

## HISTORICAL—ADDENDA

In other countries than those noted under preceding headings the Single Tax, through the teachings of its advocates, while failing to influence legislation, has nevertheless in many cases permeated public thought or secured distinguished converts. In Japan Charles E. Garst, while working as a missionary, became interested in the Single Tax through reading *Progress and Poverty*. He set to work doing what he could to influence public opinion. Many distinguished Japanese became favorably inclined to the doctrine through his teachings. On the day of his death the *Japan Daily Mail* came out with a strong article on the Single Tax. This paper at the time urged that Japan hasten to adopt the Single Tax "rather than the illogical, uneconomical and demoralizing system now unhappily pursued in Europe and America." It may be that the work of Charles E. Garst, devoted servant of Christianity and kindly, high-minded gentleman, for economic justice, has found somewhere disciples who will carry forward the doctrine of economic righteousness. But the way of freedom in a country where royalty is accounted divine is a tortuous and difficult one, and there is at present no visible sign in Japan that her feet are set in the right path.

In France there is no Single Tax movement deserving of the name. For some time a paper was printed in Paris by M. Georges Darien in advocacy of our principles, but this admirable little journal came to an end with the war that has engulfed so much of promise for the economic betterment of the nations.

One often hears of France as preeminently the land of happy farmers, of independent husbandmen, of the "morcellement," where every family is rich in its way, etc. But what are the facts? The giving of the land to the peasants at the time of the Revolution was a delusion. Today the peasants possess less than one-twelfth of the French soil. Out of 49,000,000 hectares they occupy less than 4,000,000 hectares. There is no country in the

world which has more to hope from the adoption of the Single Tax.

In Austria-Hungary, with land monopoly and the alienation of the common lands, the pinch of poverty has been severely felt. With perhaps the most fertile soil in Europe its average yield of crops per acre is rather less than that of any country of the same area. There has been a quiet agitation for land reform, in which the advocacy of the Single Tax has not been unheard. A translation of *Progress and Poverty* into Hungarian has been made by Robert Braun, now a lieutenant in the Austrian service, whose visit to America a few years ago is pleasantly remembered by many Single Taxers in New York and other cities.

Victoria, the one Australian division not treated in this work, is behind the others in the progress made, probably because Victoria prior to the Federation was a protectionist colony. But the Single Tax movement has an active Land Value League with headquarters at the London House, Melbourne. The League publishes a monthly paper, *Progress*, at the same address.

The first association in Victoria that tried to effect reforms in the system of land tenure and taxation was founded in 1872 by William Hutchinson Gresham, a ship chandler of Sanridge (now Port Melbourne), who based the principles of the League on the teachings of John Stuart Mill. The circular announcement of its formation declared that "The land is the inalienable property of the inhabitants of every country throughout all generations." It declared for "The gradual abolition of all indirect taxes whatsoever. The revenue of the State to be derived solely from the rental of the land." Mr. Gresham was drowned a few years later. Advocates of the taxation of land values should hold his name in high esteem. In 1877 a Land Tax Act was passed by the government of Mr. Berry, afterwards Sir Graham Berry, against the fiercest opposition. It continued in force until superceded by the Land Act of 1910. It applied, however, only to country lands of a certain area and value.

In 1889 the first Single Tax Society was organized. Among the original members was Mr. John Brunton who had been a member

of the League organized by Mr. Gresham in 1872. It had been formed in anticipation of the visit of Mr. George to Australia.

The movement in Victoria owes much to Max Hirsch,<sup>1</sup> whose *Democracy versus Socialism* is one of the best known, and certainly one of the most powerful and searching examinations of the tenets of socialism from the standpoint of the Single Tax. To John S. Higgs, of Echuca, is due the honor of forming the first Single Tax League in Victoria.

In 1910 the Watt (State) government passed a Land Tax Act imposing a tax of  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny in the £, from which the revenue derived in 1910 amounted to £210,640. In 1914 an Act was passed to give Municipal Councils the option to exempt improvements from local rating. This was to become operative on a day to be proclaimed by the Governor in Council upon his being satisfied that valuations of land made by assessors under the Act of 1910 were available for adoption. The government up to the present has not made them available.

In March, 1912, Melbourne was the convention seat of an important two days conference of Single Taxers of Australia. Among the delegates were E. J. Craigie, of Adelaide, and A. G. Huie, of Sydney.

Though Victoria may be considered one of the most backward States of the Commonwealth in a democratic sense, it has yet something to show for the labors of as devoted a band of Single Taxers as can be found anywhere.

Though Russia was the home of Count Leo Tolstoy, whose acceptance of the Henry George philosophy was proclaimed to the world, there is no movement which can properly be characterized as Single Tax in that country. A translation of *Progress and Poverty* has nevertheless appeared from the pen of Mr. Nicolaiff, and thousands of tracts containing translations of the writings of Henry George have been distributed among the peasants.

There is, however, a land reform movement which is not confined to the liberals and radicals, but is so strong that it has found lodgment even among the conservatives. A few years

<sup>1</sup>See appendix for Max Hirsch.

ago Count Heyden, the then leader of the conservative party in the Douma, announced himself as in agreement with the demand to expropriate the Crown, State, Church and private lands to satisfy the land hunger of the peasants.

In Natal Henry Ancketill has done much to keep the movement alive. For years he was the foremost advocate of our cause. He was in early life a member of the Royal Navy. He came to New York, worked on the *Standard*, and was one of the earliest members of the Anti-Poverty Society. He left this country for Natal, and was soon after elected as one of the members for Durban to the Legislative Assembly of Natal, which seat he resigned in 1905.—EDITOR.