

person, vicar and other, and of every occupier of lands, houses, tithes . . . coal mines, or saleable underwood, a convenient stock."

The experience of receiving an unexpectedly large increase in income from the possession of recently enclosed land may have opened the hearts of the landowners. They may have had more enlightened leaders. At any rate, they controlled legislation, and they used this power to bring the value of land as the most prominent element into the basis of local taxation. Nor did they ever forget that this power had been theirs. Long afterwards, in 1822, when prices fell from their war level, they moved in Parliament that there should be a remission of taxation on agriculture. The Government refused the request, telling them that the farmers must look for remedy "to the operation of natural causes and not to the confiscation of the revenues of the State." Still the landowners remembered. In 1896, when prices had fallen once more, they relieved occupiers and owners of land of half the burden of the rates. Finally, in 1929, in the Derating Act, they cast off the whole burden.

They did not concern themselves with the question where it fell. The occupiers and owners of houses in villages and small towns have felt the weight. Rates

which formerly were a small percentage of the rents, are now often equal to them, and are called a second rent.

Farms are let on new leases at an increase of 150 per cent. or perhaps more. They are sold at prices increased in like proportion, and the confiscated income of the State in the form of repealed rates makes part of the rise.

The remedy for this dislocation is the rating of site values. In practice the valuation and the collection of the value is no more difficult for the State than for the landowners. What is invariably wanting when this is to be done is a government and minister who will act on the country's behalf as landowners and agents act for themselves. The judicial principle inherent in land valuation makes it an operation fruitful far beyond its service as a mere basis for collecting revenue. Its expansion and application to thousands of problems which contain the substance of corporate life would be a means of removing much of the never-ending discord which injures industrial and social life. First-rate valuers, highly paid, full time, equal in status to judges in any court, are needed to provide this basis for managing the land, the foundation of the country's life, for putting into operation the highest form of preventive law.

A CONFERENCE IN DENMARK

The Danish "Ecotechnical High School" (which gives instruction on the teachings of Henry George in classes conducted in many parts of the country) held its Annual Conference on September 10th—12th in Odense under most happy circumstances. It met and lived in the newly-rebuilt Folk High School, belonging to *Husmaend* of the Island of Funen. Peculiar interest was given to the occasion in that the adherents of Georgeism were the first to have the use of the premises for Conference purposes; and were able to celebrate a quite remarkable undertaking—the rebuilding of that school which, like a Phoenix, had arisen from its ashes; the school where the late Jakob E. Lange had been Principal and for two generations or more had given that "after education" for which the Danish Folk Schools are so famous, his pupils being the young men and women "off the land," sons and daughters of the hardy *Husmaend* stock. The *Husmaend* are, in fact, small peasant proprietors whose farms can best be described as "crofts," but who, nevertheless, thanks largely to the marvellously developed instrument of co-operation and their own loving care for the land as independent men, make their acres more productive than those of the greater estates. The magnificent new building, wonderfully equipped for its boarders (the young men in the winter months and the young women in the summer) takes the place of the old, which had been totally destroyed during the war, Nemesis at the hands of the R.A.F. having come upon the German Gestapo, which was using it for their dreadful inquisition. The *Husmaend* soon got together and with financial help from many quarters they restored their own educational institute, which now stands as a model for all Denmark. Another feature of the "auspices" of this occasion is that the *Husmaend*, those small landed proprietors, have been and are the most ardent among the classes in the country in promoting the Henry George policy, their late Principal, Jakob Lange, having been one of the most prominent advocates of that policy, translator of *Progress and Poverty*, and himself the author of *Social Economy* and many economic writings; besides the fame he has

won in his contribution to horticultural research and its literature. Most fortunate, too, are the *Husmaend* in Lange's successor, Mr. Grönborg, a man with the same broad sympathies, the same spiritual outlook and the same ability to guide in all their ways the young people over whom he has charge.

Among the things saved from the old school were the much-treasured bronze bust of Henry George, which stood on its pedestal in the grounds, and the oil paintings of Mr. and Mrs. Lange. By some good chance they had been removed before the Gestapo took possession. They are replaced. And with the inauguration of the new school, the Conference of the Georgeists concluded with a mass meeting, which dedicated a granite rostrum to the memory of Lange, the forum being the lawn on which public demonstrations are held, ready, too, for the many *Husmaends'* meetings that will be held at that spot. The carvings are appropriate and the inscription, translated, reads: "To the memory of Jakob Lange, intimate friend of wild plants, the teacher of youth, guide of the *Husmaend*, fellow-combatant with Henry George." The dates are April 2nd, 1864, and December 27th, 1941.

The Conference had been ably organised by Mrs. Caroline Björner, under whose guidance the "Ecotechnical High School" has made so much progress. There were members from many parts of Denmark. The British movement was represented by Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Madsen and Mr. V. H. Blundell. The sessions, following the order of the programme, included: "The work for land value taxation in Great Britain and progress in the Dominions" (Mr. Madsen); "Children and the franchise" (Mr. Niels Skriver Svendsen); "Future of the land-value reform in Denmark" (Mr. Oluf Pedersen, ex-M.P.); "One world or none" (Prof. H. Brandt Rehberg, public lecture); "Productiveness of *Husmaends'* holdings compared with larger estates" (Mr. Harald Grönborg); "Advancement of the study of social economy," with reports by Mr. Bue Björner and Mrs. Caroline Björner on the Ecotechnical High School, and by Mr. Blundell on the Henry George School of Social

Science; and appropriately, with the ending of the Conference it was to them as leaders of the School movement that the final vote of appreciation and thanks was accorded.

We cannot do more than briefly comment on certain of the subjects discussed. Mr. Svendsen's was a novel theme, suggesting that parents' influence in public affairs should depend in some measure upon the size of their families, but we doubt if all implications were explored. Mr. Oluf Pedersen set forth a plan of his own for a "from an appointed day" collection of total land-rent, payable as to certain proportions in part by title-deed holders and in part by mortgagees, the whole scheme pivoting upon a general capital levy providing scaled refunds or part compensation to landowners at one end of the scale, necessarily however taxing improvements at the other end and at the same time liquidating a portion of the national debt—a grand "cut the Gordian knot" financial operation. Resulting discussion, which it was good to have, found Mr. Oluf Pedersen the lone defender of the tie-up of his plan, but the controversy is now engaged and more will be heard of it. Interestingly enough, the Editor of *Grundskyld* (Mr. P. C. Pedersen) and the Editor of *Land & Liberty* joined in the criticism and rejection of the plan. Professor Rehberg's address was a plea for "World Federation," with the awful warning of the atomic bomb shown by movie film. In a well-documented and extraordinarily informing address, Mr. Grönborg proved the success of the average small family-farms which, being multiplied, and given land value taxation and free trade, offered Denmark a social state and an agriculture flourishing as never before.

All in all, three days had been spent most profitably, not alone by what was learned and discussed in session, but also and even more so by the value of personal association, the new and renewed friendships linked in a common cause, the chance to meet and converse, to gain from those contacts new strength, new encouragement and new hope. That should be the purpose and the outcome of all such gatherings and by that token we look forward to the forthcoming International Conference in England in August, 1949, reminding all our subscribers how sincerely their co-operation towards ensuring its success will be appreciated. We are grateful for the concerted action being taken by the Danish Henry George Union, which is associated with the International Union as joint organisers, and in its journal, *Grundskyld*, cordially invites the enrolment and support of Danish friends.

Let one or two personal incidents be mentioned, while on the Denmark scene. Miss Elizabeth Riley, who on bicycle and now her own "hiker," has been touring Switzerland, France and the Low Countries, saw *Land & Liberty* in the home of Mr. Lameris in Holland, saw the announcement there of the Odense Conference, and at once cycled all the way to appear in person. Mr. and Mrs. Madsen spent holiday in Svendborg. The kindnesses extended en route by Messrs. Söndergaard and Jessen in Esbjerg and by Mr. Schlamowitz (Editor of the Justice party's youth journal) in Odense are gratefully acknowledged; and so also the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Thor Nielsen in Svendborg, who at their home on August 28th made a party for the visitors, joined by a large group of Justice party members—Georgeists all, desiring to know how matters stood with regard to land value taxation in Britain and abroad. Before the Conference Mr. Blundell was able to have

a couple of days in Copenhagen and there on September 8th, at the home of Bue and Caroline Björner, he was entertained at a party of mainly young people called to meet him and have him explain what was being done in London to promote the Henry George teaching. These Svendborg and Copenhagen meetings also deserve to go on the calendar.

PHILOSOPHER IN PERPLEXITY

LORD Samuel's address on September 12th to the British Association is of interest to the average citizen as well as to the specialist, coming as it does from the President of the Royal Institute of Philosophy. The speech, moreover, can be read in conjunction with his *Belief and Action*, published in 1937.

The scientists were not given a flattering picture of the world they had helped to make. Politics, he told them, was now seen as a mere struggle for wealth and power, and all public and private standards of conduct had declined. The vast powers disclosed by scientific study had been turned to mischief not to the benefit of mankind, but the scientists were not to blame for these evils. The troubles of the world have come from Science having advanced faster than morals. "The treason of some among the thinkers; the weaknesses, the blunders and the crimes of the statesmen; the passions of the people"—these were to blame. The remedy was not to hold up science, it was to speed up morals. There was no conflict between science and religion. Philosophy might be the reconciler. Professional leaders of thought should give the world the guidance it urgently needed.

Lord Samuel seems to plead for more intellectual honesty among professional thinkers, leading to some harmonious conception which will promote the co-operation of science and religion and raise moral standards. He blames the passions of the masses, not their ignorance. He implies that improvement must somehow come from the top. Nowhere in either his speeches or his books, does he show any sympathy for that spirit of self-reliance and independence of thought which prevailed more widely before the decline, which, he admits, had become so pronounced. This decline, in fact, has proceeded together with increasing professionalism in all departments of knowledge. If the professionals have been dishonest in the past, he does not give us any reason why such people as writers, economists and politicians should behave more honestly in the future.

An independent person can yield to the inspiration of an orator or teacher; but can a professional do this so easily? People are not apt to change their opinions when it affects their job. To raise moral standards, we must appeal to the non-professional as much as to the professional, and we must clear up the people's intellectual doubts about Western civilisation before we can restore confidence in its morality and religion.

In *Belief and Action* Lord Samuel declared, "if poverty continues, the property system will not." But this is the very problem to which he never offers a clear solution. He never seems to enquire seriously into the true basis of property and its natural distribution. Every material need must in the first place be supplied from land and, on the subject of land ownership, his remarks are superficial to say the least. He says, "In the main, the system of land ownership is the same as in the Middle Ages." He never seems to have heard even of the Enclosure Acts. If the question of poverty is so much bound up with that of property and is of supreme importance in our society—and in this we think he is right—it is amazing how he