

## CARL MARFELS

With deep regret we learn from Mr Max Marfels, of Berlin, that his father has suddenly passed away. Despite his 75 years he was active to the last moment when, on 11th October, he was overtaken by heart weakness.

Carl Marfels had title to renown as an authority on objects of art and for his exquisite collections of antique watches and clocks. For many years he was editor of the leading Watch and Clock Makers' Journal in Germany, and there is a book of biographies published concerning that profession, which names him alongside the celebrities in history.

Our tribute to Carl Marfels is that he was a life-long and devoted follower of Henry George, an outstanding figure among those who in Germany have striven to make wider known the teachings of *Progress and Poverty*. He had a masterly grasp of the subject, and in all his comings and goings was an uncompromising advocate of Land Value Taxation and Free Trade as the solution of the poverty problem. He was associated with the German Land Reform League from its early days and for a time was one of its Vice-Presidents. He and Bernard Eulenstein, the translator of the *Condition of Labour* into German, were colleagues together in the campaign until death parted them twenty years ago. Carl Marfels worked in quiet ways largely through his own private correspondence, but there are several illuminating publications to his credit. For example, some of his writings were collected in book published in 1918 entitled *Philosophic and Economic Talks*, these being his own contributions to the journal of his profession, which he edited for so long. It was a remarkable feature of that paper that it frequently devoted space to matters of literary, scientific and social interest, and this was the opportunity for Carl Marfels to express the faith that was in him with his talented pen. The book is a permanent addition to the literature of our movement, and there are other contributions of his in pamphlet form that have as ably solved "The Riddle of the Modern Sphinx."

When the International Union published its Address to the World Economic Conference in Geneva, no one hailed that gesture with more enthusiasm than Carl Marfels. Acknowledging his copy of the document, he wrote to say how it had impressed him by proving the importance of Land Value Taxation and Free Trade for the peace of Nations. "How happy," he said, "every friend of peace and justice would be if the nations could and would follow the wise suggestions that you succeeded in shaping in such short sentences full of meaning."

That was the beginning of a long and intimate correspondence that brought Carl Marfels closely into touch with the wider movement. He wanted to know what was being done to promote Henry George's teachings and was generous in his admiration of what he learned. It was a revelation to him to know that so much progress was on foot. He had been working in isolation and sometimes even without hope. "You have convinced me," he wrote, "that the great thoughts of Henry George can never be lost." He recognized in the International Union an opportunity to keep in step with the development of the cause and it had been his ambition to give the Union loyal service and support.

Carl Marfels was a man of extraordinary charm and sincerity, proved again and again in his letters and confirmed by personal contact. I had the pleasure of spending rare days with him on a voyage from Bremen

to Southampton when he was on his way to America in October, 1927, on business connected with the disposal of his second famous collection. He rejoiced in the meetings he had with friends of Henry George across the Atlantic, and in the homage he was able to pay at the gravestone, where it is written :

"The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be, it would have been accepted long ago. If that could be it would never have been obscured. But it will find friends—those who will toil for it; suffer for it; if need be die for it. This is the power of Truth."

In New York he was entertained to dinner, where among others he met the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy and Mrs. Anna George de Mille. Back in Germany, he planned a visit to London and eagerly looked forward to the International Conference in Edinburgh. Unfortunately, a physical disability developed that forbade any further long journeys, but he sent to the Conference his brilliant contribution, *The Riddle of Modern Society*, which was printed and circulated with the other Conference Papers. It was noticeable how widely it was quoted by the Press in all the publicity the Conference enjoyed. Next month, the text of it will appear in *Land & Liberty*.

In his last years, Carl Marfels resided at Hamburg, moving there from Neckargeniemünd, near Heidelberg. To Mrs Marfels and family, to his eldest son, Mr Max Marfels, and to our German co-workers, we extend on behalf of the British and the International Henry George movement our heartfelt condolences.

A. W. M.

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To the evil of unemployment the present unfair rating system makes some contribution. Improvements to private property are to some extent restricted by the fact that such improvements bring an increased rate demand. In my opinion legislation is urgently required providing for the levying of rates on the unimproved site value of land only—whether such land is built upon and in use or not. This would prove a stimulus to employment and trade.—A. E. Little, Labour candidate, Municipal Election at Poole, No. 3 Ward. (Mr. Little circulated with his election address the Manifesto on Land Value Rating issued by the United Committee.)

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In the New York *World* of 3rd October there appears a review of H. Hessel Tiltman's recent biography of Mr Ramsay MacDonald—a volume from which a number of passages referring to Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* were quoted in last month's issue of our Journal. Commenting on these same passages the reviewer says : "MacDonald is now 63. *Progress and Poverty* was published exactly 50 years ago. Henry George could hardly have suspected that his doctrines would have such an immediate effect on a man who was one day to become Prime Minister of Great Britain."

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A few errors and omissions occurring in the list of International Conference members printed in September issue are rectified as follows:—Alderman C. Austin Brook, M.A., England, instead of C. A. Brook; J. G. Morrow (not Rorrow), Texas; Mrs Eustace A. Davies (not Davis), Wales; Miss E. Melland, England (not India); and after Miss W. E. Anderson's name, "England" should have been inserted. We also regret that the name of Mr S. R. Daniels (England) was not included in the list.