

questions without being influenced and divided by unscrupulous party politicians. Any farmer who is wide awake and alive to the "signs of the times" must see that his industry is being more heavily burdened every day by the other organizations that we have pointed out. Are the farmers, with absolute power in their own hands, willing to sit still and see the fruits of their labor gathered in by others while they themselves and their own families go without? Or are they going to organize together and as far as possible conduct their own business for their own benefit? If they intend to make agriculture the leading occupation of Canada, as it should be, they must get into their organization and make it the real factor in the life of their community, their province and the nation. They must see that their organization is made strong and efficient and that their officers are competent and sincere men. They must be prepared to pay their little fee of \$1 or \$2 a year towards their organization and pay it regularly and promptly. They must see that their local secretary is a live man, earnest and sympathetic in the work and willing to make a sacrifice in the interest of the cause. They must provide funds for the upkeep of a central office in each province that will watch their interest closely at all times and help to guide their public activities. Good work has been done along these lines in the past, but it has only been a beginning. This coming winter should be the best in the history of the farmers' organization. It will be if every farmer is alive to his own needs and the needs of his own country. Let us all join hands in the great work in which we are engaged.

A PRACTICAL REFORM

The recent visit of Henry George, Jr., to Winnipeg, and the reception which he and his views were accorded, reveals the fact that there are in Winnipeg, as indeed there are throughout Canada and the English speaking world, a very large number of people who are deeply interested in the movement for the taxation of land values. Many of these are convinced that in the taxation of land values lies the solution for the most of the economic ills from which this country, in common with others, is suffering, and many more who recognize the evils of the present system and are earnestly seeking a remedy, are studying the question with unbiased minds and are daily adding to the ranks of the believers in the single tax. The difficulties in the way of the adoption of this reform are all small compared with those which have to be faced by reformers who would advance along most other lines of progress, and there is every likelihood that those who are working for the single tax will, within a few years, see the truth of their principles demonstrated in actual practice.

The single tax, or the taxation of land values, is a reform which can be adopted gradually, and without revolutionary changes. A single town or city may prove the value of the system before it is adopted in the province or the Dominion. A city may begin by exempting a portion of the improvements from taxation before adopting land values as the only basis of taxation, and it will be found much easier to secure the adoption of the principle in the cities than in the wider national sphere, because its adoption as a means of raising national revenues would involve the overthrow of protection and would be made a question of party politics, whereas in the city neither of those considerations would enter into the question. And after proving its practical worth in a few cities, the plan will be adopted in others, and when the people throughout the Dominion become familiar with its workings and its results in their own cities, the time will be ripe to apply it to the wider sphere of national affairs.

The preliminary work has already been done by the city of Vancouver. In 1896 the first step was taken by the exemption of 50 per cent. of the buildings and improvements from municipal taxation. The results were good,

and in 1906 the exemption was increased to 75 per cent. The good results were then still more marked, and in 1910 all improvements were exempted from taxation and all the municipal revenues are now raised by a single tax upon unimproved land values. The result has been that Vancouver has grown amazingly. A business block, a factory, or a residence pays no more taxes than the vacant lot alongside, and so every holder of property wants to build, and Vancouver has a building boom, a very rapidly increasing population, and prosperity in which every citizen shares. Edmonton has recently adopted the same plan, and other cities are preparing to follow the good example. Winnipeg exempts one-third of the value of buildings and improvements from taxation, and will probably soon increase the rate of exemption.

In Vancouver, however, speculation in vacant real estate has not been stopped by the single tax, but has rather been stimulated by the prosperity that it has brought to the city. If Vancouver wants to stop real estate speculation, and the reaping of the unearned increment by private individuals, it will have to increase the tax rate above what is necessary to meet the present civic expenditures. An overflowing treasury, however, need not be an embarrassment to Vancouver or any other city, for the possibilities of useful expenditure of public money are practically unlimited. Hospitals, schools, free street cars and free telephones could all be provided out of the increased value of real estate if the community which makes the increase would take it by means of taxation. But such things are in advance of the present time and reforms come slowly.

ADVICE FREELY GIVEN

Practically every newspaper in Canada is handing out advice to Mr. Borden as to the course he should pursue in the administration of the affairs of the nation. He is being told every day what he should and should not do in order to save his reputation and the country. There is no commodity that is cheaper than advice and there is nothing that is given freely in such large quantities. Mr. Borden will be wise to pay little attention to the advice tendered him by the partizan newspapers of either political stripe. They all have an axe to grind and their chiefest desire is not that Canada should be given an administration for the benefit of all the people. The advice of any newspaper that always supports either political party cannot in the nature of things be safe. Such a journal places party before country, and this same principle has been Canada's greatest drawback. Mr. Borden has before him an opportunity that comes to but a handful of men in the course of a generation. He is the most influential man in Canada. His is now the chief voice in moulding the destiny of the nation. So long as he is the head of the government he is the practical ruler of the eight millions of people. He is the maker of history and what he does, or does not, will have a tremendous influence for good or bad in the future of Canada. By the voice of the people he has been placed in that proud position, to which few ever attain. Though he is in the position of ruler the measure of his career will not be his ability to rule, but to serve. He has been granted the privilege of doing greater service to the people than any other Canadian. He is our premier—our first citizen. Mr. Borden starts in with a clean record. Let us all hope that it will always remain as clean as today. The selection of his cabinet is his first act of great significance. The people will at once proceed to pass judgment upon his choice and will consciously or unconsciously be prejudiced for or against him, according as he chooses. Two things we look to Mr. Borden to accomplish. We hope to see the senate and the civil service removed from the realm of partizan plundom where they have been since confederation. May we not hope that our public servants may be chosen upon merit and not for party

services? Is it not possible to make the Senate of some service as a legislative chamber rather than a home for worn-out politicians and friends of the government? What a field for genuine service to his country Mr. Borden has before him. No grander opportunity ever came before a man. Let us wish him success in his work and judge him only upon his record.

AN ANSWER REQUESTED

In discussing the result of the election the *Monetary Times*, of Toronto, the leading financial journal of Canada, concludes by saying:

"We wish to see the farmers of Western Canada, the backbone of the country, work in harmony with the captains of industry. Their interests are common. Prosperity or adversity affects them both. East must not be set against West or West against East. Only in this way can we remain a united Canada, and in a united Canada, reside peace, plenty and prosperity."

The sentiment expressed by the *Monetary Times* is one to be approved of. But it is evidently addressed to the Western farmers. The Western "backbone" is to sit in spineless approval while the "captains of industry" levy their toll upon them. The "captains of industry" are, needless to say, the protected manufacturers. These are the men who reside in Eastern cities and dictate to the Western farmers where they shall buy their implements and other necessities. They are now dictating to these same farmers where they must sell their grain. The only kind of "harmony" the "captains of industry" like is to be allowed to levy tribute upon the farmers without protest. If protection is a good thing then it is good for all. How we should like to have the *Monetary Times* explain the value of protection to the Western farmer. It means 25 per cent. higher prices on all he has to buy and much lower prices for all he has to sell. It does not make the farmer more patriotic nor a better citizen. We wait for some person to explain how protection aids the Western farmer.

The people of the United States are compelled to pay high prices by trusts which control most of the necessities of life. They are fighting the trusts, by co-operation and by legislation, and ultimately they will triumph. In Canada we also have trusts which compel the Canadian people to pay the same price as the people of the United States, with the duties of the Canadian customs tariff added. The Canadian trusts are worse than those of the United States. Will the Canadian people tamely submit or will they, too, demand redress?

In our issue of August 16 we made the following statement:—

"Mr. Borden's platform is sound and statesmanlike except in one particular. That exception is the trade question."

We have merely to repeat what we said at that time. Mr. Borden has promised, in the name of the party which is now in power, that he will enact laws providing for government ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay railway; government control and operation of the terminal elevators; necessary encouragement for the carrying on of a chilled meat industry and for the enactment of co-operative legislation by which the farmers may conduct their own business upon co-operative principles if they desire to do so. These measures have all been endorsed by the organized farmers. We consider that this platform is, as far as it goes, for the very best interest of Canada.

A Toronto despatch says the Canadian Manufacturers' association at its annual meeting on October 10 will urge the formation of a tariff commission by the government. The manufacturers, no doubt, will also urge, though privately, that the tariff commission be composed of members of that association.