

HENRY GEORGE AND KARL MARX

A correspondent, who writes that having been a student of Karl Marx he has recently read Henry George and been much impressed by his teaching, inquires whether there is any book comparing with the theories of value of these two authors. Some extracts from the reply sent to him may be helpful to others:—

I do not know of any book in which there is an express discussion of the theories of value of Karl Marx and Henry George. The most valuable work bearing on this subject is Max Hirsch's *Democracy versus Socialism*. (It was published at 12s. 6d. and is now out of print, but we happen to have one copy left.) This work approaches the subject from a very different viewpoint from either George or Marx. Max Hirsch's analysis is based upon the marginal utility theory of value, due to Jevons in this country and to Walras and the Austrian school of economists on the Continent. It thus differs profoundly from the outlook both of George and of Marx. None the less, he arrives at the same practical conclusions as George, with whose views he was of course fully acquainted. It is remarkable, however, that Walras had also come to conclusions of a similar nature quite independently, although he differs in some measure as to the remedy to be applied.

As you have been a student of Marx it is perhaps superfluous to direct your attention to Chapters XXIV and XXV of the first volume of *Das Kapital* in which he escapes from the vicious circle that surplus value is made by means of capital, but the accumulation of capital presupposes surplus value. This he does by showing how the people were expropriated from the soil and being thus deprived of the opportunity of making an independent living were forced to hire themselves for the minimum upon which they could live. A careful reading of these chapters will show that Marx regarded the expropriation of the people from the land not merely as an historical cause, but as a present and abiding cause, of the exploitation of the workers.

Throughout these passages in which Marx endeavours to emerge from his vicious circle one finds a confusion of meaning which has been responsible for much error on the part of his followers. At one time "capital" is referred to as a thing, at another it is said to be "not a thing, but a social relation between persons, and a relation determined by things." Again, "capital" is referred to as money, commodities, and other means of production, but it is evident that he escapes from the vicious circle by demonstrating that it is not the private ownership of things that have been produced by labour but the private ownership of land which is the cause of the trouble. The confusion is increased by the use of the term "means of production" which at one time is used as if it related to money, machinery and things of that kind, while at another point the emphasis is laid upon land as a means of production. Thus, conclusions are drawn with regard to capital (in the ordinary sense) which are true only of land.

It should be added that in the third volume of *Das Kapital*, which is very little read, Marx recurs to the land question and makes many true remarks about it.

I may direct your attention to two papers by Mr Jakob E. Lange and Mr Frank McEachran given at the recent International Conference in London of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade which deal with the relations between the social philosophy of Marx and of George. F. C. R. D.

A reproduction of Photograph of Charles O'Connor Hennessy is presented with this issue to our readers.

NOTES AND NEWS

An impressive ceremony took place at Fenwick, Ayrshire, on 3rd October, when the ashes of the Hon. Sir George Fowlds, C.B.E., of Auckland, New Zealand, were interred in the family burial ground in the Parish Cemetery. The Rev. James Barr, M.P., who was a companion of the deceased at Waterside School, parish of Fenwick, conducted the service and paid a fine tribute to his personal worth and public work. The report occupies four columns in the *Kilmarnock Standard* of 10th October. Among the very numerous messages received and reported was one from Mr A. W. Madsen on behalf of the followers of Henry George in Great Britain testifying how Sir George had striven all his life for the coming of the day when equal opportunity and economic freedom would ensure the happiness and prosperity of all mankind.

At the municipal elections in Glasgow and in Cardiff the official programme of the Labour Party candidates demanded legislation for the rating of land values. This was featured in the local press in each case.

At the Annual Meeting of the Scottish Liberal Federation at Stirling a resolution was adopted, 11th October, condemning the Government's agricultural policy of quotas, subsidies, tariffs and marketing boards as restrictive and urging "the Liberal remedy of increased consumption, improved marketing by voluntary co-operation between producer and distributor, and the prevention, by the rating of land values, of profiteering in land."

Town Planning and Taxation: Friends or Foes? (the paper presented by Mr Harold S. Bottenheim at the International Conference in London) is listed at 10 cents among the publications recommended in the *Monthly Letter* of the Housing Information Bureau, 122 East 22nd Street, New York City.

COLLIERS' WAGES AND COAL PRICES. This little pamphlet by Mr G. A. Goodwin, C.M.G., deals in a pleasant and attractive fashion with the problems of an industry which forms one of the bases of the economic life of the country. The author has taken the opportunity of explaining the bearings of land and taxation reform in encouraging the production of wealth, securing more regular employment and promoting a better distribution of wealth. Copies of this booklet may be obtained from the printers, Messrs Leigh & Williams, Ltd., High Street, Prestatyn, at 3d. each post free.

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- LAND-VALUE RATING. Theory and Practice. By F. C. R. DOUGLAS, M.A., L.C.C. Cloth, 2s. 6d.
- THE TRUE NATIONAL DIVIDEND. The Pros and Cons of Social Credit. By W. R. LESTER, M.A. 3d.
- LAND AND TAXATION. Conversation with Dudley Field. By HENRY GEORGE. 1d.
- THE STUDY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY. By HENRY GEORGE. 1d.
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