

* SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE SINGLE
TAX LEAGUE OF S. A.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

In your Spring issue of April 15th, 1907, under the title of "South Australia," and with the sub-title of "The South Australian League No Longer Active," etc., you publish a letter from a correspondent, who, veiled behind the initials of "J. E. S.," has made an unfair and unwarranted attack upon the South Australian Single Tax League. We hold too high an estimate of THE SINGLE TAX REVIEW to burden its columns with a lengthy reply to the misleading statements of a correspondent whose initials neither stand for any one on the League's books, nor for any known advocate of the Georgian principles in S. A. While deeming a lengthy reply unnecessary, it may be confidently advanced that the published Annual Reports of the past two years (inclosed herewith) are a conclusive refutation of the charge that the League is no longer active, and of the implication that in its policy it has in any way departed from the Georgian principles.

With regard to its special work, and general activities the Council desire to point

* We are glad to give space to the letter that appears on this page. It is quite obvious our correspondent, "J. E. S.," differing with the methods of propaganda now being pursued by the League of South Australia, has, unconsciously no doubt, visited unjust condemnation upon those with whom he was formerly associated. It is evident that as the movement advances certain methods of agitation become obsolete, and that these newer methods fail to appeal to those whose warmth of heart melts their coolness of judgment. This is often the real secret of differences that have arisen in many quarters.

At the same time we cannot ignore the fact that in the engrossing details of political activity a number of Single Taxers on this side of the water are disposed to forget their former attachment to Single Tax principles. Whether the same is true of any of our friends in South Australia we have no means of knowing save through the communications of correspondents who are known and tried Single Taxers. The initials "J. E. S.," assumed for this occasion, stands for one of these. But we are nevertheless greatly pleased to learn that he has failed to make good his case against the League of South Australia.

Editor *Single Tax Review*.

out that they consider the League's mission is to educate public opinion on sound economic principles and to pursue that work through any channel open to it.

Besides occupying a central office which is open daily to inquirers, and used as a club room for any one interested in the movement, and maintaining a paid secretary, free monthly meetings are held for the discussion of current social and economic topics. We also endeavor to make the office a distributing centre for reform literature, and, as far as funds permit, stock some of the principal books and leaflets published in England and America. As it is becoming known as a place where such literature can be obtained, orders and inquiries frequently come from most unexpected quarters. In addition to the free distribution of leaflets, etc., the sales last year from this source amounted to above £40. On the table are files of the Single Tax paper published in the Commonwealth, *Land Values* (Glasgow), *The Public* (Chicago), *Canadian Single Taxer*, SINGLE TAX REVIEW, etc.; in short, realizing the opportunity as well as the great importance of literature as an aid to our work, we aim at making the office as far as possible a Single Tax Information Bureau.

In addition to lectures and propaganda work on the Tramways question, many members joined the Tramways League, of which one of our leading members, the late Mr. Cornelius Proud, was president. This league also included many from the Labor party and other organizations who unitedly worked to secure public ownership of the street rights, which were jeopardized by the "Snow scheme," but whose efforts have now reached a successful culmination, under the premiership of the Hon. T. Price. The league has also endeavored through addresses and the circulation of literature to educate public opinion on the desirability of municipal assessments being based on site values instead of improvements. Largely as a result of our efforts an Act giving these local bodies an option to levy their rates on land values was passed in 1898, but it was hedged round with so many obstacles that notwithstanding the many attempts made, no municipality has yet been able to raise its revenue from that source. An amended bill to make the Act

workable (known here as Part XIX), was introduced by the late Mr. Hourigan session after session, and since by Mr. Crawford Vaughan, which succeeded in passing the Lower Chamber eight (8) times, only to be rejected in the Legislative Council. It is owing to the fact that until the franchise for the latter House is widened, this reform measure will not have the slightest chance of becoming law, that makes the reduction of the franchise a matter of such urgency and vital concern to reformers generally.

With our successful and popular social gatherings, our increasing membership, as well as the sustained interest in the work generally, and with the above record to look back upon, we with Mayor Tom L. Johnson of Cleveland, and ex-Mayor Dunne of Chicago, are justified, we think, in claiming that through our work in educating and influencing public opinion for public ownership of tramways and a juster system of municipal assessment, we have at least attempted to give practical application to those principles with which the name of our founder, Henry George, will be forever associated.

On behalf of the Single Tax Council of S. A.

W. H. POPE, President,

EMILY WILLIAMS, Secretary.

Adelaide, July 22nd, 1907.

THE CAUSE OF POVERTY IS POVERTY!

Illness causes most of the poverty in New York. For every family brought to actual want by drunkenness, there are nine households in need because their wage earners have not the bodily strength to keep up the fight for life. Next to ill health the lack of work is blamed for most of the pressing need. In forty-six families the proportion is eighteen cases of need caused by illness, sixteen by failure to find work, four by wages so small that they will not support the household, and only two caused by intemperance.—N. Y. Sunday Times, June 9.

TEXAS has repealed the state tax on "useful occupations" that yielded about \$250,000 annually.

DOES THE COUNTRY MAN PAY THE CITY MAN'S RENT.

In Mr. Geo. White's letter which appeared in the Spring Number of the REVIEW a question was asked: If it is true, as certain Single Taxers claim, "that farmers really pay the high ground rents obtained by landlords in cities where farm products are often marketed or exchanged. In other words, that the returns to the labor of Manitoba farmers, for instance, are lessened by the demands made in Toronto by the owners of the land where exchanges are made." Mr. A. C. Pleydell, in his answer to that question in part says: "The fallacious claim that farmers pay the high city rents is a variation in more complex terms of the old contention that rent is added to the price. While rent is paid out of product, it does not increase the price of any unit of a particular commodity." I gather from this which I quote, and upon which Mr. Pleydell bases his argument, that it is "fallacious" to claim that the farmers pay the high city rents through the price which they receive for farm products. To me, this answer is unsatisfactory, because I think it misses the question, and I am still inclined to take sides with the Single Taxer whom Mr. White referred to in his letter.

As I understand it, the contention does not claim that the farmers pay the high city rents through the price in terms of money which they receive for farm products; but through the quantity of farm products which they give in exchange for products manufactured on high rent lands in the city. It is quite true, as Mr. Pleydell says, "the price of wheat at the farm in Manitoba is not decreased because of the high rent paid on the land where the grain is marketed," but the high rents when paid to the land owners represent in the ultimate a definite amount in the cost of producing that wheat—that is, the cost as measured in product, and so far as the farmer is concerned it amounts to the same as a decrease in price. The contention does not claim that the high rents are "added to the price" because price primarily determines the rent of land, as well as the profits on capital, and these incomes being the effect of price cannot be "added" to price, its cause. But