

## Independent School of Political Economy



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### THE AMERICAN FARMER.

The Director acknowledges receipt from the author, A. M. Simons, editor of the International Socialist Review, a copy of "The American Farmer" (12 mo., cloth, 208 pages; 50c; Chas. H. Kerr & Co., Chicago). A hurried glance through its pages leads The Director to believe that Mr. Simons has at least laid the foundation for a better understanding of American farm economics. Most socialist literature treats the farm problem from the standpoint of the European farmer and the conclusions drawn are not applicable here.

A more thorough review will be given at the earliest possible moment; but, in the meantime, The Director has no hesitancy in recommending the book as worthy of a careful reading. It will help the student of political economy who desires a glimpse at this phase of socialism through American glasses instead of the strange foreign ones we have hitherto been obliged to use.

### THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

Mr. Simons has also favored The Director with a copy of "The Social Revolution," by Karl Kautsky, translated by A. M. and May Wood Simons (Kerr & Co., 12 mo., cloth, 189 pp., 50c). This is also reserved for review.

### SOCIALISM—UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC.

To A. W. Ricker, one of the editors of The Appeal to Reason, The Director's acknowledgments are due for a copy of Frederick Engels "Socialism—Utopian and Scientific"—one of Kerr's little pocket library series. This The Director has promised Mr. Ricker to read carefully and thus assist in the "development" signs of which Mr. Ricker professes to have observed in The Director's knowledge of socialism.

### PROGRESS AND POVERTY.

A disciple of Henry George—and a modest man to boot—has given The Director a cloth-bound copy of Henry George's great work, "Progress and Poverty," with the condition that The Director first read it and then do as he pleases with it afterward. As The Director has read this work, he believes it should be in the hands of some member who has never read it. It is a "free" book, costing the reader postage on to the next. Who wants to read it first?

The school work grew faster than The Director expected, and, with the Henry George Edition crowding, he is literally swamped with work, which, being largely in a formative stage, requires his personal attention. A number of members have books ordered and some delay has been unavoidable, but as soon as the work is systematized so others can assist, the members may expect prompt service.

Parsons' "City for the People," Ghent's "Our Benevolent Feudalism," Ely's "Outlines of Economics," and Del Mar's "Science of Money" are the leaders thus far. Simons' "The American Farmer" will doubtless take well, once it is started. Deposit, 50c; same for Kautsky's "Revolution."

The Director expects to furnish a treat for the populists some of these days. He is now in communication with H. W. K. Eastman, Cheever, N. H., who, back in 1888, copyrighted "The Science of Government," which was published under the auspices of the Massachusetts state assembly of the Knights of Labor. Mr. Eastman denies that labor has anything to do with values, and sustains his point with vigor. Both the Marxists and the single taxers reach some wonderful conclusions in their efforts to connect value with labor cost. Marx, for example, denies that virgin soil can have (exchange) value, but admits that it may command a "price!"

Mr. Eastman's book will be reviewed as early as possible and arrangements made to circulate it. The few pages referring to the K. of L. will not detract from its worth.

### A Plan For Union

Editor Independent: I have never written before for publication and am usually too busy to worry about politics, but having read an article in your issue of April 2, by Rev. W. M. Kain, under the head of "Unite, Unite," I happened to think of a plan to unite all of the parties opposed to republican misrule.

The plan is: Let each party meet in national convention as usual; let this plan be put before them and it having carried, let each party nominate candidates for president and vice president as usual. Then let all these candidates for president meet and draw lots, the lucky one to run. The rest to withdraw. Let the candidates for vice president draw lots in the same way. The resulting ticket to be called the Union ticket. The same plan to be carried out in nominating state and even county tickets.

I think this plan would result in a conservative cosmopolitan ticket that none of the common people except the very hide-bound and partisan could object to.

Hope my suggestion won't do any harm anyhow. From my observation of human nature it would be impossible for these parties to meet in joint convention and nominate. Each would want their idol to be IT.

E. W. ROBBINS.

Naponee, Neb.

### A Populist Socialist

Editor Independent: In an article of yours in reply to Mr. Steffe under head "As to Baby Rattle," you say that the socialists "ignore the farm problem" and you ask wherein the farmers are exploited. Does not the transportation companies, the grain elevators, the flouring mills, the meat packers, the cotton factories exploit the small farmer? The farmer has to sell his staple produce to co-operative buyers. Do they not take all that he produces over and above very limited wages? Does not the interest on debts, public and private, constitute a fixed tax laid upon the producers? The "capitalist employer buys labor power at the cost of production," as you grant, and he exploits the farmer by fixing the price of what he has to sell as well as what he must buy. He is therefore as much a serf and as much a wage-slave as any operative in the factories. He can never rise above this condition except by adopting some form of exploitation himself and robbing his neighbor.

The socialists are therefore right in classifying the people into two classes, the robbers and the robbed, and they look forward to the time when the brilliant editor of The Independent shall wield his pen for that platform which offers in their opinion the only hope for the robbed.

Come with us! We need you. You are too broad to care for a name. The sacred cause of labor, both rural and urban, we know, is on your heart and the socialist problem for its emancipation needs your logical brain and warm enthusiasm. Many of us take your paper because we believe you are an unprejudiced reasoner and will ultimately see the light, and when you do you will have the courage to stand for the right regardless of hoary custom.

"By surplus value" we do not understand to mean that a surplus is produced over and above the consuming capacity of the people, but that there is more produced than the wages allowed will pay for. Consequently there is real distress in a land of abundance. How can this ever be remedied while a small part of the people fix both price of products and the wages paid labor?

Public ownership of transportation might help the independent farmer who owns his farm, if it were not that the exploiting class owns the government and by means of fixed charges of interest and taxes impossible to escape because added to everything he buys. The farmer populists called in vain on the wage-earners for aid in their reform movements. The tide is now turned and the wage-slaves are calling on the farmers. It is useless to hope for reform until these two classes get together. They are used now by the robbers to neutralize each other, the landholder being told that he is a capitalist and needs cheaper labor in order to get a profit.

But the system which teaches men to take profits from labor is wrong and will eventually divide mankind into master and servants. A feudalism which may at times be benevolent, but never the less slavery. In

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which class will your children be?

M. FOERG.

Meridian, Miss.

(Mr. Foerg makes a good populist argument in the main, but wholly overlooks the point The Independent has been urging: That the present inequitable distribution of wealth cannot be explained wholly by applying the Marxist formula of "surplus value." Certainly the farmer is exploited, just as Mr. Foerg suggests; but the Marxist does not account as "exploitation" the robbery of one bourgeois by another. Marxist "exploitation" occurs when the laborer sells his labor-power at cost of production and the capitalist uses that labor-power for a longer number of hours than would suffice to produce the things necessary to keep up the laborer's capacity to perform labor. The surplus hours produce "surplus value," we are told.

The Independent repudiates as unsound the whole Marxist theory of "surplus value," willingly admitting, however, that the laborer receives nothing like an equivalent for the services he renders. It has no quarrel with the general survey made by the socialists, but objects to being required to account for the enormous inequalities in the distribution of wealth by using the "surplus value" formula. Further, The Independent does not believe in the "inevitability" argument advanced by the socialists, but does believe that we must fight every inch of the ground if we make any advance.—Associate Editor.)

### Cracks a Kangaroo

Editor Independent: In a recent issue A. K. Angaroo says: "The single tax will help the man who works for himself," which is true, and the gentleman will also admit that then there will be more working for themselves because land will become practically free—easier to get, as then no one will hold land idle because it will be unprofitable to do so.

This increased number of people working for themselves will reduce the army of the unemployed some, also the fact of their being "helped by the single tax will enhance their purchasing power, thus making an increased demand for labor products and again reducing the army of unemployed, making of them not only producers, but consumers, in turn employing others and a repetition of the act indefinitely. That one benefit should be enough to make any fair-minded person favor the idea.

The gentleman also intimates the socialist old stereotyped expressed that the single taxers want to go back to hand production, which is almost too ridiculous to notice. The single taxers would not abolish the present labor-saving machinery if they could, and could not if they would; we would leave the machinery as it is, and either gradually or instantly abolish all taxation, direct and indirect, and substitute the idea of single tax, which is really not a tax at all, but the pay-

ment to society for advantages that society confers on the individual.

The adoption of the single tax would remove the evils that the socialists are cracking at. Karl Marx unconsciously admitted it when he wrote: "The expropriation of the soil from the people forms the basis of the capitalistic system of production." If that is true (which we do not admit) then the restoration of the soil would destroy the basis of socialist bogie man, the capitalist. Then if there is anything in their evolutionary idea it can go on natural lines and not perverted ones on account of the consequent result of the unnatural monopoly of natural resources.

TANGLE SIXER.

Youngstown, O.

### Jefferson

The author of the Declaration of Independence stands in human history as the foremost man who ever lived, whose influence has led men to govern themselves in the conduct of states by spiritual laws, not formulas to be assented to, but rules of life to be governed by. It was due to Jefferson that our fathers laid deep the foundation of the state in the moral law. They first set to mankind the great example and exhibited the mighty spectacle—the sublimest spectacle in the universe—of a great and free people voluntarily governing itself by a law higher than its own desire.

He will hold his place among the world's immortals as the author and finisher of that great charter of human rights and foremost architect among the builders of free institutions, when those who now speak and act in hollow mockery of his example, and selfish servility to his glory, are but forgotten dust. His is a safe name for these to juggle with for popular favor; but his loyalty to conscience and his sublime courage to resist popularity when it demanded sacrifice of manly independence are and will remain to them unknown virtues.—Senator Hoar.

Importance of fresh air to the sick is told about in "Care of Invalids," (a copy of which has reached this office), issued by the medical department of the Mutual Life Insurance company of New York, and sent on request to those who address the home office of the company, Nassau, Cedar, William and Liberty streets, New York city.

Is it not time that the populists take charge of our state government again to reduce freight rates and raise railroad taxation? The populists may have given up their fight as a party, but their work with the democratic party was productive of much good to the people of the state of Nebraska. Anyone who is fair ought to admit that the populists did more for the interests of the farmer and ranchmen than any republican legislature.—Valentine Democrat.