

of political economy given us the laws of wages and of rent and of population? To attack the evil by merely shifting the burden of taxation is a silly and foolish way to cure a social leprosy."

So hath it always been with prophets.

The priests of Judea gave no comfort to Naaman and his followers.

"Bathe ye seven times in Jordan, and be clean!"

No other cure was offered, although one can well believe that Naaman tried every lotion and nostrum that quackery and cupidity could offer him, until in desperation he finally went down unto the waters of Jordan, and lo, he was clean!

Then did he and the hosts of Syria acclaim Elisha as truly a Prophet of God.

The great men of Manhattan and the leaders of Columbia also have persisted in refusing to accept the simple formula of their prophet. Nostrum, after nostrum, born of quackery and cupidity, are being tried in an effort to cure the social leprosy, but it continues to grow worse, as did Naaman's of old.

But George stands always before them saying: "Turn to Justice and obey her; trust Liberty and follow her, and the dangers that now threaten must disappear, the forces that now menace will turn to agencies of elevation. With want destroyed; with greed changed to noble passions; with the fraternity that is born of equality taking the place of jealousy and fear that now array men against each other; with mental power loosed by conditions that give to the humblest, comfort and leisure; and who shall measure the heights to which our civilization may soar?"

"Words fail the thought!"

"It is the Golden Age of which poets have sung and high-raised seers have told in metaphor!"

"It is the reign of the Prince of Peace!"

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Now it was really a harder task for Naaman to accept the cure offered him by Elisha than for the wise men of Columbia to accept the teachings of George, because Naaman had nothing to go upon but the word of the Prophet. He had to believe that *word* and have *faith* to go down unto the waters of Jordan.

But George asked no exercise of Faith. He asked the men of his day to apply to the cure of their social leprosy a faculty that all men have. That faculty is reason. He gave unto them an unanswerable argument, an argument that they and their teachers could read and weigh and ponder. The arguments of the Prophet are in the hands of all men. Every book store and library in all the land of Columbia has made them accessible to the people. Priests of the Prophet proclaim the saving gospel every day. None have been able to controvert or overthrow them, and yet—

This Naaman, Columbia, still stands stubborn and reluctant on the Shores of Jordan and the leprosy still wastes her flesh!

E. G. LESTOURGEON.

NEWS—DOMESTIC

California

THE call for a Single Tax conference at Fresno, signed by 95 Single Taxers in the State, has been definitely called off. The reasons assigned by the Los Angeles body is that without waiting for the action of the conference the Eastern leaders of the Great Adventure group announced a campaign for 1924. We regret this decision. There could be no harm, and might be much good in interchange of opinions, and we trust the decision to abandon the conference will be reconsidered.

The *Henry George Standard* for December points out that those who voted against the Single Tax measure were but a third of the electorate and that the adverse vote was decreased ten per cent. 325,000 of those casting their ballots refused to vote against the Single Tax.

Colorado

MR. B. HAUGHEY is busy in Denver and will work for an amendment to the city charter to be voted on May 16. The purpose of the amendment is to reduce rents and encourage industry by lowering the city tax on homes, stores, factories and their contents twenty per cent. each year and to increase the tax on city lots twenty per cent. each year whether they are used or not. No city tax is to be levied on the value of any building erected after the adoption of this amendment if the building is used exclusively for dwelling purposes.

Gerrit Johnson has made a generous contribution to get the movement for this amendment started.

The measure is called the Optional Amendment because it gives owners of improved property and others the option of paying the tax proposed, or in lieu thereof to remain under the old system at a reduced rate.

The Denver *Express* promises support for the bill.

Cleveland Club's Work For 1922

THE work of the Cleveland Single Tax Club for 1922 is told in the club's Bulletin of eight pages for January. Fourteen speaking dates were filled in December and six secured for the first month of the new year. During the year 13 speaking dates were secured for John Z. White and 19 for James R. Brown. Local speakers—E. W. Doty, Virgil D. Allen, Peter Witt, Charlotte Smith, Henry P. Boynton, Bradley Hull, Wilbur B. Lutton, and James B. Lindsay—addressed more than 105 audiences. The club celebrated the birthday of Billy Radcliffe in April and that of Henry George in September; held a picnic in June at the country home of William Feather; and had a large and lively

meeting with Rowland C. Haynes, director of the Cleveland Community Fund, which raises several million dollars annually to support 115 local charity organizations. The club members put some very searching questions to Mr. Haynes as to the tendency of large charity organizations in shutting off inquiry into fundamental causes. The club paid James R. Brown \$100 for his expenses in Cleveland; distributed 11,200 pieces of literature; gave a copy of "Progress and Poverty" to the Women's City Club; a picture of Henry George to the City Club; secured an enormous amount of newspaper publicity; spent \$2,495.16, and had a small balance left.

Charlotte Smith devotes all her time to the work, has an office in the Hippodrome Annex, and receives \$120 a month salary as secretary.

In this Bulletin, Edmund Vance Cooke, who is a personal friend of the new U. S. Senator from Michigan, Woodbridge N. Ferris, says the senator is a Single Taxer and glad to have it known.

Mr. Cooke himself is in demand as a Single Tax speaker and is always willing to respond. But he is also by profession, a poet and public entertainer; he is immensely popular.

Assessment Reform Campaign in Toronto

THE statement in Nov.-Dec. SINGLE TAX REVIEW that a mandamus had been issued restraining the municipality from submitting the measure for progressive exemption of improvements to the voters of Toronto needs correction.

The facts are these. On October 9th our petition containing 16,393 signatures was presented to the City Council and of this number 10,350 were signatures of electors qualified to vote on money by-laws, and whose names we had checked off by the last official voters' list.

The petition remained for 12 days in the City Clerk's office with no effort to examine it, and on the 21st of October it was sent to the Assessment Commissioner to be checked.

This official found that the necessary ten per cent. of owners qualified to vote had been checked up by our workers. But in order to block the legislation he sent out fourteen men of his own department to question and confuse those who had signed. After 3,177 signers had been called upon he found that it was only 55 per cent. valid, basing his report to the City Council on such so-called discrepancies as

1. Signatures by others, with consent of "Owners."
2. Signers who did not remember signing.
3. Alien names.
4. Signers not found.

These names, amounting to over 800, and whose validity had not been disproved, would make up 70% of the signa-

tures as valid, whereas 63 $\frac{1}{8}$ % would more than be sufficient.

As the City authorities refused to act, ex-Alderman Honeyford, in the name of the Association, applied to the Courts for a mandamus to compel the Council to submit this question to those qualified to vote.

This action was defended by the City before Judge Lennox, who refused to grant the mandamus, in a judgment that was most partial to the Assessment Commissioner's methods, and unfair to the merits of the petition.

Further legal action is being considered as the Association is determined to prove the validity of this petition. S. T.

A FURTHER CORRECTION

In your December issue, you have a very inaccurate report of the recent Tax Reform battle in the City of Toronto, and it is perhaps advisable in the interest of the movement that a correct statement should be published.

After a great deal of labor and expense the Assessment Reform Association of Toronto obtained a petition signed by over 16,000 voters, demanding that the City Council should submit to the people on January 1, 1923, the question of raising municipal revenue entirely from the taxation of land values by a gradual process of elimination spread over a period of 10 years.

This monster petition was duly presented to the City Council of Toronto on October 9th, and was by that body referred to the Assessment Commissioner for a certificate as to its validity. Instead of following the requirements of the law in checking the petition, this official endeavored in every possible way to disparage the genuineness of the signatures. At the last meeting of the City Council for the year, he delivered a report showing a great many alleged irregularities in connection with the signatures, with the result that the City Council refused to pass the necessary by-law to submit the question to the people. An application was thereupon made by our organization to the Court for a mandamus to compel the City Council to submit the question, but the Court ruled out the application on technical grounds, and one more victory appeared to be won for the enemies of progress.

The Assessment Reform Association do not admit defeat in this matter, and the fact is that a great deal of public interest has been stirred up in the City of Toronto, and the inevitable goal has been brought one step nearer.

Toronto occupies a unique position among the larger cities of this continent on the question of Tax Reform. The legislature of the Province of Ontario in 1920 passed a Statute giving local option to all municipalities of the Province in the matter of taxation; and it provided that upon a favorable vote of the ratepayers, the Municipal Council should have the power to raise municipal revenue entirely from the taxation of land values. In 1921 this Statute was amended so as to provide that if a petition signed by at least 10% of the qualified ratepayers were presented to the Municipal Council it should be compulsory to submit the question to the ratepayers.