

insists, is not confiscation but the taking by the public of a portion of the income earned by the public and needed for the uses of the public life. The checks which will come into operation against public extravagance or misuse will be the discontent evoked, and the reforming energy of intelligent citizens, when the draughts upon the income earned by general improvement of the municipality go beyond demands just and safe for the general interest. "It is no more reasonable to deny to a municipality or state the right to collect and administer its publicly created income on the ground of alleged liability to abuse of this right, than for a similar reason to deny the full use of his income to an individual who has earned it," says Mr. Hobson. The value of land depends on the presence and communal activity of the population around it. A new public improvement, a better road for instance, improves the value of unused land as much as it improves the occupied land in the neighborhood, but under the present system the latter bears the brunt of the taxation paying for the improvement. The present English reform contention on the land value question is that taxing land value is taxing a monopoly value.

E. H. CLEMENT.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### THE MODERN SMALL-FARMER MOVEMENT IN DENMARK.

Hong, Denmark, November, 1906.—The social class in Denmark on which the single tax idea has made the deepest impression and where it is best understood is somewhat remarkable, and is peculiar to Denmark. It is the lower order of farmers—the so-called "housemen." These are the men who have no more land than they can till with help of wife and children.

In Denmark there are 160,000 of these small farms. Of the middle sized farms (from 30 to 90 acres) there are approximately 70,000. The possessors of these are called "gaardmen" (freeholders). Of larger properties there are approximately 2,000. Denmark numbers 2,500,000 citizens, 1,250,000 of whom are farmers.

The "housemen," then, form the most numerous class, and their number will gradually increase, because this form of agriculture has shown itself to be the most advantageous, as well for the individual as for the whole community. The "houseman" with his family cultivates his field more intensively and with greater net gain than it is possible to get out of the larger estates with hired labor. Moreover, by their co-operative system of dairies, egg-exporting, hog slaughtering, etc., it is possible for the Danish small farmers to engage in the most advantageous forms of production in modern agriculture. The

"housemen," therefore, especially the more advanced, are the leaders in Danish agriculture.

Even in the political life of Denmark the numerous housemen are obtaining an increasing importance. The middle class farmers—the "gaardmen"—are now in political power, and their representatives are predominant in the government and the "Folkething" (lower house). They are, however, believed to be secretly in accord with the conservative party (Højre, the party of "the right"). The "housemen" who have contributed their part to the political supremacy of the "gaardmen" who obtained control of the government in 1901, are justly feeling themselves wronged. The first of the "gaardmen's" more important governmental acts was a tax reform which entirely abolished the old tolerably large land taxes (formerly well based in the land). This was a gain for the present holders, but a loss for the nation. The question involved is one of taxes and revenues to the amount of no less than 10 million kroner yearly (over two and a half million dollars) in a community of two and a half million inhabitants.

As this tax reform soon made the price of land rise, and as a former promised tariff reform in the direction of free trade was deliberately neglected, the exasperation of the "housemen" against the ruling "gaardmen" has constantly increased. This indignation is all the greater because in the year 1902, before the tax law was passed, a meeting of representatives was held in Koege (Zealand), where after an address upon the subject by the present writer, a resolution opposing the law was read and carried by the assembly. This resolution should be known more widely because of its strict and unconditional adherence to the single tax doctrine, without condition or reservation. Such a declaration has perhaps never been made elsewhere.

#### The "Koege Resolution of 1902."

The assembly of representatives of small farmers declares:

Since the small farm agriculture in independent holdings is the most advantageous form of agriculture for both the individual and the community, and it is therefore to be expected that this will in the future be the most common, and perhaps the only form of Danish agriculture, the solution of the small farmer problem is not essentially based upon support from the state or from the other classes of the community, but only in the full recognition of the small farmers having the same civil and legislative rights as the other classes in the community.

The small farmers, therefore, do not demand that they be especially favored by tax legislation, as, for example, by the abolition of the old land taxes and tithes, which were taken into account when possession was obtained, and are compensated for by abatement in the purchase price. The abolition of land taxes, by diminishing the public funds and exposing those who held no land to unjust loss, would give to a part of a single generation an advantage, and especially to the larger landowners.

Wherefore, the small farmers make this demand: the speediest possible abolition of every tariff, impost and tax, direct or indirect, upon articles of consumption, that is, upon foods, clothing, furniture, buildings, farm implements, tools, machinery, raw materials and income gained by labor; because all such burdens are resting with undue weight on labor and the poor man.

Instead of taxes upon those articles, the small farmers demand that for obtaining the public revenue, that value of the land be taxed which is not the result of the work of a single individual, but is caused by the growth and

development of the community. This unearned land value is now increasing enormously especially in large towns, and instead of being taken for the state or the public treasury, it is making some individual private speculators rich. Such taxes would not hinder labor, but would make the land cheaper, and thereby make it easier for every man to obtain his own homestead.

The assembly of small farmers in Koege therefore ask that the other organizations of small farmers in the nation give their support to this tax program, and they require that such political parties as want the assistance of the small farmers, should take up the demands of this program, and work for a tax reform of this kind during the present session of the state assembly.

As is clear from this resolution, the small farmers' tax program rests on the fact that the small farm freeholds have by experience proved to be the most advantageous to labor, and it is therefore believed that this will be the future form of agriculture. Therefore the small farmers look upon the matter, not as class politics, making fixed demands against the other social classes; but they regard themselves as striving for a body politic founded on an equality which places all citizens on a level in regard to all civic and economic matters. Wherefore they demand the entire abolition of all present taxes on labor and consumption, and ask instead for a tax on the value of the land of the community.

Probably never before have the Henry George doctrines in their purity been so clearly advocated by a whole class as here in Denmark by the small farmers.

Although this program was ignored by the "gaardmen" party in its tax laws of 1903, the small farmers of the islands of Denmark have reiterated these demands in two assemblies of representatives—in Roeskilde (Zealand), 1905, and Odense (Fuenen), 1905; and at present the movement is making its way over the whole of Jutland,\* and it is to be hoped that the tax on land values will become a strong feature of Danish politics.

It may be added that this has already partly come to pass. A new political party, "The radical Left" (Det radikale Venstre) was formed in 1904, and in their program they expressly demanded the entire abolition of all tariff-taxes (customs duties) and other taxes on articles of consumption, and as compensation the introduction of a tax on land values.

This was undoubtedly a result of the "housemen's" Koege Resolution, and the strong Danish George movement the influence of which is increasing day by day.

Quite another "land question" is the problem of how it is possible for the state or community to provide land for the "housemen," independently of the influence on the price of land of a land tax law. This problem of land for land laborers has been long in the foreground here in Denmark, and some laws relating to the question have been made during the last few years. The result, however, has not been encouraging. Meanwhile, this program of "inner colonization" is stirring our agricultural circles, and it is just possible that Denmark will find the right solution of this important problem also, and thereby show the way to the other nations.

S. BERTHELSON.

Editor of Ret (Justice, Right).

\*Now, in November, 1906, the congress of housemen in Jutland, have adopted the principles in the Koege resolution of 1902.

## NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Wednesday, Jan. 23, 1907.

### Mayor Dunne's Candidacy for Renomination.

Mayor Dunne's formal letter announcing his candidacy for renomination as Mayor of Chicago (p. 994) was published on the 17th. It deals exclusively with the traction question, and as this is of national interest we give the text of the letter in full:

At the earnest solicitation of many of my fellow citizens I have concluded to submit my name to my fellow Democrats for renomination, at the next Democratic convention, to the office of Mayor, upon the following platform in so far as it affects traction matters:

The ordinances reported to the City Council Jan. 15, 1907, granting certain rights to the Chicago City Railway Company and the Chicago Railways Company must, for the preservation of the people's rights, be amended in the following particulars:

1. No restriction exists in these ordinances as to the cost of rehabilitation, and it has been stated by Engineer Arnold that the rehabilitation of the properties of both companies may cost from \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000. This \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000, in addition to the \$50,000,000 now fixed as the price of these properties, would make the entire cost to the city, if it attempted to take over the properties, between \$90,000,000 and \$100,000,000. At the present time we have no ordinance authorizing the issuance of to exceed \$75,000,000 worth of Mueller certificates. If these certificates are held to be valid, as I confidently expect, we would be compelled to pay a brokerage, in all probability, for getting cash upon the same, leaving us only about \$72,000,000 net for the purchase of these roads. Seventy-two million dollars in cash will not purchase \$90,000,000 or \$100,000,000 worth of property, if we are compelled to pay cash. I therefore insist that before the cost of rehabilitation—together with the price now fixed upon the property, to-wit, \$50,000,000—exceeds the sum of \$72,000,000, provision must be made in the proposed ordinances for the passage of ordinances either amendatory to the \$75,000,000 ordinance or as a substitute therefor, authorizing the issuance of additional certificates to the full amount of the present fixed value and proposed improvement. It may be said that these ordinances can be passed afterward. But in view of the tremendous struggle we have just gone through in obtaining the passage of the \$75,000,000 certificate ordinance, I am firmly of the opinion that the present ordinance to the traction companies should contain a provision that the cost of improvements, together with the present fixed price, should never exceed the amount of the certificates authorized to be issued by law. This need not retard the improvements in any way, as it will be in the interest of both the company and the people to have these certificate ordinances passed, if there is a provision to that effect in the present ordinances. The traction companies would be bound to see that these ordinances were passed so as to secure them in the cost of rehabilitation and the people would be interested in the same direction so as to enable them at all times to have sufficient certificates