

Where the Single Tax is Being Tried.

Readers of the TRIBUNE will remember seeing articles in these columns at different times relating to the town of Hyattsville, Md., where the single tax was put in actual operation some time ago by the commissioners of the town. Owing to a state law it was not possible to give the theory a full and free test, as the state and county still continue to collect their taxes on real estate, personal property, etc., but the taxes for the town treasury are raised solely by a tax on the value of the land in the town.

Handicapped, as they are, by the state law, our readers can see in the following letter that the commissioners are still on top in the fight against the system, and that the town is progressing in an unprecedented manner. The benefits that are being derived by the community from this partial operation of the single tax are so plain that it is not likely any change will be made, although the opponents of the single tax, the men who are holding vacant land for speculative purposes, are fighting it through the courts. The following, from one of the commissioners, will be of interest to the many single taxers in this vicinity:

HYATTSVILLE, MD., January 2, 1893.  
EDITOR TRIBUNE.—The troubles of the Hyattsville anti-single taxers are without end. Every move they make against the town commissioners goes wrong. This time their trouble arises from the incompetence of their lawyers who are conducting the suit in courts. It will be remembered that a few months ago Judge Brooke dismissed the petition for writs of mandamus against the commissioners on the ground that they were acting within their powers.

The petitioners then carried the case to the court of appeals at Annapolis, but instead of waiting for a formal order signed by Judge Brooke, they took an appeal merely from the judge's opinion. When it was too late the blunder was discovered.

But they were equal to the occasion, and with unabashed audacity Marion Duckett, one of the attorneys, called on one of the commissioners and asked for his consent to have the error corrected so that the case could come up at once. He gravely and politely refused to take any action whatever in the matter, but on being pressed again told Mr. Duckett that if he would make his request in writing it would be laid before the board of commissioners.

The request was made in writing and was laid before the board which passed a resolution stating that inasmuch as the board of commissioners of Hyattsville have by the action of said relators been made the defendant in a litigation upon a matter of policy properly determinable only by the voters of said town or their representatives; we, the said board of commissioners do not feel that our duty to said town or to ourselves demands that we assist said relators or their counsel in the conduct of said case.

Being refused a chance of correcting their blunder, the anti-single tax lawyers entered an order dismissing their appeal in anticipation of the certainty of its being dismissed by the court if it had been allowed to remain. Had everything been regular the case would have come up for argument last November. It will now have to go over to the first week in February, and there are not wanting signs that it will be abandoned in disgust.

Meanwhile Hyattsville is enjoying an unprecedented prosperity. Since the operation of the single tax there has been double the amount of building than there was during any previous year for a like period. Dr. Well himself, the head and front of the anti-single tax movement, has started to build another block of houses, in face of his hot declaration a few months ago that the single tax would destroy building and drive everybody out of Hyattsville.

The commissioners do not attribute the increased prosperity much to the actual lightening of the tax burden in dollars and cents on builders, since after all the single tax here is only applied for town purposes and is very light, being limited by statute to 25 cents in \$100. The result is due more particularly to the public feeling that has been engendered that the Hyattsville commissioners are doing all they can to foster and protect buildings and improvements, and the great amount of publicity that has been given the matter in the press elsewhere, and particularly in Washington.

When the "padrone" has not the Hebrew contractor seized by subtlety the "finishing" of smaller garments to dwellers in Italian tenements, adding further tone and contrast to an already squalid condition of misery. And now the Chinaman has been drawn in. You will find a little sweaters' shop where he slaves and spins up among the lofts of Doyers street, an entering wedge for a score of others to tame the elusive spirit of the almond-eyed oriental into the unrepenting submissiveness of the Hebrew.

"Since the passage of the anti-sweater law," said my guide, himself a Russian cloakmaker and labor leader as we started out one morning to explore Jewtown, "since the passage of the anti-sweater law the large contractors have been driven out of the tenements, and these cloakmakers who work in factories are tolerably well off as to hours, sanitation, etc., though the pay is miserable. But you'll find scores and hundreds of the smaller sweat shops existing all over the east side in open defiance of law."

"The operators often work from 6 in the morning until 9 or 10 at night. There is no air or stoppage for meals, and little girls not yet in their teens take a hand at the benches with the older ones. These shops are in out of the way places, rear tenements or lofts on the top floor of some six story building, and they manage to evade the inspectors. There nearly all the garments requiring 'finishing' are sent by contractors directly to the houses of families, where husband, wife and children toil ceaselessly under worse conditions if anything than the sweaters'."

We entered one of the narrow alleys which pierce the frowning tenement line of Suffolk street, and came out in a wretched "court," hedged in by towering masses of brick on either hand. "Hush," said my companion, laying a warning finger on my arm as I began speaking. "Do you hear that?" He was looking up with intent ears at the smoke begrimed windows of the rear building. From above came low but distinct the peculiar whizzing and whining sound of a dozen sewing machines.

"Come on." We climbed five flights of stairs and passed through the hallways of almost Tartarean darkness, where one had to grope and feel his way like an explorer of the Mammoth cave. At the fifth landing the guide knocked at a closed door. It was opened, and he strode in. The room had but two windows, and we counted sixteen workmen at the bench or on the machine. They were of the black, scraggly bearded Russian type, and they worked on stolidly after one look at the visitors.

How Men, Women and Children "Stitch, Stitch, Stitch in Poverty, Hunger and Debt" That Ready Made Clothing May Be Sold Cheap at a Profit.

Has it ever struck you that there are more bankruptcies, failures, losses by fire and water and forced sales at a sacrifice in the clothing trade right here in New York than in any other half dozen lines of business you might name? Not a day passes but one meets some starting fellow sign announcing that a clothing house has gone bankrupt, and that the whole stock will be sold out for a song—one-half or a third or a quarter of its former cost.

I used to feel sorry for those poor, unfortunate manufacturers, but I don't now. I visited last week the quarters where "bankrupt clothing" was made, and somehow I lost faith in the glib clothing dealer's veracity. There are sacrifice and sorrow and bitter disappointment enough in the clothing trade, but it isn't the Broadway "assignee" or the bourgeois mother picking from his shelves the \$1.47 and \$2.69 children's suits that feel these. Up in the dark, foul rookeries which line Hester and Essex and Suffolk streets and other tenement thoroughfares toil the wretched creatures who make cheap clothing possible, and their sufferings are the ones translated into the black letter appeals and ruinous prices of the huge yellow signboards.

Not always do we know who our real benefactors are, and doubtless few members of the great middle class in New York have ever stopped to think what midnight and early morning toil, what hoarding of scanty wages to make ends meet, what lurches of black bread over sewing machines, what stretches of confinement for sixteen and eighteen hours in foul air amid nasty surroundings has put good clothing on their backs, with plentiful margins of spending money left for other expenditures. Forty thousand men, women and children over on the east side make the wearing apparel of all but the sweller classes of New York.

People ask, "What becomes of the seventy-three thousand and odd Russians who land on our shores in a single year—the record for 1891? One could answer that the true dumping ground of the Russian immigrant is the crowded district east of the Bowery, where a third of a million human beings swarm in a square mile and the making of cloaks and clothes constantly goes on. And should you make a tour of that region I am sure you will convince yourself that thousands upon thousands of Slavic Jews have but exchanged the white czar's tyranny for economic servitude in this land of political freedom.

Americans are anxious to know how those isolated masses live. Glimpses of light are shed now and again upon the Jewish quarters when an organized revolt in the shape of a strike against the clothing's methods spreads on the east side or some newspaper starts a crusade in behalf of the sweaters' victims. It is only by personally mixing with the toilers of Jewry and through the patient collection of details regarding their habits and manner of life that one gains any clear idea of the industrial machinery of the east side.

One has not long to be on such an investigation before he discovers that the Jewish race is not the only ground to powder in the mill of the clothing industry. The Italian "padrone" imports his countrymen like cattle across the sea to set them at work on whining machines as well as the hand processes of clothing manufacture at wages, if such a thing be possible, less than even the shameful pittance doled out to the Russian immigrant.

Whom the "padrone" has not the Hebrew contractor seized by subtlety the "finishing" of smaller garments to dwellers in Italian tenements, adding further tone and contrast to an already squalid condition of misery. And now the Chinaman has been drawn in. You will find a little sweaters' shop where he slaves and spins up among the lofts of Doyers street, an entering wedge for a score of others to tame the elusive spirit of the almond-eyed oriental into the unrepenting submissiveness of the Hebrew.

When a new family comes to this town we rejoice. When a new house is erected we are glad. We feel that there has come among us the possibility of further beauty and development. There is no beauty in a vacant lot. There is no progress in the absence of population. We live in the hope of seeing our town grow larger, and that with such growth we will obtain facilities of which we are now in a measure deprived, and besides, we want a larger and better market for our labor.

Until the coming into office of the present board of commissioners, what were we doing to obtain that growth of population and improvement which we all think desirable? Our country taxed every new-comer who might establish a home for himself and family 80 cents annually on the \$100 for our benefit and his own advantage. The state added to this another 25 cents, and the town was expected to add a further yearly punishment of 25 cents.

For the privilege of doing good to us all, for employing our carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, tinners and day laborers, for establishing that home for himself and family, which we think every man ought to have, we yearly were expected to take away from the men doing these things \$1.25 per \$100, and to keep on taking it away until the end of time. And we call ourselves reasoning human beings, and this is the end of the nineteenth century!

But a majority of the town commissioners, conceiving that if we wanted progress and development, the best way to obtain it was not to tax it, have remitted the tax on improvements, thereby somewhat diminishing the amount our present and future home-builders will have to pay.

The experience of many cities and nations indicates that the action of the commissioners was right. In Baltimore the manufacturer's plant is exempt from taxation of every sort, and no less an authority than Senator Gorman has attributed the great development of that city in manufacturing within the last ten years to this cause.

In other countries the removal of window and hearthstone taxes has resulted in improving forms of architecture and the making of new windows and hearthstones. Similarly the complete application of the single tax theory would result in the making of more and better houses, and adding greatly to the creature comfort of our people. JACKSON H. HAINSTON.

passed through the hallways of almost Tartarean darkness, where one had to grope and feel his way like an explorer of the Mammoth cave. At the fifth landing the guide knocked at a closed door. It was opened, and he strode in. The room had but two windows, and we counted sixteen workmen at the bench or on the machine. They were of the black, scraggly bearded Russian type, and they worked on stolidly after one look at the visitors.

The "boss" came forward with that apologetic air which Russian Hebrews have and asked our business. The spokesman of the party said we had come to inspect the shop and gave him notice he was violating the factory law. The man was ready with the excuse that the inspector had given him a permit, but the paper hadn't come yet, and the gentlemen must excuse him if they did not see it on his walls. We knew the man led.

The machine operators were on men's trousers. Their task was to make up the entire garment from the cutter's hand, and for which they got the meagre pay of seven cents for each pair of trousers. How long did it take? Well, they could not tell exactly, was the answer. Half an hour if you were an unusually quick and expert operator, an hour if you were slow. They were fortunate when they earned nine or ten dollars a week. And the work—that is, steady work—only lasted four or five months, October and November up to a few weeks of Christmas time in the fall, and April, May and sometimes part of March in the spring.

The "boss" said the hours were from 7 to 7. The others were silent. There was no leaving the room for meals. Each brought out his paper of sour rye bread and stale meat, with perhaps a piece of scrawny chicken from the pig market in Hester street as a luxury, and munched the food during fifteen minutes' nooning at his table. Learners of the trade got next to nothing for their services.

At another shop of the same sort the "boss" was out, and we found the employees more talkative. Among the number was a young Russian woman but twenty years old and working twelve hours a day. The law makes it a crime to employ women under twenty-one more than ten hours daily. She was "learning," and it was left to the "boss" what pay he should give her.

The operators complained chiefly of the lack of work in the off months, by means of which the sweaters had the men completely at their mercy. Though semitwilight prevailed here all day, no gas was lit in the shop, and the sore eyes of several of the workmen told us of the strain. The air was foul—no 400 cubic feet of air space for each person, as prescribed. It seemed doubtful if there were 200.

"Have you noticed there are no tailors on the east side now?" said my cloak-maker friend when we passed out of one of these places. "They are all operators or pressers or finishers or button-hole makers, and each person has just one thing to do on a garment, which is very simple and easily learned. Formerly a tailor needed considerable skill, and his services were in great demand. As it is at present, anybody can sew a buttonhole or follow the cutter's directions on the sewing machine, and the clothing maker is compelled to submit to every exaction, because he knows a hundred others are ready to step into his place. The only persons who receive good wages in the New York clothing trade are the cutters, who, if they are expert, average twenty to twenty-five dollars a week."

I was curious to find out what portion of the total selling price of clothing went to the man who made it. In a Russian shop in Pell street, right in the heart of Chinatown, where a boss and six employees were engaged on sack coats and overcoats, they gave me a sample schedule of prices. I was shown a coat that would retail perhaps at \$12, to be forced down to \$10 or \$8, if the market was dull. The man who put this heavy, substantial garment together received 14 cents, the baster 12, the finisher 10, the ironer 8 1/2 and the button-maker 7—a total of 51 1/2 cents—somewhere near 5 per cent. of its market value. Small wonder that clothing dealers can sell their stock on occasions for one-half or one-third of the price advertised, and that at a handsome profit.

It can always be said of the industry of the Russian Jew that he works himself as hard as if not harder than his sweaters which are set over him. Leave the tenement house shops which covertly defy the law and enter one of the little living rooms one can step into from every hallway in Essex and Suffolk streets. Save the five deepest hours of the night, there is no time in the twenty-four when you won't find the whole family up and sewing for bread. We unearthed a family of three—two brothers, with the wife of one of them—who inhabited an 8 by 10 "countroom" and toiled, the brothers at least, from 6 to midnight.

Winter and summer that room was at furnace temperature with the roaring fire they kept for heating irons. They were pressers of "knee pants" at seven cents a dozen. Each man by means of this grinding slavery earned about six dollars a week, and out of that they paid for that red hot stove, eighteen hours in the twenty-four, and the room rent, which was five dollars a month. They carried the knickerbockers back and forth. In a few years these fellows will have achieved what they regard as independence.

A pitiful sight in the clothing district was that of Sarah Zusman, a gentle and mild faced young Jewish, with four mites of children dependent upon her and no means of keeping the wolf from the door, but working on those miserable boys' knickerbockers at seven cents a dozen. We saw her in a bare and cheerless room on the top floor of 20 Suffolk street, the furniture and everything salable gone to the pawnbrokers, and the wan faced little ones gathered about her. Her husband, Barnard, lay in the Moses Montefiore hospital, an incurable consumptive. He toiled, too, at boys' "knee pants" for the support of his family till the vitiated air and the confinement broke him down and marked him for the grave. It seemed a cruel mockery that the young mother worked, worked, worked with the strength of despair to clothe other boys while her own children went in rags and tatters.

Louis, the grave eyed baby of eight-months, dropped a broken bread crust of Russian rye—hard ration for a baby to munch on—when we entered and gazed with wonder. The ladder was empty, and the woman could do but a part of her usual work, as within a short time she was to become a mother. It took her three hours to finish a dozen garments. Only the friendship of their poor neighbors, who collect scraps of bread and give them to the family, keeps them alive.—New York Herald.

WOMEN'S WORK.

If They Were Compelled to Substist Upon Their Wages They Would Starve.

The relation of women's work to the general problem of poverty must also be well studied. The worst paid work is always women's work. And it is easy to see how the labor of women often tends directly to the depression of general wages. The wife or the daughter of the breadwinner frequently works for less than would sustain life.

The main dependence is the wage of the husband and father; what is earned by the women merely adds something to the sum of comfort. It is out of his earnings that they derive the strength which they expend for the benefit of their employer. If they were compelled to substist on what their employer pays them they would starve. A vast amount of the labor of women is thus given for wages that will not sustain life. The vital energies by which this labor is performed are supplied from other sources.

Many poor widows and deserted wives who sew all day and most of the night for less than enough to feed themselves and their children are kept from starving by the alms of some church or charitable association, or perhaps by the assistance of the overseer of the poor. Now it is evident that this kind of labor tends to poverty. Because there are so many who can work for less than enough to support life those employers who recognize no law but competition are ready to reduce wages to this standard.

Although, as we have seen, it is bad economy for the employer to pay less than will fairly support life if his laborers are compelled to substist upon the wages which he pays them, yet it may be good economy, from his point of view, to pay them this inadequate wage if he can depend on somebody else to supplement it, and can thus consume the labor force which somebody else daily replenishes. This is one of many ways in which the strong thrive at the expense of the weak.

Not only women's work but much of the labor of young men and boys is exploited after this fashion. Great firms and corporations employ young men at salaries far below the cost of their maintenance because they can get them at that figure. The young men are living at home, and their fathers and mothers, many of whom are themselves poor, are made to contribute to the growing wealth of the great firms or companies by boarding and clothing their employees.

The excuse for this is that the young men are receiving instruction. That is a good reason why they should not receive the full wages of trained hands, but it is not a good reason why they should not receive enough to support life, for they are not only receiving instruction, they are performing labor, in many cases very severe and exhausting labor, and the labor of a full grown, able bodied young man or woman ought to suffice for maintenance.—Washington Gladden in Century.

Trades Unions and Politics.

We believe the trades unions will broaden as their members become more enlightened, and that they will be found at the proper time to be the most powerful organizations for political purposes, but until such time as tailors, carpenters, etc., are ready to stand as one man in their unions to secure better prices for their labor it appears to many thoughtful trades unionists folly to try to get them to act untiedly on political principles, of which many men have no conception. The trades unions propose to secure full justice and freedom for the workers by doing "first things first."—General Secretary John B. Lennon, of the Journeymen Tailors' Union.

Knights on Militia.

At the recent session of the general assembly of the Knights of Labor the following was adopted:

Resolved, That we favor the dissemination of a patriotic military sentiment, and a return to the popular form of maintaining the militia in vogue prior to 1890—namely, allowing the state militia to elect its own officers, and the rank and file to hold their arms, and we discountenance centralizing the military power in every way, object to the expenditure of vast sums of the people's money in building useless armories, and endorse the popular system in vogue in Switzerland.

No Mistake in This.

Speaking of "the association of workmen to carry on their own industrial enterprises," Plank and Platform observes that it "has long been recognized as presenting in the abstract an ideal solution of the labor problem. Where the workmen are by their own employees there can be no disputes about wages; where they operate by their own capital the common interest of capital and labor is beyond question."

Imperative Mandate.

The social Democrats of Germany favor compelling the leaders who sit in the imperial diet to resign their seats every two years, in order to take the opinion of their constituents upon their actions as legislators.

The cigar makers must make up their mind before Jan. 8 if they want the forty acres at Colorado City donated by Anthony Bott for a national home. The union talks of spending \$40,000 on the home.

POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

FOR CONSTABLE—  
CHARLES SAULT,  
of Five Points.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR SUPERVISOR—  
MATTHEW DENNION,  
of Five Points.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR SUPERVISOR—  
CONDY McLAUGHLIN,  
of Five Points.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR SUPERVISOR—  
JOHN METZGER,  
of East Foster.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR SUPERVISOR—  
JOHN O'DONNELL,  
of Eckley.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR SUPERVISOR—  
JAMES WILSON,  
of South Hoberton.

Subject to the decision of the Republican nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR TAX COLLECTOR—  
CONRAD BREHM,  
of Upper Lehigh.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR TAX COLLECTOR—  
PAT'K J. GALLAGHER,  
of Highland.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

FOR TREASURER—  
DANIEL BONNER,  
of Five Points.

Subject to the decision of the Democratic nominating convention of Foster township.

Thousands of Singing Birds.

When the North German Lloyd steamer Herrmann unloaded on Saturday twenty large bundles shrouded in white cloth were carefully lifted from the hold and placed on the dock. From each bundle came a chorus of angry twitterings and chirpings and much fluttering of wings. The bundles were loaded on a truck and were taken to the store of a bird fancier in William street. There they were unloaded and the cloths removed. Each bundle contained 252 little wooden bird cages, each with a canary bird in it. Immediately every one of the 5,940 birds stretched his little yellow throat in an effort to outsing his neighbor. They caroled and trilled as merrily as if they were looking out on green Heath and a blue sky instead of a muddy highway half obscured by a drive of wet snow.

Three men undertook the task of giving the birds grain and water, and the operation consumed the major part of a day.

The canaries are of three grades—the \$2.50 birds, the \$5 birds, and the \$10 birds. The ordinary birds are worth \$2.50. A large fine bird, or one of particularly handsome coloring, brings twice that price, while a distinguished vocalist will bring \$10. All the birds are males and singers. They come from Germany, where they are bred in large numbers. It is probable that all of the 5,900 birds will be sold within a few weeks. This is the busy time in the canary market, and within the past week more than 10,000 of these birds have arrived classed as live stock.—New York Sun.

A Kangaroo Boxer.

An exhibition of boxing of an unusual character has been secured by the management of the Royal aquarium. Professor Landerman, an Australian pugilist, will box a Kangaroo seven feet high. It is said that the kangaroo boxes scientifically and hits harder than the ordinary pugilist. The exhibition appears to have been given in Melbourne and Sydney—the combatants being so severely mauled that some were in hospital for months afterward. Professor Landerman and the kangaroo came over from Australia in the Ormuz.

John L. Sullivan, although challenged, refused to fight, and Mme. Sarah Bernhardt was so amused and taken with the exhibition at the Criterion, Sydney, as to offer £1,000 for the animal.—London News.

Advice to the Office Seekers.

We see no impropriety in making applications for office on the part of all who desire it, but we believe there is a possibility of the thing being overdone. None of these petitions will be considered until after March 1. Therefore there is plenty of time in which to make applications.

During Mr. Cleveland's last administration he dispensed the public patronage through the members of the senate and the house.

If he pursues his former policy he will, as a general thing, appoint to office from this state such men as are recommended by the delegation to congress, and we do not think that he will ever see or read a letter of application for public office.—Atlanta Constitution.

A Growsome Belle.

The scaffold upon which John Brown was hanged in Harper's Ferry has arrived at Washington for shipment to the World's fair. The timbers are in a good state of preservation, though they have served the purposes of a porch to the residence of a son of the man who built the scaffold. The gallows itself is a plain, substantial affair, which would attract little attention apart from its history. The timbers are evidently pine, although they have been painted over at some later period to preserve them. The two uprights are big beams six inches square, and the crossbar is in proportion. Even the screws with which it was put together have been preserved. John Brown was hanged on Dec. 2, 1859.—Boston Journal.

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Some Special Things  
In Furniture.  
A good carpet-covered lounge, \$5. A good bedstead, \$2.25. Fancy rocking chairs, \$3.50. Ingrain carpet for 25 cents a yard.

Groceries & Provisions.  
Flour, \$2.15. Chop, \$1.10 and \$1.15. Bran, 50 cents. Ham, 13 cents. Bologna, 8 cents. Cheese, N. Y., 13 cents. Tub butter, 28 cents. 18 pounds sugar \$1.00. 5 pounds Lima beans, 25 cents. 5 pounds currants, 25 cents. 5 pounds raisins, 25 cents. 6 bars Lenox soap, 25 cents. 6 bars Octagon soap, 25 cents. 3 packages pearlina, 10 cents. Best coal oil, 12 cents. Vinegar, cider, 15 cents gal. Cider, 20 cents a gallon. Syrup, No. 1, 35 cents gal. No. 1 mince meat, 10 cents. 3 pounds macaroni 25 cents. 3 quarts beans, 25 cents. 6 pou. ds oat meal, 25 cents.

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