

Leo Tolstoy's Jewel — His Daughter

ALEXANDRA Tolstoy at 77 was introduced as a guest speaker at the HGS banquet by Arnold A. Weinstein, in July 1961, as "the illustrious daughter of an illustrious father." She recalled the visit of Henry George, Jr. to their home in 1909—a meeting which pleased her father very much. Tanya, her oldest sister, was also influenced by Henry George, and when she received her estate under her father's will an experiment similar to the one outlined in *Resurrection* was begun. The peasants worked on the land and paid a tax or rent—but this ended tragically as Tolstoy's dreaded prophecies came true.

His last days were terrible because the revolution was at its height, with daily hanging of prisoners and deportation of thousands. After his death the young daughter, Alexandra, as directed, divided his land, some 2400 acres, among farmers, friends and neighbors. But all fields and forests were taken by the government for collective farms where the peasants were permitted to keep only a very limited amount to feed themselves and their families. They have suffered continuously from the complete lack of freedom.

Count Tolstoy had pleaded with Czar Nicholas II to bring the theory of Henry George into Russia. Later he wrote a final letter to the Prime Min-

ister: "Your two mistakes, the struggle by violence against the irresistible popular force, and the strengthening of private ownership of land, can be corrected by a simple reform. Recognize that the vast area of the country is the equal property of the entire population, and establish a tax-rent corresponding exactly to the privilege attached to each piece of land. This would replace, partly or fully, all other taxes." The letter was never answered.

On reaching the U.S., Alexandra Tolstoy began a long life of unremitting effort—a noble tribute to a noble father who told her as a child, "there are many other people besides Leo Tolstoy." She still directs the Tolstoy Foundation and brings hope to sadly deprived children and lonely older people at the settlement center at Valley Cottage, New York. There after long days spent at her office in New York City, though her hands were painfully crippled, she often spent another hour plowing in the gardens that would provide fresh vegetables for many guests and residents. An orthodox chapel offering beautiful music and worship in Russian is one of many features which draws visitors to the Tolstoy farm. She wants to help young Russians remember the honor and greatness of old Russia and forget the terror of Sovietism.

Vol. 33, No. 6

June, 1970

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021, supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

Publication committee: William S. O'Connor, Arnold A. Weinstein and Lancaster M. Greene, chairman. Editor: Alice Elizabeth Davis. Subscriptions \$1 a year; single copies 10c. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

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