

Annual Meeting at the Park Hotel, Park Place, Cardiff, on Saturday afternoon, 22nd March, and that after the transaction of the usual business one of our members be asked to address us on one of the questions of the day and that after the address the meeting be thrown open for discussion." We know that if called upon Mr T. C. Morris, a member of our Executive Committee, would be prepared to act as speaker, and the title of his address would be "Towards a New World Order."

Will our readers please hold the date, 22nd March, provisionally open for attendance at the Annual Meeting? When the final arrangements have been made all our members will be circularized in the usual way.

Our financial year ended on 28th February. Will members not yet on the "paid up" list please be good enough to put themselves in compliance before the Annual Meeting is held and thus give our acting Hon Treasurer, Mr C. A. Gardner, a chance of presenting a reassuring Financial Statement?

**YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LEAGUE:** F. Skirrow, Secretary, 129 Skipton Road, Keighley.

The Secretary addressed a fireside meeting of about a dozen business men at the home of Mr Henry S. Williamson, in Saltaire, on Friday, 14th February. Several copies of Henry George's works, *Progress and Poverty*, *Condition of Labour*, and other books and pamphlets were sold. The Secretary has had two letters in the *Keighley News* and one in the *Yorkshire Observer*, and Mrs Beth Harris had one in the *News Chronicle*.

(Mr Williamson has written direct to the office in regard to the meeting at his home on 14th February, saying: "It was a delightful evening; Mr Skirrow gave us more insight into what the taxation of land values would mean for all of us."—Ed., L. & L.)

**MANCHESTER LEAGUE:** Arthur H. Weller, J.P., Secretary, Ptychley, Bean Leach Road, Offerton, Stockport.

In the *Manchester Guardian* of 12th February appeared a letter from the League's President, Dr P. McDougall, dealing with speculation in bombed sites and pointing to the Taxation of Land Values as the true remedy.

The *Manchester Evening News* of 29th January said, in a leading article: "Speculation in bombed sites is only a particularly despicable example of an abuse which for generations has hampered the country's ordered development—as Manchester knows to her cost. In dealing with bombed sites the Government has an

opportunity to establish a principle which can be extended to the whole question of land values, the principle that no individual has the right without any personal contribution to reap profits from public enterprise."

The *Oldham Evening Chronicle* recently published a letter from Mr G. A. Goodwin, and in the *Prestatyn Weekly* letters on the rating of land values have been printed from J. E. Mackintosh, L. G. Buckle, and the Rev Chas. Jones.

Mrs Sumner addressed the Clitheroe Women's Co-operative Guild on 28th January. By special request she dealt with land values taxation. In the *Northern Daily Telegraph* a letter signed "F. G. S." supported Mr R. R. Stokes, M.P., who had written previously. The story of the kerb-side vendor, which appeared in the Manchester League's notes last month was reprinted in the *Clitheroe Advertiser* of 14th February. Members of the Stockport Adult School were addressed by Mr D. J. J. Owen on 9th February.

An article entitled "Profiteering in war and peace," written by the Secretary, has been printed in the *Clitheroe Advertiser* and *Times*, *Oldham Evening Chronicle*, and the *Rawtenstall Express*.

**MIDLAND LEAGUE:** Chapman Wright, Hon Secretary, 20 Cannon Street, Birmingham, 2.

The Financial Statement for 1940 has been duly audited by Mr E. E. Sheppard. Owing largely to war conditions the subscriptions have been reduced by nearly £20, but this has been made good by the increased, greatly appreciated, grant from the United Committee. Receipts included: Grant, £50, and subscriptions, £31 1s. 6d. Expenditure included: Honorarium to Hon Secretary, £40; Office rent, etc., £28 0s. 8d.; Literature, Printing, Stationery, £4 14s. 1d.; Postages, Travelling, Meetings, £5 19s. 5d. There is a balance in Bank of £2 12s. 6d.

**GT CROSBY HENRY GEORGE FELLOWSHIP.** Meets first Sunday each month. C. C. Paton, 11 Tudor Road, Gt Crosby, Hon Secretary.

Unfortunately Mr R. Connell, who was to open the discussion on "Will the restoration of equal rights to land of itself produce a just and stable Society?" was unable to attend, so members decided to postpone the discussion until March meeting. Members, however, enjoyed an interesting discussion on "Monopolies"; whether large aggregations of capital of themselves constituted a monopoly; the effects of monopolies on profits, wages, production and unemployment; monopolies based on tariffs, etc.

## CONFERENCE IN EDINBURGH

A Saturday afternoon Conference, called by the Edinburgh Taxation of Land Values League, was held in the Oddfellows' Hall on 1st February, Councillor G. W. Crawford, J.P., presiding. Invitations had been sent, with the leaflet *Rate Land Values* and other literature enclosed, to more than 1,400 selected names in Edinburgh and district, explaining the importance of building now for a new and better social order based on economic freedom and the rights of the people to the land. Although the hall was not full the attendance was good considering the disabilities of the times. Very many letters were received from sympathisers in and beyond Edinburgh. Besides members of the League and of the general public, delegates were present representing the St Cuthbert's Co-operative Society, trades unions, women's co-operative guilds and political parties. Particularly gratifying and useful for the publicity attained were the reports in the *Scotsman* and the *Edinburgh Evening News* which, together with the issue of the invitations, have certainly done effective propaganda. Speakers were Mr A. W. Madsen, B.Sc., and Mr John Peter, M.A.

Mr Madsen said that the abolition of poverty could be brought about only by dealing with the causes of poverty. Labour should have its full reward from the production of wealth. The community should be possessed of its own natural revenue, that lay in the value of land apart from buildings and improvements. All trade and industry should be set free from present monopoly-enriching controls and obstructions, as well as from the most unjust tariff and taxation burden it had now to bear. Neither the landowner nor the tenant had any right to the value of land because the value of land was not due to anything that he did, but was due entirely to the presence and activities of the whole community. "Let us cease talking about the greedy landowner or the acquisitive landowner," he added. "Let us talk only about foolish and short-sighted ratepayers and Town Councils, taxpayers and Parliaments, who allow the present system to continue. We should denounce our own stupidity and our own apathy." It was said that people were buying bombed sites at comparatively low prices in the hope of making great fortunes after the war. The Government had appointed a Committee to see whether a check could not be put upon speculation of that kind. Personally he could not understand why there should be all that "steam" about the matter. Was there any greater sin in buying areas that had been bombed than there was in buying and holding out of use any land at all? The sin was there all the time. The solution was to assess the value of land, impose rates and taxes

on the value of land, whether it was used or not, and take the taxes off the buildings.

Mr Peter said that competition which raised the price of land necessarily reduced the earnings of industry, but if land were compelled to seek labour and capital to develop its potentialities, the earnings of the active factors in industry would rise. The position of the individual worker and of those who wished to employ themselves could always be safeguarded by easy access to land and there could be no exploitation where there were alternative opportunities to produce. In certain quarters, he said, there was foolish talk of abolishing rent, foolish because rent had its origin in the obvious fact that equal expenditures of labour and capital on equal areas of land brought unequal returns. Since, then, the rent or annual value of land was natural it was absurd that it should serve to enrich only the few. As guardians of all men's equal rights it was the duty of governments to claim it and use it for communal purposes. We saw how everything we called progress was raising land values. The invention of the internal combustion engine for example had had the tremendous effect of raising to fabulous heights the oil-producing areas of the earth, causing avidity and causing strife, and emphatically one of the military objects of war was to capture and control just such areas. The provision of amenities and subsidies and even the mere suggestion of schemes of development had a similar though less spectacular effect in raising land values, and it was an evil thing that such schemes, however much desired, were financed by methods of taxation that raised the prices of commodities and so reduced consumption or the standard of living, and discouraged production. If our new social order was to be based on a foundation such as justice demanded, such methods of taxation must be abandoned and replaced by land value taxation which would take for the people what was their own and incidentally make it impossible for individuals to withhold natural opportunities from use. It was only those people who were standing in the way of progress and development who had anything to fear from the policy of the taxation of land values.

After the speeches numerous questions were asked by members of the Conference and there succeeded an hour's keen discussion in which among others Mr Gordon Stott, LL.B., prospective Labour candidate for West Edinburgh, and Mr Wm Gray took part. Proceedings concluded with hearty votes of thanks to the chief speakers and the chairman.