

The Campaign in Ontario

AS our Tax Exemption Petition presented to the Toronto City Council last year, was not allowed by the courts owing to a technicality, it was decided early this year to obtain a new petition, rather than institute costly legal action with uncertain results against City Hall officialdom.

After six months of canvassing, by competent workers, a new petition containing 13,000 names of persons qualified to vote on money by-laws, has been obtained.

The section of the Municipal Tax Exemption Act of 1920, as amended in 1921, that permits such a petition, is as follows:

Where a petition signed by at least ten per cent. of the electors qualified to vote on money by-laws is presented to the Council on or before the first day of November in any year, praying for the submission of a by-law under this Act and setting out in the petition the percentage of exemption desired each year, it shall be the duty of the Council to submit a by-law in conformity with the petition to the electors qualified to vote on money by-laws on the day fixed for holding the poll at the next annual municipal election, and if the voting is in favor of the by-law it shall be the duty of the Council to forthwith pass the by-law, and such by-law shall not be repealed except as provided in section 11.

The petition as largely signed reads as follows:

Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby petition the Council of the City of Toronto that, under and in accordance with the said Act as amended, there be duly submitted at the next annual municipal election after the presentation to council of this petition a by-law exempting from taxation for all purposes including school purposes for the first year in which the by-law takes effect 10 per cent. of the assessed value of improvements, income and business assessment, and from year to year thereafter an additional 10 per cent. of assessed value until the whole of such assessed value is so exempted from taxation.

Much opposition was encountered from the special interests, so strongly entrenched at our City Hall, but it had no visible effect upon the signers, many of whom are also on last years' petition.

The new signatures received will give us at least 2000 names over the necessary 10%.

All signatures of persons found on the last official voters' list of the city, are checked off by an identification mark and sworn to by affidavits attached to each sheet of names.

Suitable literature has been left at many thousands of Toronto homes explaining the petition and its benefits, so the electors have a solid basis of information to guide them when this question goes to a vote.

In January of the present year the city authorities appointed a Special Committee to consider and report on the merits of the Amended Act that makes the petition possible.

The following persons compose this committee. The Assessment Commissioner, the City Solicitor, the Commissioner of Finance, and one representative from the the following bodies: The Bankers, the Board of Trade, the Trades and Labor Council, the Central Council of

Ratepayers, and the Single Tax Association of Ontario.

In the meantime our Assessment Commissioner had compiled a report on this question, but we were refused access to it by his department and the Mayor.

The first meeting of this Special Committee convened on August 1st and adjourned until the 23rd of that month.

Other sessions were held on the 24th and 30th of August, September 5th and 12th, with a final meeting called for September 25th when it is expected that reports on the evidence will be issued to the press.

During the progress of this meeting which had many press notices, such experts as James R. Brown, New York, Harry Willock, Pittsburg, Pa., C. J. Tully, Ottawa, Hon. E. C. Drury, Ex-Premier of Ontario, with local Single Taxers including A. W. Roebuck, Alan. C. Thompson, Julian Sale, A. B. Farmer, E. J. Farmer, H. Patterson, presented convincing facts and figures showing the great benefits to be obtained by the adoption of this by-law.

A. W. Roebuck, our president, who attended these meetings—that extended over six days—with his legal training, drew out by his questions many interesting facts.

The grand old man of our movement in Canada, W. A. Douglas, and Ex-Alderman R. Honeyford are to give evidence at the final session of the committee.

On September 12th, Mr. A. W. Roebuck, our president, addressed the Public Ownership Committee of America on the subject of "Public Ownership and Sane Taxation," arousing much enthusiasm by his excellent presentation, that received favorable press notices.

The same evening a complimentary dinner was given to Otto Cullman and Emil O. Jorgensen, of Chicago, and in addition other prominent Single Taxers were present such as S. A. Stockwell of the Minnesota Legislature, Alderman W. W. Mills, Chicago, Chester Platt, Madison, Wis., Carl J. Buell, Minnesota, W. J. Spaulding, Springfield, Ill., L. K. Mayer, Brooklyn, N. Y., Hon. Cornelius Sheehan, New York, Wm. Erickson, Seattle, Wash., and Mr. Andrews, Kewana, Ill.

—S. T.

Our Billion Mark Prize

INSPIRED by the example of Mr. Edward Bok, the REVIEW offers a prize of 1,000,000,000 marks for the best suggestion for a practicable method for giving the American farmers an annual income equal to the value of their labor, and interest on the capital invested in their industry. The only limitations put on plans for this worthy purpose are: 1st. That they shall not propose to get the farmers out of debt by loaning them more money. 2nd. That they shall not suggest the election of some professional friend of the farmer as President. 3rd. That they shall not require the enactment of a lot of fool laws by cheap politicians.

We don't know why Mexico was not "recognized," but feelsure J. P. Morgan knows.