

osophy concerning the taxation of land values, led to discussion as to the orthodoxy of the speaker. Be it said to the credit of Dr. Gilman that he did not waver in his support of George, holding that men of independent mind ought to be chosen as leaders of thought among young men and women, but some representatives of 'the interests' got busy, and the appointment was withheld—probably to the temporary regret of the author-to-be of 'Progress and Poverty,' and possibly to the lasting benefit of the world of humanity, as academic duties might have been sufficiently engrossing to interfere with the free play of thought that brought to fruition the Single Tax doctrine which has the acceptance of so many thinkers of the present day."

***AN ABLE PLEA FOR ECONOMIC DETERMINISM.**

We have read this work with its manly, unaffected and ingratiating "Foreword" with interest, though not concurring in its conclusions. For while pointing out the inadequacy of the Hegelian and other concepts of history the author himself arrives at the doctrine of "economic determinism." And then, though he has admitted the partial truth of other interpretations, he sees in this, not a partial but a wholly inclusive truth. "History is but the evolution of economics," he says.

We have to thank him for his refutation of Prof. Clark, of Columbia, which seems to us complete. Clark assumes a perfect working of economic factors, from which he derives the theory of the existence of a perfect institutional industry. There is nothing the matter with the working of competition; there can, therefore, be nothing the matter with the results. Single Taxers say competition would establish the same institutional perfection as Clark assumes exists in the distribution of the products of labor today—only they demonstrate that competition does not now exist.

*Economics as the Basis of Living Ethics. By John G. Murdoch, A.M. Cloth, 12mo., 373 pp. Price, \$2.00 net. Allen Book and Printing Co., Troy, N. Y.

The work of Prof. Clark is said by his ardent admirers, his professorial friends—the only people who ever look at the inside of these economic works—to be "epoch making."

These later economists are the "cubists" among the followers of what they call their "science." The errors of the older economists were large, generous errors, having something real, genuine and human in them. But the economic post-impressionists exhibit nothing on their canvass that you can grasp with the thought or follow with the eye. They build huge and monstrous conceptions with their little cubes, overlaying them with infinite variety of formation, and then cry to us to behold. How epoch making! But the eternal verities, the economic facts of life, the poverty, struggles, human impulses, the phenomena of the external world that push everywhere into our line of vision, these the dreary humbugs never see!

As for Prof. Clark, the prize for post-impressionism is his. Where his professorial friends stand before his canvass with bated breath and pretend to see profound speculation clothed in reason, analysis, imagination, the mental concept is really like one of the best known of these maniacal cubist pictorial outbursts—it is not Reason clothed in her right mind—it is actually, if we could but see it, "the Nude Descending the Staircase."

But to return to Mr. Murdoch. Our author follows the Marxian teaching. The ethical concepts of property are considered as a reflex of economic conditions. They have no other foundation. Single Taxers hold that the right of property springs from the right of a man to himself, and that men instinctively recognize this.

In his statement of Interest—a subject discussed elsewhere in these columns—Mr. Murdoch confuses it with incomes that are not pure Interest. "Our Carnegies and Rockefellers reap huge profits." (Interest?) But in his attempted refutation of the Austrian-Yale school of Interest he seems again fairly successful, except in so far as the theory of the Austrian school urges the time element as the explanation of Interest, in which, disregarding its finality, we may concede an element of truth. We

say "disregarding its finality," for Mr. Murdoch appears to be on strong ground when he questions whether the time-preference of individuals—the desire to enjoy now rather than in the future—can exist apart from social forces, or stand without their support. That is to say, in a form of society different from our own the existence and continuance of Interest cannot be predicated with entire confidence, and we think this is the conclusion of many Single Taxers who say that under a natural system Interest will persist if it is natural. Or predicating a much greater equality in the distribution of wealth Single Taxers sometimes argue that where borrowers are few and lenders many, interest will tend to a minimum. Thus Interest may be the offspring of social forces which may change its nature and incidence with changing conditions.

But Mr. Murdoch is not conclusive when he says, "Interest is institutional exploitation," for he has confused Interest with returns that are not interest, and he has missed a clear definition, for he uses the word "profits," which is a book keeping, not an economic term. He sees that nothing can safely be predicated of Interest as long as the workers are engaged in so unequal a contest, but he does not see why this contest is unequal, and therefore he does not see that Interest might persist were the conditions of the struggle changed. That is to say, would Interest persist if Privilege were abolished? And what relation has Interest, excessive or otherwise, to Privilege? And would not Interest still exist were exploitation absent, just as rent of land would persist were the State to take it for all the people?

This work of Mr. Murdoch is for the most part exceedingly thoughtful, and always clear; on many points it is suggestive and illuminating; it is written out of conviction and wide knowledge, and will repay reading. And this is to be said with all emphasis in spite of our dissent from its general conclusions.—J. D. M.

"Our Question Box" is omitted from this issue since we have received but one inquiry. Everybody satisfied?

NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS.

THE Tenants' Union of New York, which has been doing good work in arousing thought in this city on the land question, held a dinner on the evening of May 3, at the Germaine Restaurant, this city. It was attended by about 125 persons, and among the speakers was the president, Cornelius Donovan, Alexander Law, Cornelius M. Sheehan, George Wallace and others. Part of Mr. Donovan's speech appears elsewhere in this issue.

H. F. RING addresses an earnest letter of protest to Governor Colquitt of Texas on his veto of the home rule bill. It is vigorous and convincing.

I am not in favor of mincing or trying to accomplish practicable results in a round-about method. The people have got to be educated; the mere carrying of an election in the absence of this education will amount to little.—H. F. RING.

DR. GRACE KIRKLAND, who is vice president of the California Single Tax League, has a series of articles running through a number of newspapers on the Pacific coast on the White Slave Furore in which she does not lose sight of the connection of her subject with the great living problem known as the Single Tax. In her final paper, "The Solution," she makes a forcible plea for the only remedy that is worth while—economic freedom.

ELMER E. KNOWLES, of Portland, Maine, recently gave an interesting lecture before the members of the Munjoy Club of that city.

ERICK OBERG, of Brooklyn has an article in the current number of *Ret*, the Single Tax organ of Denmark published at Copenhagen.

ONE only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints the smiling plain.
—GOLDSMITH. }