

"Whither the current flows then, nobody knows, but most likely toward an extreme.

"Single Tax has the advantage over Socialism in that its aim is more limited and more easily attained, that the conditions in Germany are ripe for it (yes, more than ripe) and last but not least, that all social reform must start with the right to the soil if it does not want to renounce from the outset half of its potentialities.

"The question is only whether the people are ripe for it, whether the masses recognize what is needed and carry that conviction to victory."

Thus the *Neue Badische Landeszeitung*, an influential daily newspaper published in Mannheim, Germany, expresses itself on Sept. 28, 1920, seriously voicing the opinion that the Single Tax is the only tangible theory in Germany today which shows courageously and convincingly a clear way out of the terrible misery and confusion that is terrorizing a once powerful nation. Its economic system has collapsed and now they are standing in front of its ruins, blaming each other for their downfall.

A tremendous amount of energy—so badly needed for reconstruction—is wasted in hateful personal and factional controversy, while the nation as a whole is literally starving to death.

Now that the people are at their wits' ends the Single Tax—which until recently was only a secondary movement fostered here and there by some solitary intellect or a few scattered groups of reformers and parlor-theorists—has developed into a mighty factor, ready to create a new economic system.

The 25th yearly convention of the Single Tax Society took place at Hamburg from Sept. 25 to 28, 1920, and proved to be a great success.

Fifteen hundred people from all parts of the empire participated and showed how deeply the Single Tax idea is rooted in the hearts of thinking human beings.

Many representatives of communities and States-departments added through their presence to the significance of the event, and a great number of German newspapers—like the above mentioned *Neue Badische Landeszeitung*—hailed the convention as the most important stepping-stone in the political and economical history of the nation. They warmly praised the admirable work done by the Single Taxers, especially that of Adolph Damaschke, the famous leader.

The *Hannoversche Courier*, commenting upon the conference says: "There were about 1,500 people from all parts of Germany, representatives of numerous State-departments and communities, members of all political parties, men of all trades and professions. The convention showed that the Single Tax idea is deeply rooted in the hearts of the German people and is going to be a powerful popular movement which will without doubt reach its goal in the course of time."

Prof. Kuno Franck in a recent issue of the *Nation* of this city, called attention to the Single Tax movement in Germany as most virile and promising.

Public Ownership Brings Hardship to New Zealand by Increasing Land Values

[Address at dinner, opening the campaign for Single Tax Amendment Number Twenty in San Francisco, by Herbert Atkinson, of New Zealand.]

THE Dominion of New Zealand has been of great interest to the social student in that, for many years, New Zealand led the way in what is called "Progressive Legislation." New Zealand has made great strides in State and municipal Socialism. The list of enterprises in which the government engages is truly formidable. In addition to the usual government departments controlling the Army, Navy and Justice, the government of New Zealand controls the police force.

The government owns and operates the railroads, doing all repair work in its own workshops. The government owns and operates coal mines, competing in the market with the output of privately-owned mines. The government runs a fire and life insurance department and competes with private insurance companies—in fact, the government insurance department regulates the price of the premiums of the competing companies, so that they cannot charge more than the State office, or they would get no business. The government has a department called the Public Trust Office, which department does a lot of legal work; so a man can make his will and make the Public Trust Department his executor. The Public Trustee will draw up the will for you, put it in the Public Trust safe and run the estate for the heirs of the man when he is dead. The government manages a good system of public primary schools, free, secular and compulsory. There are also good secondary or technical schools and a State-endowed University. The State also undertakes the whole work of the Post Office and telegraph and telephone service; also, the wireless and cable stations. The government also has a Public Works Department and constructs public buildings, roads and bridges.

The government owns several experimental farms and a chemical laboratory for test work and analysis. The State owns and runs several good hospitals and four excellent maternity homes are operated at a very low fee per patient. There is a good system of old age pensions and a savings bank department attached to the Post Office.

The State advances to workers and settlers; assists the worker to buy land and a house to live in, and the would-be settler to buy land whereon he can farm.

The government runs a special Arbitration Court, in charge of a Supreme Judge, to attempt to settle labor disputes and to fix wages in all industries.

The municipalities vie with the State in the collective control of various enterprises—street car services, city water supplies, city baths, municipal milkmen, street making, drainage schemes; gas and electric light and power

are municipal enterprises. So, also, are free libraries and the scavenging and disposal of garbage. The harbors of New Zealand are controlled under government supervision by Boards, of which the members are elected by the people. These Harbor Boards undertake the construction of wharves, dredging of shoals, the handling of cargo, etc.

If this class of legislation is all that is required to make a people prosperous, then New Zealand would indeed be the Islands of the Blessed; but the fact is that, in spite of all this progressive legislation, it is harder to make a living now in New Zealand than it was thirty-five years ago, before this progressive legislation was put on the statute books, and it is but just to concede that these State and municipal enterprises are, on the whole, very well managed. But the fact remains that the labor situation is far from peaceful. There have been strikes in the State coal mines, strikes on the wharves controlled by the Harbor Boards and, to cap all, a strike on the State railroads, which held up the whole service of the country. Mr. Massey, the present Conservative Prime Minister, had to leave the Prince of Wales, during his late tour of New Zealand, at Roatara to amuse himself with the Maories and the Hot Springs, while he (Mr. Massey) went to Wellington by automobile, 400 miles, to confer with the Labor leaders in charge of the railroad strike to get a settlement and start the wheels of industry revolving again.

The Arbitration Court has not brought about industrial peace. The Union leaders tumble over one another getting into court to get their clients' wages raised. No. 1 Union gets a raise, then No. 2, then No. 3 Union and so on. When they have gone round the lot and everybody has got increased money wages, prices go up and nobody is any better off than they were at first. Then they start it all over again. It is like a "merry-go-round;" but nobody ever gets ahead by it, like soldiers marking time. In short, the worker is no better for all this progressive legislation, and neither is the employer.

Who is the better for the great increase of wealth that has taken place during the last twenty years in New Zealand?

It is here where the Single Taxer comes in.

The price of land in New Zealand has risen enormously. New Zealand is the most rent-ridden land on the whole earth.

The landowner is the robber that takes all that is left.

Prices of land have risen beyond all reason. If the State built a railway, the price of the land they were making accessible has risen before the road was finished. Did the municipality plan a street car service, the land speculator was out in the suburb before the street car, and has gained a golden harvest.

The best grazing land for Queen Cow (as that animal is called there sometimes) has reached the figure of 120 pounds per acre. The man who takes this on, finds that, when he has paid the interest on his mortgage, there is left but a bare living for his family and himself. Land in the suburbs of the cities is correspondingly high priced.

The situation is probably clearer in New Zealand than anywhere else on earth. Every enterprise directed by State or civic authority, with a view to benefit the people at large, simply resulted in hugely increased land prices. Not all the land is good in New Zealand. There is much land that is mountainous, bare, bleak and unprofitable. And land being of fixed quantity and in increasing demand, its price must rise—and does rise.

Do the people of New Zealand understand this? No. They do not. Twenty years ago, the Liberal Party of New Zealand laid the foundation stone of the Single Tax; but green moss grows on it now, and the weeds have covered it up; and the once great Liberal Party, which, under Ballance and Seddon bade fair to lead the whole world in restoring the rights of the people to the land in which they must live—that Liberal Party is dead and the wild ass of Conservatism stamps on its grave.

The Labor leaders and the Labor Party in New Zealand have not got hold of the land question. They do not see its possibilities; and, until they do, there is no hope of anything further being done in New Zealand. But New Zealand has shown that, whatever legislation you enact, if you do not get the land question settled first, the landowner will scoop the pool and rake in any benefit that may accrue from any improvements you may introduce.

Henry George asserted that the land question must be the first great reform and New Zealand has shown in letters that he who runs may read that Henry George was correct. And the question is, which country is going to be the first to tackle the lion in the way! Which country the first to see the cat and bell it? Is it going to be one of Britain's Daughter Colonies, or poor, old, much-abused Britain herself? Or, is it to be (no intention to flatter) this brightest fairest State of California?

I think it is America's job to lead in this struggle for freedom of the individual—to give, so far as humanly possible, equal opportunity for all, that each shall be free to do whatever he wills, provided he does not infringe upon the equal freedom of every other.

The whole world is waiting for a lead in the right direction. Let us see to it that we do our bit toward holding the light to show the road.

THE BALL

A LITTLE Boy of Heavenly Birth,
But Far from Home today, comes down to claim His ball
—the Earth,
That Sin has cast away.
Come, comrades, let us, one and all
Join in to get Him back His Ball.—REV. FATHER TABB.

THERE'LL be no need for taxes when we come to our senses
And use all of our ground rent for public expenses.

—GEORGE LLOYD.