

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### DENMARK

#### PROGRESS OF THE LAND VALUES BILL

The Bill for the local taxation of land values, the provisions of which were described in last month's *LAND & LIBERTY*, came up for "first reading" in the Lower House on 7th January, and, after a prolonged and informing debate lasting three days, was passed on to Committee stage without a division. The members who took part in the discussion included Mr. Willman (Social Democrat), Mr. Pinholt (Moderate Liberal), Mr. Henningsen (Radical Liberal), Mr. Aksel Jensen (Moderate Liberal), Mr. C. O. Pedersen (Moderate Liberal), Mr. Martin Hansen (Moderate Liberal), Mr. C. N. Hauge (Home Minister—Social Democrat), Mr. Grathwohl (Conservative), Mr. Vanggaard (Moderate Liberal), Mr. Brorsen (Moderate Liberal), Mr. Fibiger (Conservative), and others.

The turning point in the debate was Mr. Brorsen's declaration (prompted by the opposition to the measure expressed by some members of his party) that the Moderate Liberals stood by the principle of the Bill and would support it. Mr. Brorsen was Defence Minister in the late Moderate Liberal Administration, and this pledge from such an influential member of that party, of which he is the Chairman, has increased the prospects of the Bill becoming law, although in Committee stage certain amendments may be proposed.

The speeches on the Bill are reminiscent of many a full-dress debate on Land Values in the British Parliament. We wish we had space to print, for the excellent instruction they afford, some of the contentions of opponents and the brilliant arguments led forth in answer thereto.

#### MR. HENNINGSEN, M.P.

The Committee of the Lower House which will now consider the Bill before it is read again was appointed on 13th January, and consists of fifteen members: 6 Social Democrats, 5 Moderate Liberals, 2 Conservatives, and 2 Radical Liberals. The Chairman of the Committee will be Mr. Henningsen, M.P., Radical Liberal, and one of the foremost advocates of the Taxation of Land Values in Parliament.

#### A PRESS OPINION

The great Copenhagen Liberal daily paper, *POLITIKEN* (7th January), in a leading article "The Just Tax," upheld the Bill in these words:—

The Land Values proposal which is the first business before the Lower House after its Christmas recess, embodies a far-reaching tax reform built upon the fairest basis—the community-created values that are appropriated by individual landowners. Taxation measured by ability to pay is better than the taxation so much desired by Conservatives, namely, imposts on consumption. But the "ability to pay" basis is itself assailable in principle. It hits and fines what should be rewarded, the labour, industry, ability and thrift of the individual. Land value taxation is of all taxes the just tax, because it rewards the virtuous citizen and punishes idleness or the lack of efficiency and initiative. It falls as a first charge on community-created land values, obliges the owner to use the land, puts an embargo on all speculative values and exempts from taxation all values due to industry.

First and foremost it will show its effects in making land cheaper by preventing or destroying land speculation, which is the most useless of all practices, and in the end by compelling a proper use

of all land in town and country, vacant lots and poorly cultivated acres whose condition as to use in no way corresponds to what could be got out of them.

#### THE NEXT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Last month we reported that at the Conference of the Henry George Union in Copenhagen on 7th December, a large advisory and executive Land Values Committee had been appointed to keep in touch with the situation in Parliament. The Committee met on 27th January and considered also the question of the next International Conference to Promote the Taxation of Land Values. The decisions in this matter will be reported in a later issue of *LAND & LIBERTY*.

The more important of the articles on the situation in Denmark that have appeared in *LAND & LIBERTY* of recent years will be found in the issues of June, 1920; December, 1921 (2); January, June, August and September (3) of 1922; October, 1923 (2); January (2), April, June, July, October and December, 1924; and January, 1925 (2).

### CANADA

The "Drury" Act of 1920, which gave power to the local authorities of Ontario to transfer local taxes from improvements to land values, was repealed in 1924, but one municipality—Fort Erie—which took action under the Act continues to apply its provisions. This year Fort Erie assesses improvements at only 40 per cent of their value, and next year will assess them at 20 per cent. Land is assessed at its full value.

At Fort Erie on 15th December (*TORONTO GLOBE*, 16th December) the Single Tax Association of Ontario held its annual dinner. The Hon. E. C. Drury, ex-Prime Minister, was present and spoke. He said that if any Government tried to make the assessors value land and buildings at their full valuation it would have to put another Act on the Statutes, because the municipalities were doing illegally what his little Act had made legal. Nearly 80 per cent of the municipalities were ignoring the present law that stipulated they must assess improvements at 100 per cent value.

#### MANITOBA

The *SQUARE DEAL* for December announced that Single Taxers of Winnipeg and their friends got together on 2nd September for a reunion and dinner at the Marlborough in celebration of the birth of Henry George. This is the first time that the Georgian anniversary has been observed in Winnipeg since 1913. The war disorganized many movements, and among others the Single Tax activities in Winnipeg. Out of this reunion may grow a new democratic movement. A committee was appointed to consider plans for the organization of a democratic club, for the discussion of public questions and the entertaining of outstanding progressives who may visit the city. F. J. Dixon delivered the oration on the life and work of Henry George, and John Kennedy gave a talk on the economic condition of the farmer. D. W. Buchanan acted as chairman.

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mr. L. D. Taylor, known during his previous term of office as the "Single Tax Mayor" of Vancouver, has been elected once more to take over the reins of government in that city. He has stated (*Vancouver DAILY SUN*, 14th December) that the business before the Council this year will include a re-assessment of the city and the amalgamation with Vancouver of the