenant pays all! That evening the party was made up by Mr. and Mrs. Darien, of the French Land Values League; Mrs. Wedgwood, whose partner was called away by his Parliamentary duties, to the great regret of all; Mr. Harry de Pass, of the London United Committee; Mr. Johan Hansson, of the Scandinavian Leagues; and some more of the Spanish League branch delegates. Dr. Schrameier, the introducer of juster methods of land tenure into Kiaochau than China had ever seen the Occidental use, was a very welcome representative of the Bund der Deutschen Bodenreformer, whose work is familiar to Spanish Single Taxers by the excellent accounts compiled by Mr. F. Amaya Rubio.

On the 26th the meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. in the Teatro de Espinel, a very fine building, named in honour of a notable local poet and artist. Dr. Vitale was President as a personal compliment to the South American Single Taxers, who are so largely of his training. Mr. Fels was Hon. President, and a very fair attendance of about 700 filled much of the building. The platform was filled with Foreign and visiting Spanish delegates. The subjects of discussion were: (1) Means to unite the efforts of the Single Tax movement throughout the world; and (2) Means to unite the Spanish movement with the Single Tax movement in South America. No resolution on subjects was proposed until the last day, but all debates led off with duly prepared speeches on each heading. Much of the morning was taken up with reading messages of adhesion and apology from many countries and many Spanish centres and public men. Specially warm welcomes were given to Mr. Mauricio Jalvo, President, and Mr. Eduardo Ugarte, Secretary of the Madrid Committee, and to Mr. Felix Martinez Lacuesta, the promoter of the Single Tax

agitation at Haro on the Upper Ebro. Mr. Lacuesta, who is a wine-grower by profession, has registered a label for his best produce bearing the portrait and name of Henry George. This vintage is only given to his friends, and was first produced at the first Spanish Henry George dinner last September, in the town of Haro. Recently Mr. Lacuesta, who is a provincial deputy, or M.P., has been chosen as President of the Provincial Representatives of Logrono, a department of the Upper Ebro with 250,000 inhabitants, and has since kept the Single Tax before the Cabinet and the country with even greater zeal, and increasing public support.

It is hardly possible to record the delegates who attended. Madrid papers gave them as from Georgist Societies in 26 Spanish Provinces, or more than half. Three municipal delegates from Santander, on the Biscay Coast, must be mentioned; also the President of the Regional Council of Malaga, Mr. F. Marin; several leading lawyers, notably Mr. Blas Infante of Seville, one of the selected orators. Among the educationists perhaps the most interesting figure was Mr. Ildefonso Yanez of Centa, Spanish Morocco, who has written brilliantly on the Single Tax, and even dedicated to the Conference his latest drama, "Villaurora," which is said to be of great merit. Among the striking changes one must record is the very large number of Government officers who took part in the proceedings, both military and civilian. At all times the theatre was largely filled by well-set-up soldiers of all ranks in full dress, nearly all Reservists, as the active army was on foreign service. Not only is Mr. Albendin himself a Government field engineer, but also a talented author. Mr. Buenaga of Valencia, a Government road engineer, was specially popular with the English-speaking visitors, while of university professors and teachers there were many.

On Monday afternoon there was a far larger attendance of delegates by the 2 p.m. down train, and of the public as before. No resolution was put or vote taken until the close of the Conference, which plan was novel to me, but worked very smoothly. The same subjects were discussed, always with a sound grip of Georgist principles, and much pleasure was expressed at Dr. F. Vitale's offer to keep touch with the Spanish-speaking movement in all parts and with the British United Committee from his present home in London. Dr. Vitale as President had a double task, for he also translated English speeches to the audience when necessary, and kept Mr. Fels and other visitors in touch with the arguments of the Spanish Single Taxers. As *EL FÉNIX* said in the "special" published by that very enterprising organ of Ronda opinion: "Dr. Vitale is a man whose gentle and sympathetic nature at once assured him a very high position in the affections of all present." I take another passage from that issue which I need hardly translate—Mr. Fels on rising to make his speech of greeting was received with a prolonged storm of cheers as "Patriarca venerado del Georgismo mundial"—"world-wide." *EL FÉNIX*, by the way, recently published a verbatim report of Mr. Albendin's address to the Ronda Trade Union of mason-bricklayers, which was one of his best efforts, and it is pleasant to record that this union took a very leading part in our reception and in the course of the Congress. I felt a special pleasure in this, as the social position of many Single Taxers in Spain is so good that one fears a danger of its being criticised as a "gentlemen's agitation." It was agreed to send a warm message of sympathy to the Socialist Party of Buenos Aires, Argentina, who have lately made remarkable electoral progress with a policy of substitutionary land value taxation, and to take steps to follow the lead of the Haro Georgists in celebrating September 2nd.

On Tuesday the subjects of discussion were: (1) The Single Tax movement in Spain: how to make it tangible in Acts of Parliament; and (2) Municipal budgets and the

municipalisation of natural monopolies. The public attendance was again a good deal larger, and breathless interest was shown by the public—the least noise of interruption being hissed sharply, and the points made by the speakers well applauded. The great majority of the Spanish Single Taxers follow the American school, and favour public utilities under public management, but the points made by some visiting delegates were generally noted, such as the benefit to landowners of such enterprises before the Single Tax is in force, and the probability of the public paying too much for physical assets, or even for "goodwill." The resolution as finally put I consider a masterpiece of conciliatory drafting without evasion of principles. On Monday night the charming public gardens above the Tajo had been illuminated by the Corporation in honour of the Congress, but it proved rather windy, and the town band gave a very pleasant musical evening in the principal square before the fine "Casino" of the Artists' Club, where the visitors met many friends of all classes. Tuesday evening the City gave in the Artists' Club salon a delightful ball. We were told that the charge to residents had been kept very low to exclude none for lack of means, but the younger people were well dressed and refined and of perfect manners. The Artists' Club itself is a modern growth. It began not many years ago with a few friends of artistic tastes who thought of brightening the room where they had lunch with some of their pictures. Now they have a commodious building of their own, full of fine paintings and well furnished, and a subscription rate which is incredibly low. This effort by the Municipality and the Artists' Club fully made up for the cancellation of the State grant as related above.

On Wednesday the subjects were: (1) Best way to propagate the Single Tax; and (2) Best way to interest official organisations in the study of the Single Tax. On these points there was comparatively little discussion, the proposals being in a way self-evident. Then followed the putting of the formal resolutions, which were all carried with keen enthusiasm, and later the official constituting of the Spanish Single Tax League took place. The attendance on the third day was by far the greatest, the building being crowded, and the attention as breathless as before. Mr. Hansson and Mr. Fels put forward a supplementary Free Trade resolution, which was also adopted by acclamation. Dr. Schrameier did not vote on this, explaining that the Bodenreformer had a rule that Protection was so much a matter of party politics in Germany that for tactical reasons they do not discuss it. I was specially pleased with the attitude of the large body of peasants in the upper gallery, many of whom had come in for miles; their cordiality was very great, and a testimonial to the discreet conduct of the Spanish Georgist leaders. In the evening the Town Council gave a valedictory banquet in honour of the Congress in the Artists' Club. Everything was done splendidly, and the large number of guests were cordial to the visitors and to the movement.

It is not easy yet to assess the present force of the Single Tax in Spanish public life; certainly it has devoted adherents in all ranks and districts, and is exceptionally well organised against exceptional opposition, which is now live and desperate. There are really strong groups of Single Taxers in Ronda, in Madrid, in Logrono, and at Barcelona. There are very able local advocates in such centres as—(North): Lerida, Reus, Zaragoza, Huesca, Santander and Bilbao; (Centre): Valencia, Toledo, Salamanca, Badajoz and Aranjuez; (South): Cordoba, Seville, Malaga, Cadiz, Ubrique, Algeciras, Ceuta (Africa), and all these movements are of independent origin, though there is a sufficient central organisation in the Spanish League, which, moreover, keeps touch with all Georgists elsewhere by its able Review and the new Information Bureau in London under the control of Dr. Vitale. There

is no doubt also that added force is given by the very strong Single Tax movement in South America generally, especially in Uruguay and the Argentine.

If as is fitting we look at persons more than areas, we see a bold and democratic young King with full confidence in a wary old Liberal Premier, who has beaten the Tories into submission, crushed Whig discontent in his party, and conciliated the most practical Republicans on a policy which is rather more our way than that of the Lord Advocate. Absolute municipal Single Tax and a "something to be considered" in national finances is the policy inherited from the martyred Canalejas and so far held to by the Liberal Romanones, who has passed through enough difficulties to testify that his promotion to Ministerial rank of Mr. Argente is not unconsidered.

In the Senate there is a good group, led by Don Luis Palomo, Life Senator of the Kingdom; in education there are many Georgists: so in law, so in commerce. In journalism there is Emilio H. del Villar, probably the greatest newspaper man in Spain, and Enrique Fajardo—to speak only of those on the metropolitan Press. In agriculture, Jose Cascon, head of the Grange Agricultural University of Palencia; in local government above all, for here public men of all occupations unite, among the most eminent in this connection being Mr. Luis Pozuelo, Treasurer of the City of Aranjuez. The Press is hospitable: even the greatest Tory papers, such as LA CORRESPONDENCIA DE ESPAÑA, are open to discussion of our principles, and the movement so far has been absolutely free from cranks and side issues. If the Liberals fail us, there is now an alternative Single Tax Cabinet in the Moderate Republicans; but such a failure would be death to Liberalism and possibly to the Monarchy, and all concerned are well aware of it; and I have no doubt that Count Romanones is big enough to be bigger than his vast landed possessions, which are very great, though less than his opportunity.

The opposition to our work in Spain is growing to a gratifying degree. Not only did a subordinate member of the Cabinet (now dispensed with) divert to a very unworthy object the grant promised to the Ronda Congress, but the enemies at Ronda are active. The Teatro de Espinel had been informally promised for the whole time of the Congress, but in the upshot evening use was denied altogether and a stiff charge made for day-time use; and a Thursday day-meeting in the Bullring was prohibited altogether by the proprietor, who has a bad opinion of Georgism.

More important than these externals is the spirit animating the Spanish Georgists—bold, challenging, and thoughtful in special degree. I attach as a sort of proof of these personal convictions the resolutions come to by the Congress. Some cautious minds remember that the Iberian is a southern race with five centuries of peculiarly bad land-laws to record—impulsive, volatile, and, if brave, not persistent. I prefer to remember that National Will which rolled back the wave of Sarcacen invaders, blow on blow, for centuries; that spirit of Liberty that scorns death and improvises leaders, which Roman and Bonaparte alike found at its best in Spain. In 1808 Napoleon was the lord of Europe, and of Spain in particular—but first of Europe the Spaniard said: Give me Liberty or give me Death! The first great blow against Bonapartism was at Bailen, quite close to Ronda, where on July 23rd, 1808, General Dupont and 17,000 French regular veterans surrendered to the common people of Spain, whose sons we met at Ronda, maybe. The first great Anglo-Spanish victory, at Vimiera, was a month later, and that war never stopped till the last invader had fled for ever. The present war is harder, sterner, against greater evils; but the same qualities are needed, the allies are the same, and I am confident of a like result.

M. J. S.