

The Danegeld

DENMARK IN WORLD HISTORY, by Viggo Starcke. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1963. 381 pages. Illustrated. \$10.

In this book, the noted Danish Georgist political leader reveals himself as also being a thorough scholar of history. The theme of the book is the influence of Denmark on the rest of Europe, with special emphasis on England, up to the time of the Norman invasion.

The last of the wayfarers *en masse* from Denmark were the Vikings. They settled in and for a while dominated England. Dr. Starcke never forgets the land question throughout his narrative. He points out that the tax imposed by

the Danes, the Danegeld, was basically a land value tax; and that the part of England where it was levied was notably more prosperous than the other parts of the country. The land tax, even after Danish rule was ended, remained the basis of England's public finance up to the 18th century, when the powerful landlords succeeded in throwing off their burden and imposing it on the public. The land value tax, with its long tradition in Denmark, remains to this day an important part of that country's public finance system.

Numerous illustrations, humor and a very readable style help make this one of the most fascinating history books I have ever come across.

— R. C.

"SINGLE MINDED APOSTLE"

Robert Gillogly, a graduate student at Harvard University, is writing a thesis on the influence of Walter Rauschenbusch, proponent of the "social gospel." In reading Dr. Rauschenbusch's *Christianizing the Social Order*, Mr. Gillogly found the following passage: "I owe my own first awakening to the world of social problems to the agitation of Henry George in 1886, and wish here to record my lifelong debt to this single-minded apostle of a great truth."

This brought Mr. Gillogly to the Henry George School in New York for further research, and he said the more he learned about Henry George the more he became convinced that the world needs to hear much more about his great work and to consider it far more seriously than it has to date.

THE COMMUNITY SERVICE CHARGE

Whereas the rent of land should be a community's "service charge," taxes are an exaction of private property: fines for building a house, for improving a house or for creating wealth. Taxes on goods and services are added to the price of goods and services. As prices go up, sales go down. As sales go down, jobs go down. Back of unemployment and inadequate purchasing power is a basic "cause" — the private retention of a large part of the rent of land, plus taxation.

Unknown to most of us, this basic cause of America's unsolved problems arose in England when Charles II became king of England in 1660, and made a deal with his barons. He relieved them of their feudal dues and shifted the cost of government onto the mass population via taxes. England thus changed from labor-rent feudalism to "money-rent feudalism." This system was brought to colonial America and unfortunately was not abolished when the United States came into being.

— Herman Ellenoff