

## The Philosophy of Freedom

### A Special Review of a Remarkable Book

"The Philosophy of Freedom," by Gaston Haxo. Land and Freedom, 1941. 210 pages. \$1.00.

A PRACTICAL observer for many years of the old propaganda methods, Mr. Haxo has had a splendid opportunity to develop his ideas of teaching. He has taught many "Progress and Poverty" classes in the Henry George School of Social Science, having been since 1937 the head of the correspondence course division of the School. It was his experience in this field that enabled him to discover the "weak spots" in the average student's understanding. Extending the observation, he has discerned a similar inability of other readers of "Progress and Poverty" to grasp the technical aspects of the subject. Thus did he come to realize that the full implications of the philosophy have been missed by many of our "Georgeists."

Concentrating upon the difficult parts of "Progress and Poverty," Mr. Haxo has recast and adapted them to the needs of those to whom the classic does not easily unfold. Even those for whom "Progress and Poverty" presents no seeming difficulty will derive an added enjoyment from that masterpiece upon reading "The Philosophy of Freedom." They will appreciate the many charts and diagrams which function as an integral part of the text, and constitute one of its most important features. Even "P & P" experts may well profit from a perusal of "The Philosophy of Freedom."

While the author deserves credit for the manner in which he handles the economics of "Progress and Poverty," this review would be incomplete without a recognition of his gift of philosophic expression. Mr. Haxo writes with inspiration, and his loftier passages entitle him to rank with the outstanding expounders of Henry George. Indeed, an appreciation of "The Philosophy of Freedom" can only lead to a deeper appreciation of "Progress and Poverty". This is the modest and ultimate purpose of the work.

Each of the ten books of "The Philosophy of Freedom" is headed by "Gems from Henry George," carefully selected for strengthening and embellishing the text. Mr. Haxo has employed the classroom approach throughout, and has modernized the exposition. Beginning with the definition of the terms, the author follows "Progress and Poverty" in regular sequence, diligently compiling and integrating the various chapters into his adaptation. His handling of "The Laws of Distribution" is particularly effective. It is replete with interesting charts and invaluable footnotes, elucidating the capitalization of rent, the margin of production, etc.

In his treatment of interest Mr. Haxo presents a thorough account of George's theory. He makes the point that divergent views on this subject can in no wise affect the fundamental features of land reform. Here again charts are employed to drive home the functions of labor and capital, wages and interest.

"Material Progress and Distribution" is presented with the assistance of twenty diagrams. The entire Story of the Savannah is depicted in two illustrations. Equally fascinating are the chapters on trade and exchange, with mathematical calculations of the advantages of a free economy. "The Remedy and the Justice of the Remedy" is eloquently portrayed. All of the other main headings of "Progress and Poverty" are likewise conscientiously interpreted. There is never a dull moment in "The Philosophy of Freedom", from the introductory biographical sketch of Henry George to the Ode to Liberty in Book X.

A useful appendix, "Land Value Taxation in Practice" and a serviceable index, conclude the work. The typography is of high quality and the format is of convenient size. Every Georgeist and every advocate of freedom should want to possess this remarkable contribution to economic literature.