

prevalence in the United Kingdom was the greatest danger ahead of it. In these young countries the tendency to build up large holdings was naturally fostered by what was the earliest of our industries. Sheepfarming is not greatly pursued in the United States or Canada, because of the rigorous winter — but Australia is the favourite home of the merino sheep. Originally there was no need to buy land, or even to pay rent to the Government for it; the land had no value till settlement gave it. The squatter leased it on easy terms, and bought it only when it had sufficient value to be desired by agriculturists or by selectors who posed as agriculturists. When he bought it he generally complained of the price these selectors compelled him to pay, but it was then secure; and, with the growth of population and the railroads and other improvements, these enforced purchasers, even in 1877, had built up vast estates in single hands in every State in Australia. In **The Melbourne Review** for April, 1877, Professor Pearson sketched a plan of land taxation, which was afterwards carried out, in which the area of land held was the test for graduated taxation. Henry George had not then declared his gospel; and, although I felt that there was something very faulty in the scheme, I did not declare in my article on the subject that an acre in Collins street might be of more value than 50,000 acres of pastoral land 500 miles from the seaboard, and was therefore more fitly liable to taxation for the advantage of the whole community, who had given to that acre this exceptional value. I did not declare it because I did not believe it. But I thought that the end aimed at — the breaking up of large estates — could be better and more safely effected, though not so quickly, by a change in the incidence of succession duties.

Some time after I saw a single copy of Henry George's "**Progress and Poverty**" on Robertson's shelves, and bought it, and it was I who after reading this book opened in the three most important Australian colonies the question of the taxation of land values. An article I wrote went into **The Register**, and Mr. Liston, of Kapunda, read it, and spoke of it at a farmers' meeting. I had then a commission from **The Sydney Morning Herald** to write on any important subject, and I wrote on this. It appeared, like a previous article on Howell's "**Conflicts of Capital and Labour**," as an unsigned article. A new review, **The Victorian**, had been started by Mortimer Franlyn, which paid contributors; and, now that I was a professional journalist, I thought myself entitled to ask remuneration. I sent to the new periodical, published in Melbourne, a fuller treatment of the book than had been given to the two newspapers, under the title of "**A Californian Political Economist**." This fell into the hands of Henry George himself, in a reading room in San Francisco, and he wrote an

acknowledgment of it to me. In South Australia the first tax on unimproved land values was imposed. It was small — only a halfpenny in the pound, but without any exemption; and its imposition was encouraged by the fact that we had had bad seasons and a falling revenue. The income tax in England was originally a war tax, and they say that if there is not a war the United States will never be able to impose an income tax. The separate States have not the power to impose such a tax. Henry George said to me in his home in New York:—"I wonder at you, with your zeal and enthusiasm, and your power of speaking, devoting yourself to such a small matter as proportional representation, when you see the great land question before you." I replied that to me it was not a small matter. I cannot, however, write my autobiography without giving prominence to the fact that I was the pioneer in Australia in this as in the other matter of proportional representation.