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HAS HENRY GEORGE CONVERTED JAPAN?

MR. TENTEARO MAKATO, a Japanese gentleman sent to investigate political economy in Europe and America, published his report in the earlier part of this year, and an English translation of his work has recently appeared. It has set many men to thinking, for it shows that Henry George has made headway among that most marvelously regenerated of all aristocracies—the Japanese. The *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, a paper noteworthy for the liberality with which it opens its columns to discussions on economic questions, expresses itself as follows on the subject:

"Commissioner Makato's work was prompted by Mr. Neesima, the then Minister of Education at Tokyo, who, through the Foreign Office, wrote to the Japanese Minister in Washington, shortly after the Chino-Japanese war, that in Japan the effect of labor-saving machinery, steam-engines, and great factories had not tended to reduce the hours of labor or to relieve women and children from excessive work. Mr. Neesima had fondly hoped that these wealth-producing devices would tend toward leisure and opportunity for culture, and that his schools would shortly contain all the children in the land. Yet in Yokohama, Tokyo, Osaka, and throughout Dai Nippon the effect seems to have been the very reverse, and the workingman's lot has become not easier but harder. The cost of living has become greater, and life more anxious. The commissioner was, therefore, ordered by the Mikado's Government to make inquiries 'in those places where these wonderful machines are most used, as to their social effects; learn what methods, if any, have been adopted to cause them to bring that comfort and leisure to the masses for which they were evidently devised."

"It is to be noted that the Japanese Government directed this inquiry to be made in that country where, above all others, laborsaving machinery is most used, and is employed to the best advantage. Not in England, Germany, or France was this inquiry to be conducted, but in the democratic republic of the United States. The first commissioner, Mr. Teremoto, of the Japanese Legation at Washington, according to his instructions, abjured 'the civilities of the rich' in order to spend his time among, and learn something about, the poor. His former perceptions he soon found to be illusory. The better dress, houses, furniture, more varied food of these people, he was surprised to find, were accompanied by more tension, more anxiety, and less happiness than among the same classes in Japan. Wages seemed to be no more than a bare living, tho at a much higher standard than in Japan. To improve these conditions labor unions had been formed, but were commonly

defeated by the men and women out of work and struggling to get employment. . . . Even in Japan, he thought, the contrasts were less serious, and between rich and poor the gulf was narrowing. . . . But after about a year, he made his report to his chief, explaining that he felt himself incompetent, and suggesting as commissioner Mr. Tentearo Makato, who had graduated at Yale, after a course of study at Columbia. . . . Like Teremoto, Makato found enlightenment in Henry George, whose 'Progress and Poverty ' carried him away. Henry George the commissioner believes to be 'the freest thinker the world has known, and his book the most important ever given by man to men.' The abolition of private property in land—land nationalization—is the Socialistic doctrine which the commissioner recommends for the salvation of his native country. Ominously we learn that Henry George's four principal works are already rendered into the Japanese tongue. Here then is a pretty development if the masses of Japan (and, through them, of China) are to be become imbued with the teachings of Henry George. It was a consummation totally unforeseen by the author of 'Progress and Poverty.'"