

IMPRESSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Extracts from Some of the many Letters Received Before or Since the Conference in Edinburgh

JOHN Z. WHITE, Chicago: "Conservative, Liberal, Republican and Democrat appear to mean very much the same thing, which reminds us that privilege usually robs us of our goods by first butchering our language. A word is the dress of an idea, and if the great, enlightened and self-appreciating masses on both sides of the big pond can be induced to accept the word 'radical' as identical with 'revolutionist,' the entire 'holier than thou' section of our variegated populace will be highly gratified.

"Privilege professes great admiration for time-honoured principles, but never acts upon them, any more than a burglar seeks entrance by the front door. Privilege also professes great admiration for honesty, but far be it from privilege to practice so homely a virtue. Blatant privilege masquerading in democratic habiliments is surely a sight for the gods, although it is not at all unusual in this day of universal education and general self-satisfaction. Sane people want freedom, not regulation by law. Regulation is for public officials—not for free men.

"Someone said: 'Let me write the songs of the people, and I care not who writes their laws.' Another of these curious manifestations of a defective nervous system. Do you think that you can improve on the songs of Robert Burns? Here was the one particular democrat of all time, who rode Pegasus with all of the certainty of one of the gods. Scotsmen have sung his songs around the world and into the hearts of all peoples; and until quite recent years have sent representatives of 'yon birkie, ca'd a lord,' to plead their cause at Westminster. If this was the best Scotsmen could do, what chance have other folks? No, good friends, our work is political, not poetical. All poetry, all prose, all science, all art, lend their aid to politics, and as the centre of the feudal system was 'contract,' so the centre of our political structure is 'taxation.' That is the matter requiring attention, for its disposition determines the fate of modern civilized communities."

PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY (written from London): "Unfortunately I am obliged to return to New York early in August and so shall not be able to attend the Edinburgh meeting. With many regrets and best wishes for a glorious success in the meetings."

FEDERACION GEORGISTA ARGENTINA: "The Third National Georgeist Convention, which met in Buenos Aires on 25th and 26th May last with representatives in attendance from all the Georgeist Associations in our country, unanimously resolved to request the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade to put on record the fervent wishes of Argentine Georgeists for the success of the International Conference in Edinburgh and to convey personal greetings to all present at this great gathering."

DR STEPHEN WISE, U.S.A. (from his Secretary): "Dr Wise asks me to tell you how very unhappy he is to find that he cannot attend the Fourth International Conference to promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade. He feels that he must be in attendance at Zurich, at what will probably prove to be the most important Zionist Congress that has yet been held. In the circumstances, he must forgo the privilege, which he had coveted, of accepting the invitation to have part in the Conference. Dr Wise is such an old and convinced believer in Land Value Taxation, that it is

a great privation to him to be denied a part in the Edinburgh Conference."

JUDSON GREENELL, Florida: "I wish I could attend the Conference, but physical disabilities would prevent even if there were no other reasons. Age demands its toll. Best wishes for success. If a Thought is a Thing, then the Thought for Single Tax is with you. Let us hope that eventually the world will embrace the Single Tax and abolish poverty."

HON. SIR GEORGE FOWLDS, New Zealand (Cable): "Hearty greetings for successful Conference from O'Regan and self. Enrol us members."

UFFE GROSEN and TROELS SAMS, Denmark: "We are with you in our thoughts as you meet in Edinburgh and wish the Conference great success, so that land value cause may gain more strength and be carried for the benefit of all peoples, and that strife internally and externally may give way to understanding and peace."

S. BERTHELSEN and JAKOB E. LANGE, Denmark (Cable): "Greetings and good wishes from fellow Georgeists in Denmark."

FRANK STEPHENS, Delaware (in a letter to the President, the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy): "I think the work you are doing in connection with the International Union and promoting the Edinburgh Conference is of very grave importance. Anything to help it along I gladly will do. It seems strange to say that I am already a member of so many and such varied reform organizations that I do not know whether I ever signed up for the International Union or not, but in case I didn't, here is my application form."

MRS LEWIS BERENS, MR and MRS H. A. BERENS, London (Telegram): "Deeply regret unable attend splendid gathering which is giving great impetus to our movement. The times are propitious."

J. L. BJÖRNER, Denmark (Cable): "Greetings to the Conference, cheers and handshake, onward to the work."

F. FOLKE, Denmark: "Looking back on the days in Edinburgh, I am glad that the Conference was a success worthy of the hard work and sacrifices of our excellent co-workers in Great Britain. At Edinburgh I had some conversations with our German friends on an idea of arranging next summer a 'People's Conference on Justice and Good Understanding' at the border of Germany and Denmark. Since my return I have spoken to different people of influence about this plan and I have found that on this side of the border it seems to be the right moment to start such a movement which would, of course, afford an excellent opportunity for the propaganda of our ideas."

GEORGE CROSOER, Letchworth: "There is a feature of the Edinburgh Conference which is very noticeable to one who has been associated with the movement for Taxation of Land Values from its early times: namely, the evidence of a better understanding of the whole subject than at any former period. Enthusiasm for the cause there was always, but not always understanding in the same degree. There is now a general agreement in opinion upon related points, remarkable among so many persons from localities differing widely in laws, customs and environment.

"Very significant is the frequent use of the term 'the Henry George Philosophy.' The doctrines of Henry George do really form a system of social philosophy,

though this fact has been rather slow in obtaining recognition. I think that I first heard the term used a few years ago by the President of our 'International Union,' and I have frequently borrowed it without acknowledgment and with good effect. To present an ingenious scheme of taxation does not always gain sympathetic attention—the world has had experience of many such—but a scheme of social philosophy which throws light on the problem of how to make life worth living, and which has stood 50 years of criticism, is a more attractive proposition."

CHARLES R. ECKERT, Pennsylvania: "I want to congratulate the Committee and all in charge upon the splendid success of the Conference, and wish to assure you that the Henry George Foundation of America appreciates the great work you and your colleagues are doing for the economic emancipation of mankind. In the name of the Henry George Foundation of America I extend to the Conference fraternal greetings, good wishes and good luck."

EMIL JORGENSEN, Chicago: "Heartiest congratulations on the wonderfully fine and authoritative papers presented at the Edinburgh Conference. Their value cannot be computed. Mr Otto Cullman returned to Chicago a couple of weeks ago very enthusiastic about the success of the Conference and the delightful time he had there. We saw notices of the Conference in the local papers here, and I am sending you one of the clippings."

ANGUS McDONALD, Australia (writing from Berlin): "I duly received the Conference papers, and must congratulate the authors and all concerned on their remarkable contribution to the literature of the movement. I sincerely trust it will set some of the members of the younger generation thinking."

CAPT. ARTHUR R. MCDUGAL, Lauder: "Our Conference was excellent, I thought, though of course not perfect. It has aroused interest, and I have a letter to-day asking 'Who is this Henry George everyone is talking about. Is he a new reformer? . . .' Such is fame!"

CARL MARFELS, Germany: "Sincerely I thank you for the papers you sent, which I have studied with greatest interest. I am struck by the clear thinking and clear manner of statement in print. What impresses me very much is that list of M.P.s. who sent their messages of goodwill."

CHAS. C. MCGOWAN, Ohio: "I received the complete set of papers read at the recent Conference to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade and thank you very much for them. I also received the Conference Membership Badge and will keep it as a souvenir. We in this country followed the proceedings with intense interest and feel that the Conference will be productive of much good and will prove a milestone on the road to emancipation of the masses from poverty through the establishment of a new order of freedom and justice."

INGJALD NISSEN, Norway: "I send my best thanks for the Conference. Only now after my return home I realize what an immense undertaking it was and what forethought was required to prepare all the details. It is no exaggeration to say that everything was arranged in the best possible way, and that the Conference will be an unforgettable and ever bright memory. I enclose newspaper clipping of an article I wrote about the Conference in the Labour journal, *Arbeiderbladet*."

DR J. J. PIKLER, Hungary: "Thank you for the very nice badge and chiefly for the Conference papers. I have not gone through all of them yet. There are very brilliant and useful ones, viz., by Mr Lange, Mr

Lester, Mr Björner, Sir Edgar Harper, etc. I am awaiting with keen interest the September issue of *Land & Liberty* to learn further details of the Conference, which I was so deeply sorry not to be able to join."

W. H. PAPE, South Australia: "I earnestly hope the Edinburgh Conference will prove the success its importance demands. I shall await the report of its proceedings with great interest. Heartiest good wishes."

MRS LOUIS F. POST, Washington, D.C.: "Your Conference was a great success. Dr and Mrs Graves have written me enthusiastically about it; and the papers which you printed in advance were so very fine that the Conference could not help being of a very high order. I have been carefully over all the papers received in two instalments, and have read most of them word for word. They are very valuable, especially the historical ones. Those by Mr Lange, Mr Berthelsen, Mr Cullman, Mr Scott, M.P., Mr Dakers, Mr Peter, Mr Giannelia, Mr Kristensen, Mr Daudé Bancel and Mr Meyer jointly, Mr de Clercq, Mr Jones and Mr Anderson have all interested me greatly. I am sure you are going to have important use for these papers as tracts for a long time to come, and it is very gratifying you have put them out in such good form. Somehow the whole thing seems to have the effect of our movement having a huge jump forward into new life."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON, British Columbia: "I am feeling optimistic about the movement. The daily papers here all devoted space to the Edinburgh Conference. It seems to me we cannot be ignored any longer. If the next Budget is up to promise, the whole world will ring about it."

HAROLD SUDELL, Pennsylvania: "You certainly had some good papers for the Conference. I enjoyed reading them, and wished I could have been present. That unpublished lecture of Henry George's was fine, and I don't see why it was not put out long ago. It is a wonderful tract."

CHARLES T. ROOT, New York, who was one of the panel of Vice-Presidents of the Conference: "I have just finished going through *Land & Liberty* for September and getting an idea of the proceedings at Edinburgh, as also of the publicity which the Conference secured, and it seems to me that the present is the most encouraging epoch in the work for land taxation and rating in England. With the subject well before the public, with a Government favourable to the reform, and with the Chancellor of the Exchequer pledged to it, I should say there was a chance of an Act initiating the application of this principle during your lifetime and mine."

A. C. CAMPBELL, Ottawa, Canada: "Congratulations upon your splendid success, and cordial thanks for the great efforts that made that success possible. The occasion must have been one of sheer joy to you because of the great good accomplished.

"I have heard from Mr Roebuck since his return.

"It is evident that our delegates received special kindness and attention both from the Conference as a body and from its officers and members as well. I feel that each of us of the Faith in Canada has been placed under obligation, and I offer you, and all, sincere thanks accordingly.

"I have received the publications of the Conference, also membership badge. These things are another reminder of the completeness of the preparations made for the Conference, in other words, of our debt to the officers who did the work."

(Many other messages have been received relating to the International Conference and we hope to find space for a further selection next month.)