

# THE SINGLE TAX REVIEW

A Record of the Progress of Single Tax and Tax Reform  
Throughout the World.

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## THE LAND NATIONALIZATION MOVEMENT IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM.

*(For the Review.)*

By GUSTAVE BÜSCHER.

In France and Belgium the works of Henry George have had very little influence in comparison to their effect in some other countries of Europe. This is in my opinion due to different causes. The first among them is perhaps the high price of the French editions of George's works. "Progress and Poverty" and "Protection and Free Trade" are sold at the price of 9 francs a copy, though probably with a rebate of 20 per cent., but this is a very high price in a country where books of the same size generally are sold at less than 3 francs. There has been a cheap edition of the "Condition of Labor," but it was not to be expected that this work would have a great effect in a country, where either the most superstitious devotion to the utmost contempt for the church and its teachings prevails. It is significant that in the preface to the "Condition of Labor" the translator warns the reader against laughing at Henry George's religious utterances in the book. This book and "Progress and Poverty" are now out of print, but as I was told by the second-hand bookdealers in Paris, they are very much in demand in the second-hand book market.

Besides this there are still other reasons for the falling short of George's teachings in that country. I suppose it is the general opinion in America that France is the most progressive country on the continent of Europe. But this is greatly erroneous. To say nothing of Switzerland, I think I can fairly say that Germany and Austria and perhaps even Italy are to-day more progressive than France. It is a fact that not only the Single Tax movement, but all other reform movements, except perhaps the peace movement, are much less successful in France than in the other countries of central Europe, and that especially the municipal government of German and Swiss cities is far superior to that of the French cities. In spite of its republican form of government, France is to-day more conservative than Germany. The success of the movement for the disestablishment of the church does not prove anything against this, for this movement is only the result of the fear of the now ruling republican party that it may be thrown out of power by the clergy. It seems to me that what I might call the social conscience is less developed in France than in the Teutonic countries of Europe.

The well-known national vanity of the French is another reason for the small success of Henry George's works in that country. A doctrine preached by a foreigner is not likely to meet with approbation in France. And a move-

ment that cannot count upon immediate success is very unlikely to find many followers in that country.

In spite of all this there is a movement for "Nationalizing the land" in France and Belgium, and a league has been founded to promote its end. This movement was already started in the first half of the last century by the writings of a French economist, the Baron de Colons. But it is lacking the enthusiasm and vigor which it has been inspired with, wherever the influence of the personality of Henry George has been felt. Its organ, the "Revue de Socialisme Rationnel," published in Brussels, has only a very small circulation. Last year a group of the Belgian-Land Nationalizers of more radical tendencies have started a newspaper "*La Terre*," published in Mons, in Belgium, designed to agitate for land nationalization among the working classes, and it seemed to me that this new organ will serve better the cause than the old one.

Besides these two organs, the movement has a great literature of political, economical and philosophical works. In politics its influence has hitherto been next to nothing, chiefly because nothing has been done to spread the doctrines which it stands for among the people.

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## A PRIVATE LAND OWNERSHIP STORY IN THREE PARTS.

(For the Review.)

By WILLIAM C. MINER.

### PART FIRST.

It came to pass in the first decade of the 19th Century, in the old New England town of Guilford, Connecticut, there lived and thrived one of those strongly Puritanic families, whose paternal head was Mr. David Perkins. In those primitive days of easy access to land and none divorced from his native soil, Mr. Perkins had in early manhood taken a wife to himself and set up his domicile on land that the fact of citizenship had made his own. While not the most fruitful and inviting of all the spots on the round earth, yet it was there with his young wife as queen of the modest cottage that he walked the hard soil of his rough acres a free man.

Time was—so Guilford's older story ran—  
When every rood of ground maintained its man,  
Gave Perkins freely from her bounteous store,  
Gave what he needed, though it gave no more.

In those early days of rural life in New England race suicide occupied but a small place in current discussion. Calvinistic theology supplanted that idea in every sermon, and Jonathan Edwards had been too deeply absorbed in his effort to reconcile the freedom of the will and eternal decrees to mention it at all. Large families were the order of the day, and the Perkins family was no exception. Boys and girls, a dozen or more, a good healthy stock, in a few years came to claim a place at the family table or to gather around the hearth-stone before a blazing open fireplace of a winter's night, or to sit reverently impatient while "pater familias" dispensed a chapter of Scripture and invoked the Divine blessing. Furthermore, it came to pass, as the boys arrived to age and strength of manhood, it became necessary to leave the old home and strike out for them-