

Poultney Bigelow on Henry George

DURING the years I knew Henry George—the short seventeen years of his active ministry—his great book was translated into every tongue, including Japanese, and cheap editions flooded the English world. The German Government was the first that applied his doctrines practically, at the very moment of their author's death, and in the world's oldest community—the province that gave birth to Confucius. Australian land legislation has felt the influence of *Progress and Poverty* and today its principles are welcomed universally, although vast prejudice is encountered when it comes to their practical application. In Henry George's own country, where the world might look for the first experiment in land reform, we find land speculation firmly rooted and hotly justified as the basis of national prosperity.

This view is reinforced by an almost universal distrust of anything done by government. We tolerate stupidity, waste, petty tyranny and medieval barbarism in our customs officials, our post office, our immigration matters, our censorship of morals, our suppression of wine, and in our navigation laws. We tolerate because we cannot do away with congress and majority rule. We vainly protest against the corruption and inefficiency of our ubiquitous inspectors and blackmailing officials, but there they are like fleas on the dog, and any relief can be but momentary.

Henry George lived in the slums of New York, for he was putty in the hands of his publishers. He paid for making the plates of *Progress and Poverty*, and he never knew financial ease. It was to him a source of bitter comment when of a Sunday morning I would fetch him for a stroll and a talk. He had to pick his way along sidewalks crowded with ash cans and refuse; neglected streets with abominable pavements; children with no place to play save the gutters. Yet we were in the richest city of the continent under government "by" if not "for" the people. Of course George argued that when his plan should have been accepted, every man would live on his own land patch; speculation would cease; the public treasury would be full; government would provide parks, libraries, baths, music, education, and all sorts of good things without taxation save a moderate proportion of the "uncarned increment."

It was a joy to be with George and to feel the glow of his invincible confidence in human goodness. Had I been younger he might have persuaded me that all thieves and murderers would turn into philanthropists did we but meet the advances in a kindly spirit. He was a saintly man; he walked with angels, and his heart expanded when the voice of God came to him and bade him struggle in the cause of humanity. He gave away his copyrights in order that the gospel of *Progress*

and *Poverty* might reach the masses, and he gave his life as a sacrifice for the very men who gave him his death blow.

"Seventy Summers," Vol 2. by POULTNEY BIGELOW
Longmans Green & Co., 1925.

Death of Edward M. Caffall

IT was a shock to learn of the sudden death of our old friend, Edward M. Caffall, for he had visited this office only a few days before his short but painful illness which ended fatally.

He died at his residence in this city, June 22, and funeral services were held at St. Agnes Chapel (Trinity Parish), Thursday, June 24. Present among his family and friends were those followers of Henry George who had been most closely associated with him: William J. Wallace, Oscar Geiger, M. Van Veen, Herman Loew, George R. Macey, Mark M. Dintenfass, and Joseph Dana Miller.

Mr. Caffall was 67 years old, and was born in Alton, England, coming to America as a young man of eighteen, following his examination at Oxford, which he passed successfully. His father had invented a waterproofing process for brick and stone work, and the son made many improvements in this process. Many public buildings and monuments were treated by the Caffall process, among them being Cleopatra's Needle in Central Park and Plymouth Rock. The business will be carried on by the son Edward of the third generation.

Few followers of Henry George have been more unremittingly active. Mr Caffall possessed the newspaper instinct and his articles in several Jersey papers and his letters to the metropolitan dailies were always interesting and striking. But above all was the charming personality of the man. A devout Christian, his religion guided every step in his daily life, yet his spirit was broadly tolerant. He had a host of friends and few men were more greatly loved.

The *Palisadian*, of Palisade, N. J., where he lived for many years, says of him:

There died this week in New York one of the most remarkable men this age has produced—Edward M. Caffall. He lived nearly fourteen years in Palisade, when circumstances made it necessary for him to move back to the big city over the way. Mr. Caffall was one of the most forceful thinkers the country has known. In one direction he had no equal in the entire land. As an advocate of Single Tax and the Henry George theory of government he was sincere and really powerful. In all of the turmoil of our State and National politics he never wavered from Single Tax. As a citizen he was beautiful in the simplicity and loyalty of his daily life, and left an imprint that will not be forgotten by those who knew him in the sincerity of his life's performances. An Englishman by birth, he was American by adoption and an honor to both nations.

The Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Land