

everybody bought land so much wealth would thereby be created that it would be unnecessary to tax anything else to pay for the war. He lectures in a Y. M. C. A. on real estate, and actually believes that wealth is increased when you sign a deed or land contract. These people are incapable of consecutive thinking outside the narrow boundaries of their parasitic business; their predatory instincts are abnormally developed; and they are ridiculously unfitted for dealing with any economic problem. The confidence with which they undertake to settle such questions, however, is almost impudent.

## The Economic Condition Of Russia

THE economic condition of Russia continues to improve steadily although not very rapidly. The agricultural production last year reached about 90% of the pre-war level according to Russian statistics. The industrial production does not make so good a showing. Railway fares are low, but freight rates are high. There has been considerable unemployment during the winter. The unemployed in the cities were given shelter by the government, and there has been no great privation. Great numbers of people have been moving to the land just as was the case in the United States as long as homesteads could be had in the West. In many cases free transportation is furnished to organized colonies. Settlers are going from Western Russia to Eastern Siberia and the Saghalien Island. Danish dairy farmers are establishing model farms and dairies near Moscow. Several American agricultural colonies have been established in Southern Russia. One headed by Harold Ware is located at Revier on the Kuban River. This colony I understand is sponsored by prominent Boston people, and that Don Stephens of Arden, Del., will be a member of the colony.

Russia has a stable currency ranking with that of the United States and Sweden. This feat in national finance was accomplished without any foreign assistance and reflects great credit on the organization of the measure.

The production of gold is being encouraged by the government with the object of further stabilizing the currency. There was a great increase in the production of gold last year, and there will probably be a much greater increase this season. The Aldan River gold fields which were opened up last year will be extensively worked this season.

The Land Tax Law has already been changed in some respects in the interests of the peasants. The inequalities and crudeness of this law are no doubt largely submerged by the individual's greater interest in the common ownership of all natural resources.

—W. A. WARREN.

## Tax Fight In Youngstown

ORGANIZER ROBINSON, OF THE COMMON-WEALTH LAND PARTY, LEADING A GREAT REVOLT IN THAT CITY

ON July 20th, there will be heard before Judge Gessner of the Common Pleas Court here, an injunction proceeding which will, in a way, be a climax in the fight against the raiding land-owners in Youngstown. The fight was begun in deadly earnest after our National organizer came on the ground. The town was greatly excited at the time over the daily arrests of citizens for failure to pay an occupational tax provided by an ordinance passed on the 12th day of May, 1924.

### ARREST OF DELINQUENTS

The recourse to arrest for failure to pay a tax is unusual in American legislation and it gave rise to much discussion of the subject of taxation. The attempt to justify an unusual measure was based upon a deficit in the city's treasury and the tax was levied to meet operating expenses. Investigation as to the cause of the deficiency by your organizer and the local committee resulted in confirming the general knowledge that the cause of these deficits is the drain upon the general fund by land-owners. We found a special case involving \$600,000.00 which contains the following striking features, the publicity of which attracted general attention.

Landowners in the vicinity of Mill Creek had for years urged the City to construct a sewer through the Park. Despite opposition on aesthetic grounds on the part of the Park commissioner, they were finally successful, and the sewer was built. Contractors were paid by the sale of bonds issued by the city in anticipation of the collection of the assessments; but following the shrewd practise that is becoming common, the land-owners, over fifty in number, applied for and were granted an injunction restraining the city from collection. The legal effect of the injunction was to prevent the assessments appearing on the tax duplicate as a lien. The land-owners then capitalized the value of the sewer in the sale price of their land to innocent purchasers who, in the absence of a lien of record, were easily led to believe that the improvement had been paid for.

A veritable scandal arose when it was disclosed that the injunction, which is a legal action which may be summarily tried, was allowed to languish for more than a year. The revelation that some of the Plaintiffs in the case were close relatives of C. W. Osborne, the law director, and of Ralph Miller, the assistant law director, was unavoidably suggestive of collusion. My sudden appearance in the Court of Common Pleas before Judge Gessner on the unusual application to be joined with the city as defendant, furnished the element of dramatic surprise and consternation among the plaintiffs' attorneys and law departments' representatives who hastily put in an appearance.