

A NOTABLE TRIBUTE TO LOUIS F. POST

One of the last and the finest services Louis F. Post rendered the Henry George cause was to write his brilliant little book, *What is the Single Tax?* published in 1926 by the Vanguard Press, New York—a book that should be in the hands of every student and teacher of Land Value Taxation and Free Trade. In a preface, Louis Post's friend, Edward N. Vallandigham, makes the reader acquainted with the author. It is a year since Louis F. Post passed away, and we feel it appropriate to put on record this rare and loyal tribute to one of our greatest pioneers.

"Louis F. Post, journalist, lawyer, publicist, author of many books, high-minded and efficient public servant in an important and responsible post at Washington during the two administrations of Woodrow Wilson, for more than half his life the able and convincing expositor of Henry George's economic philosophy, undertakes in this book, what he has often before undertaken, in various literary forms, a systematic interpretation of the Single Tax, setting forth in moderate compass a comprehensive answer to the question, 'What Is the Single Tax?'

"When I first made acquaintance with Mr Post, more than thirty-five years ago, he was already an earnest propagandist of the Georgian economic philosophy, and a warm and trusted friend of the philosopher. He had been admitted to the bar of New York in 1870, almost twenty years before our acquaintance began, and twenty-one years after his birth near Vienna in Warren County, New Jersey. Six years before his admission to the bar he had become a printer's apprentice in the office of the *Gazette*, at Hackettstown, New Jersey. He practised law for nearly twenty years, for a time in partnership with that active and useful Single Taxer, the late Charles Frederick Adams. During part of the time as a practising lawyer in New York he was an Assistant United States Attorney. He is still a member of the New York bar, as of the bar of the District of Columbia, where he has lived since he became First Assistant Secretary of Labour under William B. Wilson.

"In the 'eighties of the last century, Mr Post was an editor of Henry George's weekly organ in New York, *The Standard*, along with that human volcano, William T. Croasdale, whose early death is mourned by all who knew and loved the man for his rich gifts of mind and character. With the suspension of *The Standard*, Mr Post became one of the editors of the *Cleveland Recorder*. From 1898 to 1913, he and his wife, Alice Thacher Post, were editors of *The Public*, published at Chicago, a weekly organ of sound politics and sound political and social science, into which he constantly put the best of himself, and in so doing did manifold service for many good causes. He gave up his chair at the office of *The Public* to become Assistant Secretary of Labour in the first administration of Woodrow Wilson.

"In this new and unaccustomed work Mr Post speedily showed his versatile ability, as he also showed his tenderly conscientious regard for justice in the administration of laws, some of them severe in their workings, and made more severe by the zeal beyond measure of other persons connected with the administration. Mr Post's determination not to be driven to the wholesale deportation of innocent aliens when the world-war madness seized many in authority led at length to an attempt to remove him from office under impeachment proceedings. He met this utterly unjust attack with a courage, skill, tact and eloquence that resulted in the utter defeat of those who would have

added him to the long list of victims demanded by the public madness of the time.

"Busy as Mr Post has always been in his various occupations, he has always found time to take an active part in the Single Tax movement in all its stages, to lecture in many parts of the country upon topics related to Henry George's social and economic doctrines, and to write a number of books upon kindred questions. Among the books of which he is author are *Ethics of Democracy*, *Social Service*, and *Land Value Taxation*. In all these volumes, as in everything that Mr Post has written or said upon public questions, he has shown himself a clear reasoner, a convincing propagandist of principles and ideas, a man whose intellectual conclusions are at one with a fervent belief in their moral implications. It is this union of close reasoning and deep moral conviction that makes him impressively convincing as speaker and writer.

"It is these qualities as writer and speaker, debater and propagandist, that have made Mr Post highly effective, especially with intelligent audiences, and that have enabled him to meet with calmness and courtesy, and with convincing argument the heckling of those in opposition. He never stooped to bitter assault in answer to his hecklers, however rude, nor did he seek to deceive by specious sophistry. His performance on such occasions illustrated the truth of Shakespeare's great saying, 'Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just.' In urging the great truths of Henry George's philosophy, he put on 'the whole armour of God,' the defence of him who is conscious of being right, and thus has been enabled to win many battles, notably that with those who would have driven him from public office by impeachment.

"In this new volume, written in propagation of the high and vivid cause, Mr Post illustrates the qualities of logical presentation, moderation in the discussion of political, social and economic proposals to which he cannot assent, a courteous and large-minded readiness to concede the sincerity of those who make such proposals. 'What Is the Single Tax?' should prove an effective exposition of natural taxation. Certainly no living man is better fitted than Mr Post, by experience, by thorough understanding of the subject, and by literary ability, to make the authoritative presentation of the great reform, to which many able and earnest men have devoted themselves, from his friend Henry George's time to this, and the benefits of which each day is now bringing nearer to general acceptance.

"It gives me great pleasure to preface this work with this far from adequate biographical sketch of the author's career, and I feel that I do myself honour in whatever of honour my words may confer upon him. What I have written by way of eulogy is, I believe, precisely such a testimonial as many another man who knows Mr Post would gladly have supplied, and many who know him far better than I would have felt it a privilege to do what I have attempted to do in this slight sketch of his many and useful activities. What I have written is a labour of love, a record of the impression made upon me by years of a highly valued friendship."

EDWARD N. VALLANDIGHAM.

What is the Single Tax? By Louis F. Post. One of the series of *Outlines of Social Philosophies* published by the Vanguard Press, New York, and written by request. 123 pages, Price 2s. 6d. (*Postage 2d.*)

The Basic Facts of Economics. By Louis F. Post. Price 2s. (*Postage 2d.*)