

So it happened that little by little a complete transformation took place in the character and the consequent influence of these temples which had been erected in honor of the king for having established an ideal government.

The iniquity of the then existing social order was made to give way to what had been originally established, and these temples were now devoted to the restoration and support of the original order of things. Those in the temples whose protest was strongest were exposed and driven therefrom, while those who in the halls of learning rebelled at the new order were made to give their places to others, all by popular consent.

At last reason prevailed not only in the temples but, what was equally important, in the halls of learning. Leaders arose who led the people in a successful revolution, resulting in the deposition of the king and the complete restoration of the natural order that had been responsible for the prosperity of the people as originally planned by the founder of their kingdom.

The operation was as simple as it was effective. One by one the taxes upon business and industry were repealed. This was, in every instance, followed by increased business activities and additional employment of the idle. As these taxes were abolished the government simultaneously increased its collection of its natural revenue, ground rent, and this enabled the reduction of those enormous expenses of government. As free trade with other peoples was inaugurated a new impetus was given to industry of every kind.

As the inflated values which had characterized all lands were cancelled, this had the effect of restoring the land to the people, in consequence of which agriculture became profitable in a natural way and all rents paid for the use of land of any kind were reduced to a normal basis.

The government thereafter made no demands upon citizens except payment for equivalent public services rendered. The certainty that no laws would be passed contrary to natural law gave full encouragement to all business enterprises. Other striking features of the change were the reduction of public expenses to but a fraction of what they had been, and extirpation of the spoils system, together with the entire removal of patronage from legislators. Restoration of normal commercial relations with the rest of the world enabled the reduction of armaments to a police basis.

Prosperity was thus restored not by any magical influence, but by compliance with the laws of nature provided by a wise and beneficent Creator. At last every one of numerous taxes had been repealed, leaving only for the government collection of economic or ground rent. This was the superlative achievement of a perfected democracy under Natural Law.

## Appeal for Socratic Education

By LANCASTER M. GREENE

THE time is ripe for a reaction in the direction of American philosophy, for a Renaissance of the thought of Henry George. Pressure groups are bringing about a natural resentment toward their methods and the privileges they obtain against the rest of the country. People are wondering whether counter-pressure is just chasing around in a vicious circle. Millions are desperate for jobs. Even the most able and fortunate wonder where they might be with the next turn of the wheel.

Conditions have made the soil fertile and ready for the seed of Georgeist thought. The problem then is a practical one—how to plant so as to produce the finest crop with the least effort. Humanitarian intentions are not enough—the means of planting thought will determine the crop. The two methods of planting, or educating, which I wish to examine are the lecture method and the Socratic method. By the lecture method is meant the delivering of an oration, or the imparting of an idea, with little active participation on the part of the audience. By the Socratic method is meant the free discussion and exchange of questions and answers on the part of both instructor and audience.

In teaching through political campaigns we find the concentration on lectures. The human tendency is to resist being told, and particularly to resist what is told during a campaign. The prejudice and bias which the average human acquires during his life are likely to be reinforced by the kind of lecture he gets through politics. The speaker is in a hurry, and we have all been warned against people who are in a hurry. Bank tellers are not the only ones who say, "Look out for the man in a hurry." Questions must be swiftly met, honestly if possible, but quickly, no matter how ruthlessly. The Georgeist movement has had many of the most brilliant lecturers for generations, but though they could influence the hearts and minds of their audiences, it was another matter to make their listeners effective *teachers* on their own account. It reminds me of Professor Herbert Brown's statement, "Education is personal exercise. It cannot be sprayed on in a lecture."

Another difficulty with the political lecture is that it must take the view that everything else must be dropped while we deal with this emergency. All work for the long pull, no matter how much the political speaker agrees with it, must be put off while we struggle with the dragon of the moment. The political Georgeist would say, "Drop slower methods of educating while we put over this all-important fiscal reform or elect this man or party." This political pleading inevitably depends

upon the promise of mighty benefits to come. It has supplied the hook upon which the tag of "panacea" and "crackpotism" is hung by the ignorant and unscrupulous.

A better case might be made for the lecture method in the calmer atmosphere of the class-room. The national hero of Danish education, Grundtvig, developed a number of rules for obtaining the maximum result through lectures. He advised: 1. That students should be over eighteen, at which age he felt they reached maturity. 2. That teachers should be farmers, or business or professional men, so that teaching should be for the love of it and never aloof from actual life. 3. That students should be similar people so that they might test the abstract principle in living. 4. That teaching should concern itself with principles of economics, logic and history, purely cultural subjects as compared with so-called practical or vocational courses. 5. That teaching should eschew religious and political views (though Grundtvig himself was a minister and a man of political convictions).

This method of education taught the Danish farmer to be a keen logician and an individualist. He is a power to be reckoned with, and politicians fear to propose laws for the rural part of Denmark which might meet with the ridicule of the farmers.

As a result of their education, the Danes have been favorably disposed toward Henry George, and have taught his principles in their Folk Schools. Their method of education has also made them quite receptive to the Socratic method. In 1936, I attended the International Conference for the Taxation of Land Values, in London, as a representative of the Henry George School of Social Science. The School has developed the Socratic method of spreading the Georgeist philosophy, and it has proved highly successful in the United States. The Danish Georgeists were excited enough about the new American use of the Socratic method to come to London to learn of it. I found them most appreciative of the method and material used to lead the student to think for himself and to express himself vigorously and confidently enough to teach himself, whether in or out of the classroom. They point out that the advantages of the question method made possible 27 new schools with 55 classes the second year after the London Conference. These Danish educators will tell you that the Socratic method is ideal for breaking down bias and making possible the re-examination of premises and the extension of logical reasoning. Thinking done for oneself, they say, carries conviction. The political slogan, which was their greatest handicap, is breaking down in the atmosphere of free discussion and realization of how far George extended the Grundtvig idea of individual freedom. Prejudice is giving way to understanding.

An interesting sidelight is found in the experience that a larger percentage of a class can be held by the lecture

method than by the Socratic method. They can come for entertainment without perspiration. When Socratic questions make study necessary, some may be unable to keep up the work. These will drop out, but the quality of those who stay is higher. While this experience is usual, the ideal of the Boy Scout executives has a moral. The Scoutmasters are reminded that the dropping-out of a boy after six months is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster, and not any fault of the boy. All boys are assumed to be good material for Scouts for life, and failure of this ideal should bring careful soul-searching on the part of the scout leader. How well we can apply this principle to either the lecture or the Socratic teaching!

Jacques Barzun, in "Of Human Freedom," said, "Every thinker from Plato down has perceived that any education worth the name must make of each pupil a self-propelling individual who not only has learned but can continue to learn. In Aristotle's homely phrase, to educate is not to present the student with a pair of shoes but to impart to him the art of shoemaking." Education, and the achievements that come from education, cannot be imposed upon people. It must come from within. A demand for results that can only come thus is as ridiculous as Napoleon's command to his Commissioner of Police to see to it that literature flourish in the Empire.

"But," I can hear from the "practical" man, "what are we educating teachers and students for?" To which I reply: Isn't the freedom of the individual our ultimate object? And isn't the development of each self-propelling person a big step? And isn't the only next consistent step the encouraging of each person to work out his own program while cooperating as he wishes in our further development of more students of freedom?

The organized efforts of 20,000 people or more in politics might force some program upon a larger number, but the diverse and autonomous efforts of 20,000 to educate others would seem to me to make far greater strides toward freedom. The means will always determine the ends, and the more freedom each local group maintains the more freedom they all are apt to obtain in larger spheres. No matter how we multiply, a principle remains the same.

THIS doctrine alone stands unshaken, that doing wrong is to be more carefully avoided than suffering it; that before all things a man should study not to seem but to be good in his private and public life. . . . Insult and infamy will do you no harm if you be really an honest and true man, practising virtue. And hereafter when we have so practised it together, then and not till then will we set about politics.

—SOCRATES (FROM PLATO'S DIALOGUE, "GORGIAS")