

though no doubt the overthrow of land monopoly would cause the simultaneous toppling over of many smaller special privileges, while without the overthrow of land monopoly the abolition of all other special privileges would avail little or nothing.

Regarding those alleged errors which some can find in the writings of Henry George, but as to the existence of which we are as yet by no means clear—should they ever be substantiated it will be by the application of the Georgian Philosophy to the writings of George.

And a further application of the same philosophy should result in the discovery of any natural law that has been either missed or miss-read by the great master.

* SOME ECONOMIC DEFINITIONS.

BY AN EMINENT BRITISH JURIST.

Whereas it is essential to good order of every state and the welfare of the people that all persons should have and enjoy the fruits of their own labour, and to this end it is expedient to declare the natural laws governing the acquisition of private property: Be it declared and enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

DEFINITIONS.

1. The term "land" means land in its natural condition resulting from

*These clean-cut definitions were contained in an interesting bill relating to the acquisition and ownership of private property drafted by Sir Samuel Griffith in 1890. Sir Samuel was at this time Premier of the province of Queensland. Subsequently he became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of that province, and on the creation of the Federal High Court of Australia, he became Chief Justice of that Court, a position which he now holds. He is easily the most distinguished lawyer in Australia and one of the most distinguished in the British Empire. The court over which he presides is analagous in nearly all respects to our Supreme Court. It is needless to say he is a Single Taxer.

We have spoken of these definitions as "clean-cut". But from the Georgian standpoint the definition of capital (8) is made to include too much. So, too, exception may be taken to 18 and 19, for "positive law" may not modify but should conform to natural law. But this later reasoning is expressly negatived by 14 and 15 and 16, which are strong and explicit.

In this connection it is interesting to note the progress made in Queensland, since Sir Samuel drafted this "Bill". This is revealed in a very full and careful report made by Leslie Gordon Currie, ex-Mayor of Brisbane. This report contains a history of the successive steps leading to the present system where the whole of the rates for local government purposes are levied only on the unimproved value of the land.

He says, "It is a system neither borrowed by their legislators nor accepted by the

the operation of natural forces unaided and undirected by man, and does not include any improvements made upon it.

2. When the term "value" is used with reference to land, it signifies the extent of the difference between the advantage of having the use of the land in question and the advantage of having the use of the nearest other land the use of which can be obtained by mere occupation without making payment to any person for such use.

3. The return or payment demanded by persons having, by positive law the right to the exclusive possession of land, for the permission to use that land, is called "rent."

Rent is therefore a measure of the value of land.

4. The term "labor" includes all modes of exercise of the human faculties, whether of mind or body. It therefore includes the function of supervision or organisation of other labor.

5. The immediate remuneration of labor is called "wages."

6. The term "property" includes all forms of material things in the possession of man which have a value for the purpose of exchange or use. It also includes inventions and other immaterial results of the exercise of the faculties of the mind.

7. The term "production" includes any act or series of acts by which labor is applied, either directly or indirectly, to property, and the result of which is new property, or property in an altered form, or in a different place.

It also includes the exercise of the faculties of the mind or body, the result of which is property, although the exercise of those faculties was not applied to property.

8. The term "capital" means and includes all forms of property not being land which are in use for the purpose of production. It therefore includes as well property which is consumed or destroyed as property which is not consumed or destroyed in the process of production.

9. The term "interest" is used to denote either the immediate return derived from the use of capital for the purpose of production, or the payment

people of Queensland ready-made from others, but one educed, as the development of legislation proves, more or less subconsciously from the germ of the idea, which in its integrity is an excellent belief—viz:—that a premium should be held out, or, at worst, no discouragement offered, to the improvement of the unexploited lands of a new country. It is a system that in its Queensland application has worked in operation with fewer difficulties than its most sanguine supporters could have anticipated."

Again, "The stimulation to improve land, owing to the appreciable rating of the same, is more clearly established whenever the outgo is very direct and visible, such as in the instance of highly-priced city lands.

"When an owner has it brought annually home through his cheque book that he is paying out just as much in rates upon, say, a fifty-foot frontage of vacant land as he has to contribute upon a similarly sized piece, carrying, as it may do, his entire business establishment, or may be improved with buildings giving him fair rentals upon both land and improvements, it becomes a mere question of time until he either takes steps to render the unimproved land also rent producing or decides to let someone else have the chance to do so."—*Editor Single Tax Review*.

received by the owner of capital from another person by way of return for the use of that capital.

Interest is therefore a measure of the value of the use of capital.

10. The term "productive labor" means labor applied for the purpose of producing some property which is, or is intended to be, of greater value than the value of the property (if any) to which the labor is applied.

11. The terms "net products of labor" and "net products" mean the net increase in property resulting from productive labor, after allowing for the cost of production.

12. The cost of production may include all or any of the following elements:—

- (1) The replacement of the property which is consumed, or destroyed, or altered in form, or changed in place, in the course of the process of production;
- (2) The wages of the labor engaged in the production;
- (3) Interest on the capital used in the production;
- (4) Rent of the land used for the purposes of the production;
- (5) Incidental expenses not falling under any of the foregoing heads.

13. The term "positive law" includes all written laws enacted by a competent legislative authority.

It also includes all unwritten rules declared by any competent judicial authority to be the law of the state.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

14. All persons are, by natural law, equally entitled to the right of life, and to the right of freedom for the exercise of their faculties; and no person has, by natural law, any right superior to the right of any other person in this respect.

15. The right to take advantage of natural forces belongs equally to all members of the community.

16. Land is, by natural law, the common property of the community.

17. Positive law is the creation of the State, and may be altered or abrogated by the State from time to time.

18. The application of the natural law of equality and freedom may be modified by positive law, so far as the common advantage of the community may require, but not further or otherwise.

19. The rights of the individual persons with respect to land are created by, and their incidents depend upon, positive law.

20. All property, other than land, is the product or result of labor.

21. The natural and proper measure of wages is such a sum as is a fair immediate recompense for the labor for which they are paid, having regard to its character and duration; but it can never be taken at a less sum than such as is sufficient to maintain the laborer and his family in a state of health and reasonable comfort.

22. The net products of labor belong to the persons who are concerned in the production.

If one person only is concerned in the production the whole net products belong to him.

If more persons than one are concerned in the production, the net products belong to them, and are divisible amongst them, in proportion to the value of their respective contributions to the production.

23. When labor is not applied directly or indirectly to property, the whole products belong to the laborer.

When labor is applied directly or indirectly to property, the person who is lawfully entitled to the use of that property is deemed to be concerned in the production as well as the laborer.

24. When for the purposes of production the use of land is required, then the rent (if any) payable for that use is a part of the cost of production.

The person who receives the rent is not, by reason only of his permission to use the land, concerned in the production, but may otherwise be concerned in it.

He is therefore not entitled, by reason only of such permission, to any share of the net products.

25. For the purpose of ascertaining the net products of productive labor applied to land, and the persons entitled to share in those products, the land to which the labor is applied is to be considered as if it were capital, and were the property of the person who for the time being is entitled to the possession of it.

The amount of that capital is to be taken to be equal to the value of the land burdened with a perpetual rent equal to the rent (if any) payable by him for the time being.

26. The share of net products coming to each person who contributes to the production from which they arise is the property of that person, and may, subject to any positive law, be disposed of by him at his pleasure during his lifetime or by will.

27. Any person entitled to a share of the net products of any productive labor may enforce that right by proceedings in any Court of competent jurisdiction.

28. It is the duty of the State to make provision by positive law for securing the proper distribution of the net products of labor in accordance with the principles hereby declared.

SHORT TITLE.

29. This Act may be cited as the Elementary Property Law of Queensland.

WE want your help. Make yourself a committee of one to interest your friends in the REVIEW. Now is the time of a presidential campaign when you can make Single Taxers. Send every promising convert the REVIEW for one year.