



J. L. BJÖRNER

The Danish movement for land value taxation and free trade is proud to count Mr J. L. Björner among its capable and active adherents. He brings to the advocacy of the question not only the understanding that the speaker or writer must possess but also the ability to state his case and carry conviction. He is the author of a number of pamphlets that have rendered good service, and in the Press he uses his pen with telling effect, especially when his theme is Free Trade or his purpose is to expose the fallacies of Protection. Never missing the opportunities that come to him to take the platform, he is as often as not himself in the chair when meetings are called to discuss the affairs of the movement and its advancement. There he presides with acceptance, for his associates esteem his sound judgment and the faculty he has for selecting the obviously wise decision.

He has loyal support as the organizer of the annual Henry George *Staeve*, or convention, to which two days are devoted following the annual business meeting of the Henry George Union. The bigger provincial towns are chosen in turn year by year for this double event. The delegate members of the Union meet for their business in the town, and the subsequent *Staeve* is held at a neighbouring People's High School, anyone being welcome to join. The convention makes its quarters at the school for the two days, and the time is passed with lectures and discussion on the social problems of the day in the light of Henry George's teachings. It is a rich experience to be present at such gatherings, and a happiness to be "led" (as the Danish word is) by a man of Mr Björner's good humour and genial personality.

Mr Björner first became acquainted with the works of Henry George in 1897 when engaged in the study of Political Economy. In 1902, the Henry George Union was formed, or more correctly speaking re-established, and he was among the founders. The Union at once reaped the fruit of the good seed sown by the pioneers of the "first Henry George movement," which had been active from 1887 onwards; and it took up again the organized agitation which had been dormant since 1894, although the propaganda had been continuously maintained by the individual effort of a number of earnest workers.

In 1910, at the Free Trade Congress in Antwerp,

Mr Björner was of the company that brought together colleagues and co-workers from a number of countries and made lasting personal friendships. At the instance of Joseph Fels, and through the offices of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, some 50 Henry George people had come to that Congress to urge the case for Free Trade as Henry George has revealed it. The group represented Great Britain and Ireland, the United States, Denmark, France, Sweden, Belgium and Switzerland. As a fact, it was at Antwerp, out of that pleasant and profitable meeting, that the International movement was born which Joseph Fels hoped to see and which has now grown to such dimensions. The International Conferences in Ronda, Oxford, and Copenhagen have followed as a matter of course.

Mr Björner, with Mrs Björner, was present at the Oxford International in 1923, and there he warmly associated himself with the proposal that the next event of the kind should take place in his own country. In the organization of the Copenhagen Conference he took a leading part and acted in the special capacity of general treasurer and accountant. His enthusiasm and his competent advice in many directions contributed very much to the success of the event. In private life Mr Björner is a prominent hardwood merchant in Copenhagen. In that capacity he has travelled all over Europe, the U.S.A. and Canada, and everywhere he has sought and found friends of the Henry George cause.

A. W. M.