

Truth — An Eternal Quest

by ALFRED Y. K. AU

TIME tested and revered books, like masterpieces of art and aged wine, must be sipped, not gulped. Recently I had occasion to sip a little of *Progress and Poverty*, the immortal work of Henry George.

I marveled at how modern this book is — how apropos is its message — even after all these years. Indeed Henry George was an advanced thinker — a man who should have lived in our present era in order that he might offer us his active leadership in our present search and struggle for the truth.

But even though his voice and his pen are now stilled, his thoughts and ideas, mellowed by our own experiences, seem to leap from the pages to ignite the flame of hope in the hearts of all those who would read his work in full contemplation and appreciation — sipping rather than gulping down its wisdom.

Henry George was a leader who was not afraid of his own thinking. On page 12 of *Progress and Poverty* he expressed the dogma of a true scien-

tist — the philosophy of causation — commonly known as the theory of cause and effect. "In the sequence of phenomena there is no accident," he wrote. "Every effect has a cause, and every fact implies a preceding fact."

This is followed with a declaration of his dedication to truth: "I propose to beg no question, to shrink from no conclusion, but to follow truth wherever it may lead. Upon us is the responsibility of seeking the law, for in the very heart of our civilization today women faint and little children moan. But what that law may prove to be is not our affair. If the conclusions that we reach run counter to our prejudices, let us not flinch; if they challenge institutions that have long been deemed wise and natural, let us not turn back."

These passages, in my estimation, put Henry George "in the groove." A thinker among thinkers, he is a man who does not believe that "established" truths should be regarded as eternal; but that the search for truth itself must necessarily be an eternal quest.

Mr. Au is the principal member of a certified public accounting firm in Honolulu. He recalls that Gilbert M. Tucker of Albany, a life-long exponent of George's theories, visited Honolulu in 1960 and spoke to him about *Progress and Poverty*. "At that time," wrote Mr. Au, "I was deep in my own research . . . Recently I got around to really knowing Henry George. . . . I hope 'Professor' Tucker hasn't forgotten that I'm not one to forget."