

A Korean Looks at Henry George

MR. KONG WON KHYLL of the Korean Consulate in New York has been a regular attendant in David Targ's class in Fundamental Economics (New York headquarters). In Korea he was a resident of Seoul, where he practiced law before the war. During the war he had opportunities to study the results of the type of land reform instituted by the Communists.

As has been pointed out by other observers, the division of large estates into parcels for farmers worked unforeseen hardships in many cases because quotas for production were placed at impossibly high levels, and when they could not be met the parcels were promptly lost.

Up to the time Mr. Kong left Korea, a year ago, he had not heard of Henry George. He now thinks the Georgist teachings, if they could be more widely known in Korea, might possibly have some influence. As to whether the taxation principle advocated by George could actually ever be put into effect there, naturally he would not hazard even a guess.

Mr. Kong's house in Seoul was among the thousands which were bombed. The devastation and suffering are things he does not mention. Is he bitter? He smiles. It is not a bitter smile.

Sensing concern on the part of the questioner he quickly dispels a pitying attitude by saying that Koreans have received help through the government agency FOA, the churches, and the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency. We should all be grateful that this year Korea will have a good rice crop, and therefore the danger from a food shortage will not be as great as in the past.

Mr. Kong studied English with a lady in New York who recommended the Henry George School to him. He has since recommended it to others.