

Early Japanese Land Reform

THE INFLUENCE OF HENRY GEORGE'S IDEAS UPON MODERN JAPAN—A pamphlet by Yoshisaburo Yamasaki, reprinted from Kobe University Economic Review, No. 4, 1959.

IN this article, Professor Yamasaki shows how Japan was ready for land reform in the 1880's, when the Meiji government was attempting to convert the country from a feudalistic economy to a modern capitalistic economy. The Japanese found a new land monopoly growing up as fast as the old one was abolished.

As early as 1883, an excerpt from George's *Social Problems* was translated into Japanese. References to George appeared in periodicals, and a full book on his views by Sentaro

Jo appeared in 1891. The American missionary, Charles E. Garst, promoted Japanese interest in George, but another influential American in Japan, Professor Dwight Whitney Learned, emphatically rejected Henry George's ideas.

There was evidently a considerable Georgist influence among Japanese liberals at the turn of the century. A moderate land value tax was among the measures of the Meiji government. Unfortunately, there was not always a clear distinction between George's ideas and socialistic ideas, but some thinkers saw the difference.

Professor Yamasaki brings his study up to about 1900. He hopes to continue the story in a future article, and we hope so, too.

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HENRY GEORGE NEWS