

PREFACE

SEVERAL points require preliminary mention in presenting the following work. First, the title of the book must be kept in mind—the interest will be in *theory*. There is a steady stream of books on economics coming from the press, but few of them deal with anything that might be termed economic philosophy. The technical and statistical emphasis has almost captured the major share of contemporary attention, and economic theory itself has indeed become somewhat suspect. Theory, to many modern economists, seems so often an out-moded classicism. Now, although there will be more than a little concern here with technical processes, the primary interest is in a theoretical analysis that, without apology, will be largely deductive. For it is a belief of the writer that present-day economics is not sufficiently sensitive to the function of (mere) theorizing.

A second point is simply to indicate awareness that the writer is professionally in the field of philosophy and not of economics. This, however, is not meant to be an excuse for any egregious errors in economics. It is noted chiefly to repeat the con-

viction, made in another work, that philosophy cannot remain oblivious to any significant social or economic problem. Especially must moral philosophy show a genuine and pragmatic interest in the instruments and agencies that alone can bring into operation its own exhortations.

Finally, there is no claim here to originality. The land question has a long and noble tradition behind it, and there is practically no argument discussed in these pages that has not appeared in some form before. Nevertheless, the problem of land control is felt to be portentous enough to demand constant exposition, particularly when, as at present, that problem is almost studiously neglected.

I must take this opportunity to express my deepest indebtedness to the inspiration of my father, the late Oscar H. Geiger. His suggestions, in what were literally his last hours, have been of inestimable value, and his memory has served to keep me at my work. Next, I must thank very sincerely Professor John Dewey, my former teacher, and Professor Harry Gunnison Brown of the University of Missouri. Both have read, with some exceptions, the entire manuscript, and have given me much necessary and gladly accepted advice. I deeply appreciate their interest and their efforts. Chapter IV has been read by Professor Austin P. Evans of Columbia University and Professor William A. Oldfather of the University of Illinois. They have pointed out historical errors of fact and interpretation. However,

in no way can any of these critics be held responsible for errors that the book may now contain.

For welcome help with proofreading and the compiling of an index, I want to thank my wife.

G. R. G.