

Progress in South America

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THE enthusiastic advocacy of the Henry George principles in Brazil by Mr. Andres Alves de Lima, of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, has found concrete expression in the adoption of the Singletax in 1917 by the municipality of Garibaldi in the province of Rio Grande do Sul, and subsequently by other municipalities in that State. The city of Nichte-roy, capital of the province of Rio de Janeiro,

has it; and its beneficial operation there and elsewhere induced the government of the State of Santa Catherina to make the Singletax the organic law of the province in its entirety. The latest municipal convert to Singletax in Brazil is the city of Itajahy in Rio Grande do Sul, with all of Brazil in promising perspective.

Uruguay, neighbor to Rio Grande do Sul, has not yet accorded legislative sanction to the

Singletax; but in this forward and progressive Republic are to be found some of the most capable and powerful protagonists and exponents of the doctrine. Their work, coupled with the reflection from accomplishments in the adjacent province of Rio Grande do Sul, is nearing success, and has already borne fruit in the recent housing legislation by the Uruguayan Congress. It was one of these Uruguayan Singletaxers, Felix Vitale, who sent a cablegram to the Peace Conference when it assembled at Versailles, urging the inclusion of the Singletax as an indispensable basis for their counsels, and prophesying the ultimate futility of all their deliberations unless they did so.

Probably the most agreeable aspect of the situation in South America relative to Singletax is the earnest international co-operation of its advocates. The Brazilian, Mr. Andres Alves de Lima, is one of the most powerful exponents of the doctrine in the Argentine. Dr. Manuel Herrera y Reissig of Uruguay, in his preface to the treatise on "The Economic Work of Bernardino Rivadavia," by Mr. Andres Lamas, another Uruguayan, pays high tribute to Rivadavia, an Argentine, whom he calls—in the language of Guillermo Ferrero, the "molder of society," and acclaims him as the original Singletaxer of America. Dr. Herrera couples Rivadavia with Francois Quesnay, the French author of "The Natural Right," and with Anne Robert Jacques Turgot who, as Marquis de l'Aulne, tried to stem the tide that produced the French Revolution. Dr. Herrera asserts that France and the Argentine, in the persons of these citizens, had the initiative in the doctrine of the Singletax which found in North America and in Henry George its culmination in his splendid and irrefutable arguments.

While the Argentine League for the Singletax was formed in Buenos Aires on June 14, 1914, the economic work of Bernardino Rivadavia began in the Argentine as long ago as 1812, when, on September 4th of that year he presented his first constructive resolution on the subject to the Argentine Congress, and continued for a decade until, on July 1st, 1822, the Congressional Decree was passed intended to make the Singletax, as proposed by Rivadavia, the law of the land.

That this was not done in fact, is evidenced by the existing conditions in the Argentine, where the great landed estates, the *latifundia* against which Henry George inveighed, still exist to the detriment of the economic life of the people; and nowhere in the Argentine now is the Singletax applied.

But the Argentine Association for the Singletax is well organized, having in Buenos Aires members and partisans to the number of about 60,000, representing some 16 trade and industrial organizations, and counting among its membership the brightest minds in the Republic. This organization is the result of the indefatigable labor and self-sacrifice of Mr. Fernando Lodi and his colleagues, in full harmony with Mr. de Lima and other international sympathizers and co-workers. Branches of this parent organization are thriving in Southern Argentina at Bahia Blanca, in the northwest at Mendoza, and in the municipalities of La Plata, capital of the province of Buenos Aires, at Rosario, Renlicó and Córdoba.

The South-American "Georgists" believe in coöperation, and are persistently aggressive, but in conformity with the precept of Henry George that a social reform must avoid noise and tumult, complaint and denunciation while seeking to awaken thought and develop progressive ideas. The Argentine League for Singletax has therefore created a considerable library of which probably the best vehicle they now have is an abridgment of the Henry George doctrine entitled "The Single-Tax Within Reach of All" by Jose F. Menchaca. The headquarters of the Society is always open and its library available to interested inquirers. Out of this constructive activity has now grown the Reform Party, with the slogan of "Land and Liberty," the avowed adherents and defenders of the Singletax.

A significant circumstance, in view of recent history, is the formation of the Argentine Association for the League of Nations, whose principles demand universal welfare based on truth, justice and mutual responsibility and depend for practical realization primarily on the Singletax and its corollaries, free trade and the stability of money exchange; and these factors in those countries where foreign influences

and exploitation have militated so seriously to hamper apt development, are of all things the most vital. And it is there that the thinkers of South America believe is the splendid privilege of our America, the United States of North America, to prevail for economic justice and international morality, before the opportune moment is gone.

The edition of May 20th, 1917, of the Buenos Aires daily "Humanity" carries a remarkable tribute to President Wilson and our national character in the light of that particular period. And it is with deep feeling and regret that many of these thinkers down there consider that this exquisite eulogy, this proud panegyric and this alluring augury of our America's leadership—spiritual and moral and material—for the world's welfare has practically fallen to the ground with the abortive outcome of the Peace Conference, and the apparent defection of our America from the high place and wonderful promise then so brilliantly prophetic. These assiduous workers for the common good point to the movement afoot to perfect a Latin unity, and look to their brothers in the North to achieve a League of Nations that will constitute a Parliament of the Peoples, that will strive in mutuality to realize a world actually safe for democracy, whose affairs shall be administered in justice.

They advocate the creation of Singletax clubs in every city, town, village and hamlet; they want to see those Singletax clubs in full coöperation here and with their fraternal kin elsewhere, all—according to the Brazilian motto of "order and progress"—working for a League of Nations that will not be a military alliance, but will make for self interpretation and ethical righteousness as Henry George saw those things.

And these gentlemen of the South are demanding that the text-book for instruction in political economy shall be "Progress and Poverty," and for analogy the economic principles of Bernardino Rivadavia. And having in mind the beautiful practicalities of a League of Nations that will be a Parliament of the Peoples, they urge that Joseph Mazzini's treatise on the "Duties of Man" shall be the companion text to the Henry George doctrine.