

ANOTHER LOOK AT NORTH AMERICA

A business trip to North America in July and August enabled me to meet again many of the friends there who are giving yeoman service to the cause in the great cities of U.S.A. and Canada. In New York the Henry George School in its fine premises in 69th Street, is hard at work. Mr. Robert Clancy is the new Acting Director. From 1940 to 1943 he was editor of *Land and Freedom*, which is not now in publication.

Georgists in Britain will rejoice to know that Mrs. Anna George de Mille maintains her intense activity, surrounded by well-known stalwarts that space prevents from naming. Miss Peterson works unremittingly at the Schalkenbach publishing work. Miss Davis edits the *Henry George News* with a spirited pen.

Meeting for the first time a young couple of enthusiasts, Dr. and Mrs. Esty, it was very interesting to learn that the doctor's conversion came about through his own search for a remedy that he felt must exist somewhere for the awful poverty that he had met in his practice and for which the current 'isms were useless.

In Chicago there is a grand band of workers bursting with energy and finely marshalled by John L. Monroe, a young Scot. Geo. M. Strachan showed me the magnificent waterfront boulevard that made one realise if so much could be done under private ownership of land what could not be done if land were free?

A fortunate turn of date allowed participation at a memorial meeting to that great leader of the Middle West, John Z. White.

In Montreal, Miss Walton with a brisk band of folks is widening the good work started there many years ago by our late friend John Anderson. In Toronto it was a treat to find all our old veterans led by Senator Roebuck faithfully holding the fort, and a joy to meet their new, young secretary, John Potts.

In North America, where politics are so intensely professional, Georgists have concentrated on teaching; but some day, and may it be soon, the converts will in some places burst into public life and deal with the post-war troubles with the only remedy that can be effective. It is to be hoped that a good number of our zealous friends in North America will attend the next Conference of the International Union so that our friends in Europe may know the same encouragement that I have found from meeting them.

ASHLEY MITCHELL.

A correspondent sends us a cutting of the illustrated advertisement, which appears in New York newspapers with the headline IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD WINDOW NOW . . . AN INTERESTING DISPLAY SPONSORED BY THE HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL. And it goes on: "The School, at 50, East 69th Street, is devoted to spreading the economic ideas of a man whose fervent love for men and justice led him not only to write and teach, but to run twice for mayor. Henry George appeared near victory in 1897 when he died in the midst of the election campaign. His greatness is attested by the influence he has had on world leaders and by the fact that to-day, almost 50 years after his death, men and women contribute their services to teach his philosophy in a school of social science where fees are unknown. Beginning to-day you can see mementoes of George, editions in many languages of his great work *Progress and Poverty* and other interesting items in BLOOMINGDALE'S 60TH STREET WINDOW AT LEXINGTON AVENUE.

The gold discoveries at Odendaalsrust, in the Orange Free State have boosted the price of land beyond the dreams of avarice—that is to say, for those who manage to get in on the ground floor. A correspondent has sent us the circular of a local estate agency offering business sites for sale. It lacks nothing in audacity as to how to get rich without working. It is land speculation in the raw: "We hold on our own behalf and behalf of various sellers, numerous stands in the very heart of this Coming Goldfields Capital . . . now is the time to secure at low cost a selected site which must prove a safe and sound business investment . . . plans are now under way for a main railway service to be laid down as early as possible . . . direct tarmac road proposed to link Johannesburg with Odendaalsrust . . . we are also sole selling agents for numerous

properties in and adjoining Odendaalsrust, properties which will eventually increase in values out of all proportion to present prices."

TWO KINDS OF CLOSED SHOP

To the Editor, LAND & LIBERTY

SIR,—During the controversy on the "closed shop," we have been assured by Trade Union spokesmen that the closed shop—in the sense that all employees of a particular concern must belong to a particular union—is not true British Trade Union policy. However, one-hundred-per-cent. Trade Unionism (i.e., all employees to belong to *some* union) is to be aimed at. Nevertheless, in the case of the London Passenger Transport Board it has been laid down that all busmen and tramwaymen must be members of the Transport and General Workers' Union as a condition of employment, and a number of employees who refused to conform to this new condition have been dismissed.

The Unions, in their struggle to better the conditions of their members, are resorting to coercion which is in direct conflict with the free status one would naturally expect them to seek for their members. And it is a policy resorted to because of the failure to recognise that the economic structure of society has deprived labour of the very basis of independence by the private monopoly of natural resources.

That the Unions have accepted this dependent status of labour is implicit in the suggestion that the only way in which wages can be maintained or raised is through one-hundred-per-cent. "organisation" for the purposes of bargaining.

The acceptance of common standards of wages in particular industries, irrespective of the variety in individual ability, and conditioned by "cost of living" indices, is a complete surrender of the true status and dignity of labour. If the Unions have the real interests of labour at heart, their efforts should be directed to securing conditions under which the individual worker would receive as wages payment according to the wealth which he himself produces, so that industry and self-reliance would be encouraged.

The economic force which has inexorably driven not only labour, but capital as well, along the path of sectional interest towards the ultimate goal of the "closed shop" is the most perfected closed shop of all—the monopoly of land; a closed shop in which alone both labour and capital can obtain employment, and to enter which the normal action of the law of competition compels them to mortgage a greater and greater proportion of their production.

So long as the natural resources, from which alone labour can produce wealth, remain a closed shop, any advantage achieved by a particular Union in advancing wages can be only temporary and at the expense of the rest of the community. Nor is the complete "organisation" or monopoly of labour the best way in which to counter the effects of the monopoly of land—the latter, incidentally, being much more firmly secured by the economic pressure of the landless than any conscious organisation could achieve. One-hundred-per-cent. organisation of labour can be obtained only with the sacrifice of many of the vital liberties of the individual worker.

The power of exploitation vested in land monopoly, of which the fruits are riches for the few and an inadequate existence for the many, can be destroyed only by striking at the roots. Let the whole people reassert their right to use the land of their birth by collecting for the people as a whole the economic rent of land through the Taxation of Land Values. Such a reform would enable the present burden of taxation to be lifted from the produce of industry, leaving to the individual the full fruits of his labours.

Still more important, in relation to the status of the worker, the holding of land would then be profitable only to the user, eliminating the speculative element and throwing natural resources open to both labour and capital with unlimited opportunities for employment on freely competitive terms. The economic independence of the working man would at last be assured, and in conditions of freedom in which he would be able to reach his highest individual stature.

Yours, etc.,

FREE LANCE.