

## DANISH PROPOSALS AND PROPOSITIONS

WE HAVE been glad to receive the September-October number of *Grundskyld*, an issue of 24 pages, and to appreciate the fact that this "Nordic Review for Economic Freedom and Justice" and organ of the Danish Henry George Union, now in its 22nd year of publication, was regularly produced throughout the war. The literal translation of *Grundskyld* is the "Land Due" or the "Land Duty"—that which should be paid to the community by every landholder; in other words "Land Value Taxation" as we express it.

### SMALLHOLDERS' RESOLUTION

This number has much in it of great interest. It reports the annual meeting, in Copenhagen, on September 29 and 30, of the federated associations of Housemen; that is of the small land-owning peasants who in their associations and unions have a membership of 110,000. At this meeting over 400 delegates were present. Unanimously they adopted a resolution in which it was declared:

"The people's right to the land of their Fatherland shall be confirmed and extended.

"The socially created values shall be collected into the community's treasury. To the same degree that land-value taxation is made operative, the unjust customs, tariffs and consumption taxes must be abolished.

"Taxation that is levied on buildings shall be transferred to land values, so that those values alone shall form the basis of taxation on real estate.

"A more uniform valuation of the land (bringing the values into more correct relationship with one another) is demanded.

"Revenue and protectionist duties shall be gradually repealed."

The rest of the resolution contained proposals for the creation of new small-holdings and the extension of existing holdings through positive State action; but it is understood that such small-holdings will be held under the same provisions as those which applied to the small-holdings created out of the entailed estates by the Act of 1919—namely at a rent for the land alone determined in harmony with the general periodical valuation of all the land of Denmark. The tenure is without any term; the obligation is to pay that rent and all the improvements on the property belong to the holders, so that, subject to the payment of the rent, the holders have all the rights of freehold.

The Small-holders' resolution on taxation policy breathes the spirit of the famous Declaration at Køge in 1903 and shows how they stand fast by the enunciation of the principles which their influence in Danish politics has done so much to promote. They expressed

then and still hold by the sentiment that they as land-holders sought no favours in the way of taxation but demanded the earliest possible removal of all tariffs and taxes upon articles of consumption and the provision of public revenues by taxation on the value of land apart from all buildings and improvements.

### SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PROPOSALS

*Grundskyld* also devotes much space to a description and examination of the land-values proposals made at the Annual Congress of the Social Democratic Party. These in our view present a strangely mixed dish. The approved reports were in two sections. One relating to housing policy in the towns contained proposals for the collection of the whole *increase* in the value of land and also that, in the case of public land which is alienated for building, the land would be rented at the full land value on a lease for as long as the reasonable life-time of the buildings; but there are discriminatory "escape" clauses permitting abatement of the increment duty or of the land-rent where that may be deemed "necessary or desirable." In the section on rural land, there are proposals for reducing the taxes on buildings and correspondingly increasing them on land values. But contradicting all that, and apparently applicable in both town and country, is the proposal of the Social Democratic Party to carry out a wholesale and so-called "nationalisation" of all the rent of Denmark and under a plausible plan of accompanying that with full compensation to the landowners. The idea is that this could be accomplished by issuing State bonds, bearing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent interest plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to sinking fund, equivalent to the aggregate land-value of Denmark; handing the bonds to the landowners who on their part pay to the State the full rent of the land as it will hereafter be periodically assessed. It is calculated that by the sinking fund the bonds would be extinguished in 60 years and then "the Danish land will belong completely to the Danish people." The objections, moral and economic and political, to such a plan leap to the eye; but we do not propose at this stage to discuss them further except to say that they do not and cannot have part or lot with the Henry George policy of appropriating the rent of land as the property of the people and the abolition of taxation on industry and trade. The Social Democratic plan would make the rent of land the property of the landowners and it would be only to the extent that the rent of land grew in succeeding years to exceed the service of the bonds, that there could be any possibility—not taking into consideration the existing taxes for all other purposes and the future demands the State may have to make, together with

changes in the purchase-power of money—of reducing the burden of the penalising and restricting taxation now imposed. The transaction would be a wild gamble and the step would be irrevocable.

### GENERAL ELECTION

The General Election on October 30 has resulted as follows:—

	New House	Previous House
Social Democrats ..	48	66
Conservatives ..	26	31
Moderate Liberals..	38	28
Radical Liberals ..	11	13
Justice Union		
("Georgeists") ..	3	2
Danish Unity (the		
Slesvig party)	4	3
Communists ..	18	3

The result has meant the defeat of the former coalition administration under Mr. Buhl, the Social Democrat Prime Minister and he has resigned. He could not have formed the coalition of Social Democrats and Radical Liberals which had carried on the government for a number of years until quite recently; nor is any alliance with the Communists (whose success is spectacular) in the least likely. It is reported that Mr. Knud Kristensen, leader of the Moderate Liberals, has been asked to form a new administration and will try to find a broad basis.

**HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE.** The Classes being conducted in the Liverpool area (MR. E. J. McMANUS, Hon. Secretary, 13, Norton Street, Liverpool, 3) include the following: by MR. McMANUS at 56, Lord Street, each Tuesday at 7.30 p.m.; by MR. C. C. PATON at 11, Tudor Street, Crosby, at 8 p.m.; by MR. H. T. BOOTHBY at the Carlton Cafe, 190, Rice Lane, Walton, each Wednesday at 8 p.m.; by MR. E. STEPHENS at the Olive Hall, Walmer Road, Waterloo, each Thursday at 8 p.m.; by MR. G. MILLER at 54, Hillfoot Avenue, Hunts Cross, each Saturday at 7 p.m. The Lord Street class was opened by MR. A. N. BATTY and is being continued by MR. McMANUS until MR. C. S. CRAIG (whose return to Liverpool is greatly welcomed) can take over. MR. McMANUS, at the address given above, will be pleased to hear from any who are interested in the work of the School and who can co-operate in increasing the number of the students and forming new classes.

6d. **THE PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT: REVERIDGE FAILS TO SOLVE IT: WHAT WILL? Published by the Staples Press. Ltd.**

3d. **THE TRUE NATIONAL DIVIDEND. Progress and Cons of Social Credit. By W. R. Lester, M.A.**

6d. **KARL MARX'S THEORIES OF SURPLUS VALUE AND LAND RENT. By F. C. P. Douglas, M.A., M.P., L.C.C.**

6d. **SCOTTISH LAND AND AGRICULTURE. Roth Land Nationalisation and Land Value Taxation are well argued. Which should it be?**