

## A Splendid Tribute To Henry George

IN the *Journal of Law and Order*, published in Boston, our old friend, Poultney Bigelow, has a remarkable tribute to Henry George which would be well worth reprinting in its entirety did space permit. We cannot forego the opportunity of reproducing extracts from this article. Mr. Bigelow wields a pen that has given him no little fame in this country, and great causes have always enlisted his fine genius and splendid sympathy. In his home at Malden-on-the-Hudson, surrounded by his books, he has left unsought the prizes held out to those who take part in political activities. He has been wholly satisfied and happy in the literary work that has engrossed so much of his time, and the fruit of that effort is by no means inconsiderable in quality and quantity.

Mr. Bigelow says in part:

"Of the many and noble and unselfish men that have loomed on my social and literary horizon, Henry George stands out with remarkable vividness. His life is perhaps the nearest to that of our Saviour which it is possible for an American to live. He died young. He lived all his life in poverty. He knew no period of rest or earthly pleasure—his work was always for others, rarely for himself. At a time when other boys are in elementary schools, Henry George was a sailor before the mast, circumnavigating the globe, visiting the Far East, and studying man under different conditions.

### A WARRIOR PACIFICIST

Henry George was a theoretical pacifist, but a practical man of blood; he denounced Governor Tilden for urging the importance of coast defences, yet he enlisted with a gang of adventurers to make war in Mexico under the bloody banner of Juarez.

His conduct was paradoxical only as was that of the meek and lowly Jesus when he broke the tables and no doubt the heads of the Jew money lenders.

### HIS GREAT UNSELFISHNESS

The key to Henry George's poverty was his invincible unselfishness. He deemed it a sin to earn money from his books. He wanted his gospel to reach the poor and for them he virtually abandoned all hope of returns from a work that went into millions of grateful homes. It is also worth noting that Henry George, in common with many of the world's great writers, had his book rejected by the leading publishers of his native land.

### A LITERARY TRIUMPH

Finally the author borrowed money, set the type up himself; made the plates at his own expense and then after having achieved his own success found plenty of pub-

lishers ready to share his glory—and secure all that there was of profit.

In 1881 Henry George woke up to find himself the literary hero of two continents—but heroes of the pen are much like those of the sword—they often fight on empty bellies.

### OUTRAGED TRUSTEES

He had written much on political economy and had achieved considerable fame as a speaker who treated questions of the day from a philosophical and not merely political point of view. The University of California suggested to him the idea of preparing a course of lectures on political economy with a view to a chair in that department—as yet unfilled.

The day came, the platform was occupied by all that could lend importance to a great academic event. The hall was crowded with under-graduates and the prospective Professor was at his best.

Success was instantaneous and overwhelming, but the applause was limited to the body of the hall. The platform with its load of trustees, patrons, politicians and paid pundits shook hands but languidly when the lecturer ceased—and Henry George was not invited again to Berkeley.

The lecture was a masterpiece. . . . It is a lecture that might do good if given once a year at every American college.

Here is an extract well calculated to administer a spiritual jolt to even less conservative communities than California:

"For the study of Political Economy you need no special knowledge, no extensive library, no costly laboratory. You do not even need text books nor teachers if you will but think for yourselves. All that you need is care in reducing complex phenomena to their elements, in distinguishing the essential from the accidental, and in applying the simple laws of human action with which you are familiar.

### UNIVERSITY IGNORANCE

"All this array of professors, all this paraphernalia of learning cannot educate a man. They can but help him to educate himself. Here they may obtain the tools; but they will be useful only to him who can use them.

"A monkey with a microscope; a mule packing a library are fit emblems of the men—and unfortunately they are plenty—who pass through the whole educational machinery and come out but learned fools, crammed with knowledge which they cannot use—all the more pitiable—all the more contemptible, all the more in the way of real progress, because they pass, with themselves and others, as educated men."

We can see the platform plutocrats writhing at these revolutionary sentences, for they are words of truth—and therefore bitter to the many.

### A CHALLENGE TO SOCIETY.

Progress and Poverty was eagerly read and hotly discussed, but the older and more sagacious wagged their

heads when the conclusion was driven home logically and society was invited to surrender property in land.

A little club of Henry George students met weekly in my bachelor rooms near Gramercy Park. I recall at this moment J. Kennedy Todd, Cleveland Dodge and his brother Earle, Percy Pyne, Oliver Northcote, and many others of their age and kind.

Mr. George listened always with utmost courtesy, and in his answers had a winning manner of apparently sympathizing with his interlocutor. Many were the long walks and talks we had together, particularly of a Sunday morning, and I was fortunate in being able to fortify a subsequent edition of his great book with citations from the writings of the French Physiocrats, Turgot and Quesnay.

## Robert C. Macauley Stirs Lewiston

(From the *Lewiston Journal*, Lewiston, Me.)

**R**OBERT C. MACAULEY of Philadelphia, candidate for president of the United States on the Single Tax party ticket at the last election, is in Lewiston. He came here from Boston, where he has been spending the last ten days with National Organizer Robinson, looking over the ground and meeting those who have an interest in the Single Tax proposition.

Mr. Macauley, who at present is secretary for the national committee of his party, is visiting this city for the same purpose. He is here to meet all who have a working knowledge of just what the Single Tax plan means. In this way he expects to gain new enthusiasm and ideas, and at the same time to awaken added interest in the cause in this section of New England. During his stay in Lewiston he is to talk at a number of public meetings.

A well built man of middle age, with bright, snappy eyes and a grey Van Dyke beard, Mr. Macauley has an appearance and personality that hold the attention of his hearers. And when he begins to talk in a clear cut and pleasing tone, rapidly warming to his subject, he becomes very interesting.

In an interview granted a *Journal* reporter soon after his arrival from Portland, Mr. Macauley emphasized his belief that at the present time in politics a man does not vote as he thinks is right, so much as he does according to his obligations. For instance, a man may consider that the Single Tax proposition is a clear solution to the problem of taxation. He works, however, for a company owning wild lands on which it pays few if any taxes. Is it probable that this man will oppose his company by voting for the Single Tax plan?

This idea of taxation originated in this country with Henry George, at one time a candidate for the office of Mayor of New York. He advocated the abolition of all taxes upon industry and the products of industry, and the taking, by taxation upon land values, irrespective of improvements, of the annual rental value of all those various

forms of natural opportunities embraced under the general term land. To point out the numerous reasons why this is practical is a story in itself.

The Single Tax party originated in Philadelphia about five and a half years ago, stated Mr. Macauley, not for political purposes but to advertise the proposition and to get its ideas before the people. "We do not desire to be a separate party," continued the visitor. "What we do desire is to convince the people of the practicability of the Single Tax idea, and to get one of the two greater parties to adopt it in its platform."

He went on to say that the party is fully organized and working at the present time in 21 states, being particularly strong along the Pacific Coast. "But," he added, "as I stated before, we do not measure our success by votes. It is measured by the extent to which our propaganda—our basic idea—has reached the people."

"Are there any places where this method of taxation is in effect?" asked the reporter.

"No, there are none," was the ready answer. "In British Vancouver they started ten years ago on the proposition, but they took only a part of the idea. They exempted all improvements from taxation, but did not adopt the main feature—the collection of the annual rental value of the land. Thus land values were greatly increased. In no place has the Single Tax idea been given a fair trial.

"Under the present form of taxation they tax dogs, thus decreasing the number in a community. If a person commits an assault he has to go into court and pay a fine or tax, and so on. A man builds a house and he is at once taxed a large sum. Is this proper? It works as in the case of the dogs—it cuts down the number of new buildings. It puts more of a fine upon a man to build a new house than it does to break the law. It places the builder in the same class with the criminal, one paying a fine for being a menace to the public and the other for being a benefit. Taxes as they are at present put a penalty on men's production; the more productive you are the more you pay."

He cited as an example the case of a man in an insane asylum—incurably insane. Property had been left him. While the owner is in the asylum a railroad decides to build across country, the site being along the insane man's land. This land, of course, increases in value, due to no action on the owner's part, and the person in charge of the property sells a narrow strip of it for a large sum, besides getting an increased rental from the other land along the railroad line. Thus a man incurably insane has his bank account greatly increased through no skill or effort on his part. Single Tax would prevent this, as the increased rental from the land would go to the county or town where it was located.

A PEOPLE set free from land monopoly would not tolerate government as we know it today, with our silly political campaigns!