

dum petition; whereas Maine requires 12,000 signatures for the first, and 10,000 for the second.

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Conference of the National Women's Trade Union League.

The National Women's Trade Union League (p. 566) held its second Interstate Conference (p. 495) simultaneously in Boston, New York and Chicago on the afternoon of the 27th. Resolutions prepared at preliminary sessions were adopted, and telegrams were exchanged between the three cities. The sessions in Chicago were attended by delegates from ten States and twenty-seven cities. Among the resolutions adopted in Chicago were the following:

Whereas, The laws governing the industrial work-day and its conditions apply equally to women and men; and

Whereas, Law should be the political expression of the common will; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the welfare of the community requires the admission of women to full citizenship without limitation of property qualification, and that the Women's Trade Union League work to bring about a closer relationship between the equal suffrage movement and the labor movement, so that women may have a voice in the public affairs which so vitally concern them.

And—

Whereas, Long hours of labor and low wages are especially prejudicial to women workers; and

Whereas, It is to the best interests of the community, State and nation, that women be free, strong, well nourished and not overworked; therefore

Resolved, That the National Women's Trade Union League stand for the eight-hour work day, and urge its establishment through legislation as well as through trade organizations.

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The Single Tax in New South Wales.

There is unusual excitement in New South Wales over the coming into practical operation throughout that State of the law (pp. 273, 488, 494) for compulsory taxation of land values and optional exemption of improvement values. This reform was promoted by the League for the Rating of Unimproved Values, of which A. G. Huie is organizing secretary, and was accomplished by Sir Joseph Carruthers as prime minister of the State. The law as it now exists is described by Mr. Huie as revolutionary in its results.

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Almost the entire State of New South Wales is administered by shire (or county) councils which were established in 1907, and by municipal councils which were established in 1908. All councils are required to levy their taxes for general State purposes, on land values exclusively, the minimum being fixed at a penny in the pound (about 2 cents

in 480) or a little less than one-twentieth of one per cent on the capital as distinguished from the rental value. There is no maximum limit. For local and special purposes the councils may impose taxes on either land values or improvement values, subject, however, to veto by a referendum of tax payers, one of the referendum questions being on the issue of taxing land values alone or improvement values also. To facilitate the operation of this system an assessment of values must be made every three years in three categories—capitalized land values, capitalized improvement values, and annual values, the latter being for statistical purposes only. It is worthy of special note that on the question of local rates an overwhelming number of councils have levied on land values alone; although seven tried to levy on both land values and improvement values, they were defeated on referendum in every instance by large majorities. In the city of Sydney and its suburbs, governed by 40 councils, the highest rate is 5½ pence in the pound (about 2½ per cent) and the average about 3½ pence (say 1½ per cent), and the whole amount, except about \$4,000 out of a total of \$1,750,000, is imposed on land values exclusively.

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The wholesome economic effects of even this small measure of the single tax policy—"unimproved land value taxation" as they call it in Australia—is indicated by an explanation that Mr. Huie makes. He says: "A good many councils are raising largely increased revenues, but for all that it is estimated that the change in the system of rating means a reduction in the rates paid by over 50 per cent of the ratepayers, while largely increased sums are demanded from owners of idle land, or land with improvements unworthy of the site. The owners of good shops, factories and homes on reasonable areas pay lower rates, in many cases less than half the amount paid formerly. The owners of idle land are much more willing to meet the ideas of buyers, and many old buildings are to give place to new." This statement is fully confirmed by interviews in the Australian newspapers. From the Sydney Morning Herald of June 12 we take this significant extract from an interview with a prominent real estate dealer:

Everybody who has a little bit of land around his place which he does not want will sell it, and where are the people to buy the land to come from? That is where our trouble will come in. It certainly means a fall in land values, and a heavy one, too. Then again there are the owners of large estates in the suburbs. They cannot afford to let their land lie idle, waiting for increase in values, because they will naturally realize that with everybody being anxious to sell, values, instead of going up, must come down, and they will be rushing the residues of subdivided estates into the market and cutting up other estates.

Indeed the leading firms in the city conducting a business such as ours are already beginning to feel the strain. Then again many people that I know are getting ready to build. They want to get some return from their land, seeing that the rates are the same whether there is a house there or not. That of course means a reduction in house rents, for there will be too much building going on to meet the demands of the population, and when house rents come down capital values will fall.

In the same paper another prominent real estate dealer of Sydney said:

Undoubtedly land values will come down. I have had a proof of that to-day in connection with the sale of Botany land. A week or two ago the local council assessed the unsold portions in Lord's estate, Botany, at 30s per foot. I was called to give evidence as to value in the Appeal Court. I told the magistrate that if I went out to Botany and put those allotments up for sale they would not fetch more than 10s a foot. I was laughed at by the assessor, who swore that 30s a foot was the market value of this land, and that he had offered 27s 6d a foot for certain allotments, and was refused. I told the court then that I was prepared to sell the land at 10s per foot, but I was not taken seriously. However, I have now had an opportunity of proving my statement, for to-day I put the whole of those allotments under the hammer. We advertised the sale well, stating that the upset price was 10s, and that the land had been assessed at 30s. Notwithstanding all this, I could not sell a single allotment, and I may add that the assessor who offered the 27s 6d was sitting in the room. That, I think, is proof enough that land values are coming down. People won't invest in land now, unless they actually want it, and then they will buy as little as possible. There is no doubt the market will be glutted with suburban land within the next twelve months. Under the new system of rating, people have a taste of single tax business pure and simple, and they know that there is no escape for them; for, even if the land is brought down in value, the council requires a certain revenue, and they immediately raise the rate. In other words, if the council values the land at £1 a foot and charges 6d in the £ rate and then finds that the court sets the value at 10s a foot, the rate must be raised to 1s in the £1 in order to produce the same revenue. No matter what the capital value is lowered to, the owner of the land still pays increased rates, in most cases four and five times more than he was paying under the old system. This fact will force people to either do something with the land in the way of building or put it into the market for sale. Take it any way you like, the capital value must decrease. There is enough suburban land unoccupied to house the population of London, and I dare say that there is enough subdivided at the present time to give every man, woman, and child in Sydney two allotments, so that if everybody wants to sell there must be a serious glut. There is another class who must suffer; that is the people who have bought land on payments extending over a number of years. Their rates under the old system were 5s for every 15s or £1 they are now paying. Consequently, these people will not be content to pay out year after year

this extra amount, and will rush the land into the market, and help to increase the already glutted condition. I am convinced that land values must come down. I have given you a proof of that in my attempt to sell land to-day.

NEWS NOTES

—The Illinois State Conference of Charities is to be held at Rock Island, October 10 to 13.

—The National Irrigation Congress (p. 506) opened at Albuquerque, New Mexico, on the 29th.

—The Swedish parliamentary elections have resulted in the election of 138 Liberals and Socialists, and 98 Conservatives.

—A big turret gun on the French armored cruiser *Iatouche Treville* exploded during gunnery drill on the 22d at Toulon. The entire gun crew of thirteen men were killed outright (vol. ix, p. 1187).

—At the New York State convention of the Independence party, held in Cooper Union, New York City, on the 24th, Clarence S. Shearn, Mr. Hearst's principal attorney, was nominated for Governor.

—The National Deep Waterways Convention (vol. x, p. 828) is to be held in Chicago October 7, 8 and 9, when the Chicago Association of Commerce is to have as its guests Wm. H. Taft and Wm. J. Bryan.

—The International Tuberculosis Congress (p. 613) convened in Washington on the 28th, for sessions which are to continue for several weeks. More than 4,500 delegates have arrived from all parts of the world.

—The preliminary programs of the second international conference on State and local taxation, to be held at Toronto from the 6th to the 9th of October (p. 158), are ready for distribution by Allen Ripley Foote at Columbus, Ohio.

—Professor Frank Parsons, distinguished as a lawyer, an educator, an economist and an author, died at Boston on the 26th at the age of 53. He was most widely known for his investigations and writings on public ownership questions.

—The severe drought (p. 613) from which almost all parts of the United States have been suffering for from six to eight weeks or longer, was very generally broken on the 28th, when rain, snow or hail fell over almost the whole country east of the Rocky mountains. Forest fires have ceased to be a menace.

—State Senator Everett Colby (vol. ix p. 635), who has become a national political figure because of his aggressive leadership of the democratic element in the Republican party in New Jersey, and who is the father of the direct primary law in that State, was renominated for senator at the Republican primaries on the 23d.

—Tolstoy's eightieth birthday (p. 588) brought to him more than a thousand telegrams and letters from all parts of the world, according to C. T. Haggberg Wright, Secretary and Librarian of the London Library, who was himself bearer of an address from Tolstoy's English friends. The New York World quotes Mr. Wright as saying that "the most touching of all the addresses were from the single taxers of Australia, the followers of Henry George, and one