

## Vancouver

NUMEROUS press reports having reached us that the City of Vancouver had reverted to the old regime of taxing improvements and business in order to supplement a diminishing revenue from its Single Tax on Land Values, we referred the reports to a trusted correspondent who resides in that city. From his reply, dated the 5th of May, we extract the following reliable data:

"The news of Vancouver's deciding to go back to the taxation of improvements did not reach you quite accurately. The proposal is still in abeyance.

"The situation is, that the present *method* of taxing site values does not provide enough revenue to meet the expenditure, though that has been considerably cut down. To meet the deficit, several aldermen advocated taxing improvements. Another (Ald. Kirk) proposed a business tax, to be levied on different classes of trade in varying proportions, according to their estimated ability to bear it, *and* in proportion to rental. This was adopted by the City Council; but the necessary charter amendment embodying it was vetoed by the legislature a few days ago, largely (I am glad to say) owing to the timely efforts of the Retail Grocers' Association. So the matter is again in the melting pot."

Our correspondent adds the following interesting information:

"The municipal franchise in Vancouver is at the root of the present reactionary tendency of the City Fathers. As a *tenant* of property of the capital value of \$300 or over, I am entitled to vote at city elections for mayor, alderman and school trustees; also to vote on by-laws that have no direct bearing on the raising of revenue or its expenditure.

"If I were an *owner* of any real estate, however trifling in value, I should be entitled to the complete franchise and wise enough to effectively criticize City Hall peccadillos."

Under the above circumstances, it is easy to understand how disfranchised public opinion is handicapped in its fight to maintain fair play in the city's taxation and to defeat attempts of the land speculators to foist the burden on the business and industrial sections of the community. It is also easy to understand how the Provincial government, elected on a broad franchise, have been induced to intervene on behalf of the general interests of the city.

The action of the Retail Grocers' Association is a further demonstration of the determination of the business community to resist a return to the old regime; and the business opinion undoubtedly is that of the mass of the population.

THE Retail Grocers' Association of Vancouver defended the Single Tax and defeated the attempt to revert to the taxation of improvements. When are we to see a similar line-up of business associations in this country in support of sane and equitable taxation methods?

## Single Tax Party Club Dinner

ONE of the interesting monthly dinners of the Single Tax Party Club of this city was that of March 27 at the Cafe Chevalier in this city. Mr. A. Bastida was toastmaster and among the speakers were Count Ilya Tolstoy, Wm. J. Wallace, Frank Chodorov, J. R. Hermann, Miss Grace Colbron, N. C. B. Fowles and Joseph Dana Miller.

Count Tolstoy, whose address is commented upon elsewhere by Mr. E. Yancey Cohen, said that the land question was the only question that made the Russian revolution possible, and the only solution of that question was the one proposed by Henry George.

Mr. Hermann's appeal for California was simple and eloquent.

## Our Washington Letter

### THE BLIGHT OF LAND MONOPOLY

A FEW years ago Washington, from Capitol Hill, presented a beautiful picture. In every direction was a sea of fragrant green, and through the foliage one could get a glimpse of homes and gardens, while here and there arose in noble outlines the marble facade of government workshops. There was no smoke, nor dust; no noisy factories, and the sky seemed always blue. To the West could be seen the shafts to our hero dead, glistening on the slopes of Arlington. But now the picture is spoiled. Some rude hand has left its blot on the exquisite canvas. Parks have been denuded of trees that were a hundred years old, and acres and acres of flower beds have been trampled under the feet of the workmen. Dominating the landscape now in every direction are the drab-colored war buildings of Uncle Sam. Of course, these buildings had to be erected. Art and sentiment must step aside until the present grim work is over. This war must be won regardless of sacrifices. But the destruction of these beauty spots in the National Capital would not have been necessary but for the greed of the land monopolist. Millions of men have offered themselves to fight for their country's honor. Millions more have gladly lent to their government every cent they had saved. But when the nation needs a few feet of land upon which to perform its necessary work, it is forced to pay millions for the privilege, or tear down the artistic development of generations.

The nation did buy some land. It did not buy any more. These words of Senator McCumber will explain why. They were talking in the Senate about the site of the Arlington Hotel, purchased by the government for an addition to the Treasury.

"This site was sold a few years ago under a foreclosure mortgage for \$400,000, and I cannot see now how there can be \$4,200,000 in the present deal."

Isn't this a vivid illustration of how even the most