

formed on November 16, 1911, with Dr. Ed. Lauterburg of Thun as President and F. Trefzer as Vice-President. In an address to the young Liberals of Bern a few nights previously, Dr. Lauterburg had named "as one of the real causes of the high cost of living" "the rise in the value of land, and private speculation therein," and had announced as remedy the progressive land tax. From this land tax he foresees the following results:

(1.) The large landowners would be induced to give up their surplus land.

(2.) The landless could more easily obtain land; upon the cheaper land cheaper products could be grown and cheaper and better dwellings be built.

(3.) Interest on mortgages would be lower.

(4.) The capital hitherto tied up in land would be offered to industry on cheaper terms.

(5.) Consequently the employers could raise wages and would be obliged to do so, else the laborer would work with home machinery on his own land or would cultivate his own land.

(6.) Following upon the increased land taxes, the taxes on incomes—which burden industry and especially one class of citizens, the wage-earners—could be diminished and at last abolished. The man who owned no land, or only a little, or mortgaged, land, need pay little or no taxes.

(7.) Purchasing power would increase, and this would work advantage to husbandry, trade and commerce.

The new Association for Tax Reform asserts as its working principle that "every man has the same right to the use of the earth's surface, the source of all material good," and "seeks to realize this right by bringing about legislation which shall withdraw the land—originally the property of all the people—from private speculation and make it again accessible to the whole people." It therefore demands that "ground rent, the unearned income from land monopoly, shall be appropriated no longer by private individuals but by the community and the state." The Association therefore asks, first, a valuation of all Swiss land at its true market price exclusive of improvements, and second, the gradually increasing taxation of ground rent along with abolition of the taxes on the products of labor.



#### Persia Being Assimilated.

The province of Azerbaijan in the northwest of Persia, bordering on Turkish territory, is rapidly passing into the occupation of Russian troops, according to dispatches of the 19th. A Russian court martial at Tabriz has been busy sentencing Persian Constitutionals to death or exile. Several Constitutionals have been sent from Resht to the Russian penal colonies in Siberia. Andrasian, the principal Persian Armenian in Tabriz, has been hanged on the charge of complicity in the recent fighting. Appeals from the Armenian archbishop of Ispahan and from various influential bodies against this execution, have been ignored.

The late American Treasurer-General of Persia, W. Morgan Shuster, made a statement at Vienna on the 20th, while on his way from Teheran to Paris, in which he declared:

The net result of the British and Russian action in Persia renders a nation which was making progress toward peace and order and was building up its finances for the establishment of a constitutional government, a land of chaos and anarchy, without prestige among its own people, and, in addition, has meant the sacrifice of hundreds of innocent lives. . . .

The Russian and British legations are the real governing forces in Persia. They are acting through a directory of seven Persians in order to avoid international responsibility, but morally they are responsible for the destruction of Persian nationality, when it gave promise of establishing a stable constitutional government.

The seven men who nominally are governing Persia are without character or reputation. They do not command the slightest respect of their countrymen and would not exist a day without the protection of the Russian and British legations.

Russian forces and influences are steadily advancing southward and unless there is a break in the present trend of events the realization of Russia's dream of a warm water port is a matter of only a few years. Great Britain will then be confronted with a living Russo-Indian frontier problem. . . .

The most regrettable feature of Persia's dismemberment is the fact that it might have been entirely prevented had Great Britain frankly objected, at the beginning, to Russia's flagrant violation of the Anglo-Russian agreement, commencing with her claim last summer of the right to veto appointments of Persian officials, and culminating in the dispatch of her army into Persia on the false pretext that a Persian official had printed a pamphlet criticising Russia's previous actions in Persia.



#### China.

The expected abdication of the little Emperor, an edict for which was said to be all ready for promulgation on the 17th, has not come off—the more warlike of the Manchu princes having prevailed in the Imperial councils. In the expectation of an abdication the following circular appeal for recognition was sent out on the 19th by the provisional Republican government at Nanking, to the governments at Washington, Tokio, London, Paris, Berlin and St. Petersburg:

The Manchu government having entered into negotiations with the Republic of China for the purpose of abdicating its entire sovereign rights, powers and privileges, we fervently pray for recognition in order to avoid a disastrous interregnum.

WANG CHUNG WEI.

Foreign Minister.

On the same day the following demands were telegraphed by the Republican government to the Imperial Premier, Yuan Shi Kai, at Peking:

1. The abdication of the throne and the surrender of the sovereign powers are demanded.