

FROM THE FIELD

JAMES F. MORTON, JR., REPORTS HIS
LECTURE WORK

My present report will be a brief one, although certain features of my trip just ended would make interesting reading, did space permit their elaboration. A propagandist lecturer has experiences which come to no other person; but they are unfortunately often of too personal a nature to be given publicity, since the sensitiveness of others must be taken into account. Moreover, the power of the true economic gospel is such that even a feeble presentation of it is often surprisingly effective; and a plain statement of the reaction of the audience to the truths drawn from the teachings of Henry George would read like intolerable bragging on the part of the humble expounder of those truths. Such a message as ours is of itself so potently convincing as to overcome the deficiencies of the advocate, and to make its own way into the convictions of the hearers. Of course, this is no excuse for slipshod work in presenting the truth; but it does account for the startling progress often reached in spite of an inferior mode of presentation.

My late trip began with the Syracuse Conference, and ended with the coming of the holiday season. The Conference has already been well reported for the REVIEW, so that I need add nothing except my personal testimony to its decided success. The attendance was not enormous; but it was highly representative; and as a direct consequence it was possible to plan for effective work in a number of widely separated communities. The enthusiasm was intense; and nearly all present bore testimony to the inspiration gained from the gathering. One of our university hosts declared to me that it was a revelation to him and one of the most agreeable experiences he had ever known.

After the Conference, I had the pleasure of addressing the students' assembly of the Agricultural College of Syracuse University; and the young men and women were most responsive. The seed is being well sown in

that quarter by the liberal policy of the governing authorities, which have permitted various opportunities for the presentation of advanced economic thought.

In the Albany district, meetings of very diverse characters were held, including, among others, a Socialist local in Troy, where debate ran high; the Albany Forum, where the Socialist element was also vociferously in evidence, but where the most vehement denouncer of "capitalist economics" was foremost in moving a vote of thanks to the speaker and in greeting him cordially after the fray was over; the Troy Rotary Club, where the message was received with great eagerness by some of the most representative business men of eastern New York; a Young Men's Hebrew Club in Albany, where about a hundred earnest-faced young men and women listened with intense closeness and asked many questions which showed interest and intelligent comprehension; and a Congregational Church Men's Club in Rensselaer, where three preachers and about two hundred laymen paid the closest attention, and some of them expressed a wish to hear the speaker before other organizations with which they were severally connected. Albany is, for peculiar local regions, perhaps the hardest city in the State in which to accomplish large and permanent results; but the seed-sowing is beginning to tell.

Utica was a disappointment with reference to number of meetings. This was due to circumstances for which nobody could well be blamed; and this city will yet occupy a good position on the Single Tax map. One good meeting was held, however, on invitation of the mayor, in the Common Council chamber of the City Hall, the mayor, corporation counsel, city engineer and other city officials being among those present.

An exceptionally delightful visit was paid to Hamilton, upon invitation of the local board of trade, which gave a dinner, at which I was the guest of honor and chief speaker, and which was attended by nearly all the business and professional men of the town, including the president and many of the faculty of Colgate University. The exposition of the Single Tax was most appreciatively received; and many pertinent

questions were asked. Only one man showed actual hostility; and his eventual discomfiture, when he put his head into a trap, was gleefully and enthusiastically applauded by the audience. He had repeatedly indicated his objection to the Single Tax as "letting the manufacturer off," saying that he might buy land for ten thousand dollars and put up a factory by means of which he would make a hundred thousand dollars in a short time, which gain would go wholly untaxed; and no explanation could make him see the point. Finally, he exploded: "Then, I guess I'll take all my money, and put it into manufacturing." To which I, of course, made the obvious reply: "That is exactly what we want you to do." That was all; but it "brought down the house." I learned the reason subsequently, on being informed that he was one of the richest men in town, and refusing to sell or rent his extensive properties, which he was holding for speculative purposes. The next morning I addressed a large class in Economics in Colgate University.

In Oxford, I addressed the Union School, including both grammar and high school grades. It was a problem in simplicity of presentation; but I think some good was done. I lectured in the evening to a small audience, the weather being uncommonly disagreeable, and the home fireside appealing to all except the boldest and most enthusiastic. Still, the quality of the attendance was above the average, in proportion to the numbers; and many questions were asked by several of the listeners, who included a leading local preacher and several members of the school board.

A little slip-up occurred in Auburn, through the unforeseen appearance of John Z. White, who arrived on the scene a few days in advance of me, and spoke before the very organizations in which it had been planned to secure me a hearing. However, my disappointment was Auburn's gain; and much good was accomplished by the work of that peerless champion of our cause, of whom we are all proud. My own accomplishment this time was confined to an address before a Social Ethics class in a Universalist church; but I have reason to believe that it was not wholly in vain.

I presume this issue of the Single Tax REVIEW will appear early in February. By that time, I shall have completed my season's work in Chautauqua County, and will probably be in Rochester, whence I shall go to Binghamton for a few days. This will conclude the winter's trip; and after a brief return to headquarters in New York City, I shall proceed to Buffalo for a long spring campaign in Erie and Niagara counties. As usual, I shall be glad to hear from Single Taxers along my contemplated route, as well as from those in any part of the State. A little tentative correspondence may lead to engagements or visits later on. We must pull together, if we are to prepare New York for the Single Tax. All letters sent me at 68 William St., New York, N. Y., will be promptly forwarded—JAMES F. MORTON, JR.

MRS. JULIA GOLDZIER recently lectured the ladies of the Legislative League in the parlors of the Waldorf on the Single Tax. She indicated the main points of our gospel in her characteristic way. The only opportunity man ever has lies in the land. "One-tenth of the people hold nine-tenths of the land. This means that nine-tenths of the opportunity is held by one-tenth of the people. She told the ladies she would leave them their diamonds and pearls, their automobiles and invaluable gim-cracks, and would not levy on a single article, however large or small, one cent or a fraction of a cent." All she would take would be that to which they had no right anyhow—the value of land which they did not produce, but which the community did. Mrs. Goldzier's talk was listened to with much interest.

HERBERT QUICK has been appointed on the farm loan board to administer the Rural Credits Act.

THE *Friends' Intelligencer* of Philadelphia, in its issue of December 11, prints on its first page a picture of the late William L. Price with tributes in poetry and prose to his memory from Elizabeth Chandler Forman, Fiske Warren, Katharine Musson, Frank Stephens, Horace Traubel, and others.