

A DEMOCRATIC VICTORY.*

Henry George, junr., who has just achieved a remarkable victory as Democratic Candidate in the Congressional elections in New York, is the son of the author of "Progress and Poverty," founder of our movement. He was born in Sacramento on the 3rd of November, 1862. Owing to delicate health when a boy he had very little schooling, but he had a great advantage in the intimate companionship of his father and the intellectual stimulus of his father's method of encouraging his children to question all things rationally. Throughout his life he has been an indefatigable reader over a wide range of subjects and books, but of political economy and political history and science particularly.

When less than seventeen he left school for good and, teaching himself shorthand, became his father's secretary, in which service he continued until the early nineties, except for a few breaks at intervals. When his father came first to Britain in the Land League days, as special correspondent to the IRISH WORLD, young Henry George worked as a reporter on the staff of the BROOKLYN EAGLE.

After some experience at reporting he again acted as his father's secretary, accompanying him on his cyclonic lecturing tour through the British Isles in 1884. He was present at the Glasgow City Hall in that year when his father spoke there to the historic Scottish meeting, out of which has sprung the present movement in Great Britain from which may be traced the current of agitation that led up to the famous Budget of 1909.

On his return to the United States in 1885, he undertook more reporting, and rendered his father some further service as secretary during the production of "Protection or Free Trade." Later he had secretarial experience with the managing editor of the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, and did some supplementary work at writing fictitiously signed articles for that magazine. After a round of campaign speeches in his father's contest for Mayor of New York in 1886, and some miscellaneous service on the STANDARD, which his father started in 1887, Henry George, junr., became the managing editor of that paper. He served as such with skill and fidelity through trying experiences during his father's long absence in Australasia and on his trip round the world in 1889.

The STANDARD passing into different ownership, Henry George, junr., became a Washington correspondent. In 1891 he transferred the seat of his activities as newspaper correspondent to London. Here he made the acquaintance of Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, William Stead, Helen Taylor (step-daughter of John Stuart Mill), and Cardinal Manning. Of this democratic Cardinal he speaks and writes as he does of Tolstoy—"a great spirit no less than a great mind."

Further newspaper work succeeded Mr. George's return to the United States; editorial writing for a Washington paper, and a period of two years in Florida, first as news editor and then as managing editor of a Jacksonville daily paper. After a business venture in Cleveland in 1895 and 1896, Mr. George again joined his father, this time to assist in the preparation of "The Science of Political Economy."

In 1897 his father was drawn into the campaign for the Mayoral seat for Greater New York as the candidate of the Jeffersonian

Democracy. He died just before its close, and Henry George, junr., succeeded him in the candidacy.

In later years and since his marriage in 1898, Mr. George has travelled extensively—as an observer, writer and lecturer—in the United States, Canada and Japan, and in a trip round the world in which he visited Tolstoy. An account of his visit to Tolstoy reprinted from THE WORLD'S WORK, appeared in the March, 1910, issue of LAND VALUES. In 1900 he was a candidate for Presidential elector on the Bryan ticket in New York. In intervening times he has published in magazines and newspapers many articles and investigations concerning monopolies. He is the author of "The Menace of Privilege" and "The Romance of John Bainbridge," both published by Macmillan, his investigations furnishing the material for the

warnings of the former and the romance of the latter. Mr. George has done much lecturing since his father's death, on subjects principally within his own wide experience and observation.

Early in October, 1910, he was adopted as candidate by the Democratic Party and the Independence League for the seventeenth Congressional district of New York. He made a splendid uphill fight and was returned by a majority of 1,721. Writing from New York on November 16th, he says:—

"We have had a royal fight in a Republican 'silk-stocking' district. It contains nearly a quarter of a million inhabitants, and at this election had more than 50,000 voters registered. The incumbent, Mr. W. S. Bennet, was standing for his fourth term and was quite confident of re-election for several reasons. The district was regarded as 'safe' for a Republican. The boundaries had been so arranged as to make it a pocket borough for Republicanism. Two years ago Mr. Bennet carried the seat by a majority of over 8,000. He was a favourite with the New York City delegates for Legislative honours. He had a very extended personal following on account of his interesting personality and his willingness to do personal service for both Democrats and Republicans.

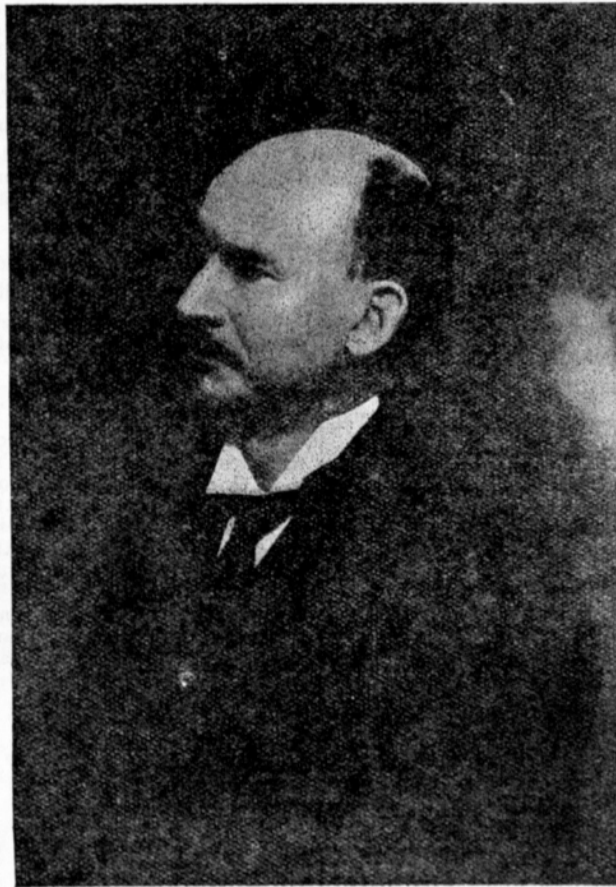
Against this, I was little known in the district up to the time of my nomination. We put into the field the finest body of speakers in this city and went along on radical lines appealing to progressive Republicans as well as to Democrats and Independence Leaguers. . . .

"The thing that most amazed my opponents and continues to amaze them was the strength we developed by our avowal of the whole free trade and Single Tax faith."

Last month we gave some particulars of the campaign from a letter from Mr. Scanlon.

The following interesting additional details from an article in the PUBLIC of 18th November, 1910, by Joseph Dana Miller, will pay for reproduction:—

Henry George, junr., won his fight for a seat in Congress from the seventeenth Congressional district of New York after a spirited campaign in which he gained the good will of the voters of his district. In a district normally 6,000 to 8,000 Republican he won by a majority of 1,721 over William S. Bennet. Mr.



HENRY GEORGE, JUNR.

Returned to Congress for New York City in November, 1910.

* We are indebted to the PUBLIC (Chicago) for the substance of this sketch.

Bennet has represented the district for three terms. He is popular as a handshaker and vote-getter; he is a "stand-patter," and voted for every increase of duties in the Payne-Aldrich tariff. He stood upon his record as a high tariff man and belittled the arguments of his opponent that the high cost of living was due chiefly to the tariff.

It was one of the few Congressional districts in which the tariff was directly and persistently assailed. It was the only one in which free trade was openly and boldly preached without equivocation. The candidate frankly announced himself as a free trader, and went even further than his enthusiastic speakers in the clear cut radicalism of his utterances.

Many votes, it is safe to say, were cast by Republican Free Traders, of whom there are many in this district where the Single Tax and abolition of all tariffs have been preached by the adherents of Henry George for many years at the corner of Seventh Avenue and 125th Street. This was one of the causes which helped.

In the campaign that had been carried on from 101st Street to Spuyten Duyvil and from Hudson River to Fifth Avenue, the truck speakers—and there was never any lack of them—preached Free Trade and administered telling blows to the protection fetish. Among the speakers were Hon. Lawson Purdy, Hon. Robert Baker, Dr. Marion Mills Miller, Joseph Fink, Fred C. Leubuscher, James Macgregor, George Von Auer, Leonard Tuttle, Augustus Weymann, and many others.

Mr. Bennet's failure to accept Mr. George's challenge to debate the causes of the high cost of living was made much of by the George speakers, and undoubtedly influenced many voters.

One of the chief causes of success was the candidate himself. His speeches were strong appeals, manly, dignified and free from the arts of the politician. Something of the loving simplicity of heart and mind that come to him from his great father were manifest to the voters of his district, and drew to him the support of independents. In the high-minded and honourable treatment he accorded to his opponent, refusing to take advantage of certain openings which a less punctilious swordsman might have eagerly availed himself of, he took to himself the high knightly counsel:

'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it.

Mr. George goes to Congress with a prestige of a great name, a world-wide reputation as a student of public questions and a personal acquaintance with many of the leaders in both parties. He can do much, because of the unique position he occupies, to advance the principles which his father formulated and which in his own best known and admirable work, "The Menace of Privilege," he has sought to popularise in terms of the latest economic development.

In all his efforts for the Commonwealth, Henry George has the loyal and enthusiastic support of his wife, and readily acknowledges how much this means to him at all times.

SAUL AMONG THE PROPHETS.

By ARTHUR SHERWELL, M.P.

(In THE HUDDERSFIELD DEMOCRAT for November.)

One of the pleasantest of all indulgences in a busy man's life is an occasional hunt among one's old papers. Clearing out a drawer, I lighted upon a copy of a report of an address which a well-known Tory member of Parliament—Mr. Watson Rutherford—delivered to his constituents exactly three years ago (October 25th, 1907). It is called "A Democratic Tory's Programme," and, in the light of current political controversies, it richly deserves to be rescued from oblivion.

Mr. Watson Rutherford is an estimable and able man, respected by all who know him, and a valiant fighter for his party. He is active in debate, skilled in the arts and tactics of guerilla fighting, and always ready for an all-night sitting. He took a leading part last year in the struggle against Mr. Lloyd George's memorable Budget, and was a keen and constant critic of the land taxes in particular.

Remembering all this, a humble supporter of a "spoliating," "confiscating," "socialistic," and "hen-roost robbing" Government re-reads his famous "Programme" with new zest and interest. He speaks, he tells us, for himself alone, although he "has reason to believe" that many of the views expressed "are shared by the majority of the more active spirits of Opposition M.P.'s." Whereat, recalling recent events, our eyebrows begin to rise. . . .

REFORM OF THE LAND LAWS.

But it is when we turn to his views on needed reforms in the land laws that our wonder is greatest. We think of last year's fight; of this "Democratic Tory's" own votes and speeches; and of his party's cries of "confiscatory socialism," "robbery," and "spoliation," as well as of this year's outcries against "Form IV."

"The land in every country," says this critic of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget, "is a limited quantity: the nation has to live upon it. It is the chief national asset, and therefore the nation has the right to insist that the best possible use should be made of every piece."

Strange accents these from the Tory benches!

But let us go on. "The principle at the basis of any reform in the tenure of land is the incidence of taxation." At present, owing to our method of tax assessment, "taxes, including not only the property tax, but the poor tax, the city tax, the sanitary rate, and all the other local rates and taxes, fall heaviest on those who are making the best use of their land, and lightest upon those who are making little or no use of it."

His remedy for this is—what? Just the Liberal remedy of taxing site values. "The proposal is that a landowner should be taxed not on his enterprise, his ability, his energy, his outlay, and the benefit which he has conferred upon the whole community by his improvements, but be taxed in proportion to his opportunity, viz.: the value of the bare site, that element in value which arises, not by his exertions, but by the stability of the State, and by the roads and drains if in the country, and by the streets, lighting, parks, tramways, and other municipal amenities if it be in a town. Such a system would automatically bring land into the market when it was wanted, and prevent speculators getting fat out of town extensions. It would also, of course, be applicable to all mineral rights, and would help to bring unworked mines into operation."

With wonderful prevision of the mind of his party, he rules out of court the stereotyped objections which have been the stock-in-trade of his political leaders and colleagues all these months past. The objection that the occupant would pay the site value tax, and not the landowner, is he says "unsound." So in truth, under ordinary economic circumstances, it is; but there are sometimes exceptional monopolistic conditions, as in Huddersfield, where safeguards are necessary and must at all costs be provided. The further stereotyped objection that there would be a difficulty in fixing site values is, he tells his constituents, "unfounded." It is done every day. (Poor Captain Pretzman! and from his own benches, too!)

Nor is it true, this "Democratic Tory" continues, that taxation of site values will "operate against open spaces and gardens, wide roads and other conveniences." That, also, oh! sorrowing critics of a "spoliation" budget, is an "unfounded objection."

But listen to this, ye members of the Land Union, and, as ye listen, reflect that the words are the words of a "Democratic Tory" who sits in Parliament on the same benches as your "repealing" President:—

"Incidentally" (our "Democratic Tory" is summing up the social results of the taxation of site values) "the alteration would be of great benefit to unemployment. It is notorious that the building trade furnishes a large proportion of the skilled unemployed. And there would be no fear of over-building, because there are immense numbers of out-of-date factories and rotten slums, all of which, under a proper system of taxing site values, would require to be pulled down and re-built. Moreover, there is another great advantage and most desirable reform that would immediately become feasible if this system were adopted, viz., to give the State, the city and the local authority in turn, power to purchase and take over any piece of land within their area at the assessed site value, plus, of course, the value of any existing improvements. In order to carry this out, it would be necessary to give the landlord power to get his assessment raised if he thought it too low, as well as lowered if he thought it too high. No landlord in Liverpool to-day applies to have his assessment made higher, but he would do so quickly if the city had the power to take his property at the amount of his assessment. Great advantages would result from this reform: landlords would take care to pay their proper share of the taxes. Arbitration to fix the value of land for any city improvement would be unnecessary, and the State or city acquiring land which the owner did not value at its proper price could turn it over at a profit to someone else who would make better use of it, and be willing to pay a higher proportion of the taxes."

Truly is Saul among the prophets!

Somehow I wish I had "spring-cleaned" that drawer before. The speech deserved an earlier resurrection.