

RUSSIA.
MOSCOW.

I know your readers will be interested in the land movement of Russia, as I observed it. A distinctive Single Tax movement there is not, though there are Russian Single Taxers, as evidenced by the fact that George's works have been translated and circulated in Russia.

In Moscow I tried to find a gentleman whose address had been given to me by a member of Count Tolstoi's family, who told me that he was interested in the Single Tax. I found him, but could not do very much with him, as he did not speak sufficient French or German. He told me that they had printed and distributed among the peasants many thousand of the short tracts by Henry George. Mr. Nicolaiff who is a reader of the *Review*, had unfortunately left Moscow for a long journey. He is the translator of "Progress and Poverty" and other works of George.

Mr. Gorbanoff Paradoff, the name of the gentleman talked with, told me that the revolutionary socialists were working for the abolition of private property in land. He gave me the address of some leaders of this party in Petersburg, and I went there, but did not find them. As I could not read the Russian language I tried to learn from the German newspapers in Petersburg what was going on in Russian politics. Summing up what I have learned from this source the situation in Russia is as follows: The leading party in the Douma (though not the majority) are the Constitutional Democrats. This party is demanding principally a constitutional reform such as would make Russia a modern democratic state. But this party is also advocating a far-reaching reform of the land laws. Besides this party the most influential group is the "Labor-Grange," a body of peasants and laborers, whose watchword is "land and liberty" (*semlya i volya*). This party is laying more stress upon social reform, especially reform of the land laws, but is somewhat reactionary on constitutional questions.

A group of the party of Constitutional Democrats has elaborated a scheme for solving the agrarian problem, whose chief features are:

The land belonging to the state, the crown, the church, to monasteries or to private proprietors shall be expropriated except under certain conditions. The proprietors are to be compensated according to the normal productiveness of the soil, not according to the rent.

This land is to be handed over to the State, which in time shall rent it out to those of the peasants who have insufficient land or no land at all. The land shall be given to those in private possession, but not as private property.

In the meantime the Douma has already begun to discuss this proposal. It is prob-

able that that body will not hesitate to accept very radical measures, as these would secure it the favor of the peasants and the large majority of the people, and make it thus impossible for the government to resist the Douma on other questions. As the Countess Tolstoi remarked to me, the Russian peasants are determined to have more land, and if the landed proprietors will not give it them voluntarily, they will take it by force.

The representatives of the peasants in the Douma are told by their voters to get them land, or not to return to their homes. Indeed the demand of the people is so strong that even the reactionary parties do not venture to oppose it. Even Count Heyden, the leader of the conservative party in the Douma, declared himself in agreement with the demand to expropriate the Crown-State, Church and private lands to satisfy the land famine of the peasants. In the answer, which the Douma has given to the Imperial Address with which it was offered, it is declared as follows: "The recognition of the needs of the country population (peasantry) and the passing of the necessary legal measures will be the next task of the Douma. The most numerous class of the population of the Empire, the working peasantry, is awaiting with impatience the satisfaction of their present land famine and the first Douma of the Russian Empire would neglect its duty, if it did not pass a law for the satisfaction of this most urgent need by expropriating the Crown, State, Church, and private lands for this purpose."

The address containing this passage was nearly unanimously agreed to, only five members refraining from voting.

Of course, the organs of the well-to-do classes are denouncing this as robbery, as a violation of the sacred privileges of private property, as impossible, etc., etc. They are prophesying the ruin of Russia, they declare that the Russian peasant is too lazy to work the ground. But that the peasant has been mercilessly robbed and exploited and kept in ignorance and brutality for centuries, they forget to mention.

When I was talking about this question to the editor of a German-Russian newspaper he told me that the idea of a "Knecht" (hired laborer without land and without means of subsistence) was quite foreign to Russian thought. Happy Russia!

GUSTAVE BUSCHER.

THE WORK IN PHILADELPHIA.

Since the close in April of the Sunday evening meetings, open air meetings have been developed gradually until at this time they are held every night at the City Hall Plaza. Rain has interfered with many of these meetings, but they are steadily gaining in attendance and interest. Post cards

are distributed through the audiences which are bringing in from 25 to 30 applications a week for literature, which is furnished free of charge.

The Economic Lecture Bureau which was established here last winter with Harold Sudell as manager, succeeded in getting eighty-five lecture engagements for its lecturer, Frank Stephens, who never fails to interest and instruct his audiences. He has, in heaped and overflowing measure, all the qualifications of a brilliant speaker and is thoroughly earnest and a master of his subject.

A wide variety of audiences have been reached, churches, schools, university classes, young men's Christian associations, as well as a number of bodies who deal regularly with social questions.

The Bureau is very much encouraged over the result of its work in this new field.

W. L. ROSS.

COMMUNICATIONS.

IS THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE MOVEMENT SATISFACTORY?

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

One could not fail to be struck by the glowing appeal for love—the love that suffereth long and is kind—which is made by Mr. Gustav Büscher in your April issue.

Any movement must be founded in love else it must fail. Human love and sympathy always attracts unto itself the quiet unassuming forces that ultimately lead to victory. History is replete with instances. The revolution of 1776 and the anti-slavery agitation in this country had their beginnings in the breasts of unselfish men whose hearts went out in sympathy to their fellows. The faith of Jesus has been kept alive and spread to the ends of the earth because of His message of brotherhood and love.

Contrary to Mr. Büscher, I believe that our movement is gaining and must win because it is founded on the same firm foundation. Henry George applied the principle of human brotherhood, not alone to the relation of individual with individual, but he pointed out that it must also govern men in all their social and collective relations. It was George who said: "That we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us—that we should respect the rights of others as scrupulously as we would have our rights respected—is not a mere counsel of perfection to individuals—but it is the law to which we must conform social institutions and national policy—if we would secure the blessings of abundance and peace." To my mind Single Tax men and women are imbued with this love. The acceptance of our philosophy makes of them altars upon which a vestal fire seems ever to burn.

Our distinguished friend is right in point-

ing out that the apparent success of Socialism is due to the fact that it also is founded on human sympathy. Therein lies its danger. Socialism in its final analysis is economically unsound, and must ultimately become the antithesis of democracy, yet from the fact that it is taught with such fiery zeal and such unselfish devotion to the cause of the oppressed—because it awakens a class consciousness among the world's disinherited, and bears to them the message that they can secure their portion of the fulness of the earth—it must gain friends and supporters on every hand. It behooves us the more to accept Mr. Büscher's warning and reveal that vestal fire of love and sympathy with those whom the world has wronged, which is the real test of any philosophy.

I do not think our progress has been slow. How long, from the time of Martin Luther to the last act of the great Inquisition, was the world struggling to gain religious freedom? How many lives were lost, and what untold misery did our ancestors suffer that we might serve God as our conscience dictates? Because the progress was slow did our fathers falter? Did they not struggle on for centuries against the most bitter and vindictive opposition until at last the cause was won?

When the idea of political freedom found lodgment in the hearts of men the same bitter strife arose. The Russian mujik whose house is being burned by Cossack supporters of tyranny to-day, is still fighting in this cause. Because the way is long and the progress slow does not deter him, nor did it deter our fathers. Victory was assured though it required centuries of suffering to achieve it.

A little more than 25 years ago a prophet stood forth to declare that while we had secured religious and political freedom, yet were we enslaved because we did not possess the greatest of them all, industrial freedom—the right of access to our first great inheritance. He pointed out the way it could be secured. Of that way Mr. Büscher says: "The principles of our cause are so simple as to be intelligible to every child of sound understanding." Simple though it be, and easy of application, the great world of vested wrong attacked it with all its might and vigor. By insinuation and innuendo they attempted to becloud it and beat it down. Although it was the most fundamental reform the world has known, yet in this short time it has spread to all corners of the earth. It is being partially applied in several countries—Manitoba, New Zealand, Scotland, Australia and many of the American States—the great nation of England is demanding it in a modified form at once—writers, thinkers, speakers, great souled and unselfish men, are spreading its gospel of human brotherhood abroad. It is Truth, and it is winning the battle over Evil more quickly than that battle has ever before been won.

E. G. LE STOURGEON.