

"To help and encourage this work," as suggested, there are constantly going forward from the Main School, letters explaining the method, with all necessary material—helps for conducting the classes, such as lesson assignments, teaching manuals, and copies of the Henry George News Service, a weekly message serving fifty-four Georgeist publications throughout the world, for use without cost.

"The possibilities are unlimited."

True—of the School, indeed. There are extension classes now in England, Denmark, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, as well as over one hundred in the United States, all appearing since September, 1933, when Oscar Geiger began to put to the test the idea he had presented in its germ form as "Reading Circles" nineteen years before. Through the years, he had come to see that for his purpose of making clear the philosophy of Henry George and spreading the gospel of that message, no book approached "Progress and Poverty" in its power to convince the student—so he devised a method of question and answer following logically through the book, which was the basis of the present Teachers' Manual. He said of the Reading Circles:—

"The people will respond if we are in earnest, and our work will be crowned with success."

What must have been his inner joy as a sign of the coming fulfilment of his God-like purpose, to help men to free man, after establishing the School—to find strong, young lives rallying to the task beside him!

Of the School, developed from this idea germinating slowly during those years, we have a fervent faith the words last quoted will prove to be prophetic. It was the faith and work of Oscar Geiger that produced the ear following the blade; to produce the full corn in the ear will require no less faith and work on the part of his students and friends in the movement.

HELEN D. DENBIGH.

Just Ignorance

IN the unabridged dictionary that is being offered by the *Post* of this city there is a definition of Single Tax as follows: "A form of taxation advocated by some, consisting of a levy on land, irrespective of its value, and on no other form of property."

This is a good definition of what the Single Tax is *not*. It may be said that most of the dictionary definitions of economic terms are "cockeyed." A plan has been worked out to examine these definitions in various dictionaries and communicate with the publishers of these lexicons. A newspaper article could then be written which might be syndicated and find publication in farm papers and elsewhere. There are possibilities in this suggestion, which originates with Mr. Ellenoff of Brooklyn, author "How to Create More Jobs than Men," and other widely circulated pamphlets.

Privilege for Every One

FREDERICK S. ARNOLD, A.M.

LIBERALISM is a word that seems to be used loosely for almost any change in public affairs, from the administrative reforms and the suppression of ecclesiastical abuses by the Emperor Joseph II, in the eighteenth century, to Communism and Atheism. We can't get anywhere with a term as loose as that. It ought to be defined. European Liberalism historically came to mean individualism, freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity. In the nineteenth century it meant equality of all men before the law, religious toleration and freedom of speech and person, a reformed civil service based on merit, representative government, universal suffrage, a secret ballot, Anti-slavery, Free Trade, and the abolition of special privileges. In the British Islands and in America it came to include local self government, home rule, and States Rights. As great monopolies developed in modern business, Liberalism came to mean Anti-monopoly. Therefore, where monopoly is natural and necessary to the business, but nowhere else, Liberalism came to mean Government Ownership. In this sense of the word, Fascism, Socialism, and Communism are not Liberalism, but its antithesis. In Russia, Communism is explicitly regarded as opposed to Western Liberalism. Defined in this way, Liberalism becomes something definite enough to discuss. It is a philosophy of the complete freedom (*libertas*) of the individual, based on the ethical and metaphysical value of personality.

Our last Democratic president of the Liberal school was Grover Cleveland. Perhaps the last old-time Liberal Prime Minister in England was Campbell-Bannerman. The last Liberal Roman of antiquity was Tiberius Gracchus. His own brother, Gaius, introduced the dole and Julius Caesar was a Fascist Dictator. That was the final defeat of ancient Liberalism. Liberalism has failed to win a good many times, since Gracchus, B. C. 133.

When Grover Cleveland was president and Governor Russell administered Massachusetts and Bayard, Breckinridge, Mills, Schurz, and many others were leaders of the Democratic party, Democracy meant about what it had meant under Thomas Jefferson, George Clinton, Martin VanBuren, Thomas Hart Benton, and Samuel J. Tilden. It meant States Rights, Free Trade, local self-government, the gold standard of sound money, and thrift. Grover Cleveland himself added the principle of the merit system, or civil service reform. All that is nineteenth century Liberalism. The economics of this philosophy began with the French Physiocrats, Condorcet, Turgot, du Pont de Nemours, du Quesnay, who deeply influenced Thomas Jefferson. This *laissez faire* economics developed through Adam Smith, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill and others in England. It became the philosophy of economic Liberalism. These are the his-

torical principles of the Democratic party in the United States.

The Republican party also began as a Liberal party. It was anti-slavery and Liberalism must be anti-slavery. The Republican party, however, began also as the heir of the Whig and Federalist doctrine of centralized government. Therefore the Republicans fought the war for the Union. The Democrats sympathized with a state's right to secede. The issue was settled on the battlefield and the Democratic party was outcast and discredited from 1860 until 1884. For almost a generation of men, Democracy was regarded as standing for slavery, treason, and disunion.

In American history the forces of evil captured each of the great parties in turn. The party of Jefferson, Van Buren, Benton and others stood for States' Rights. Slavery was not recognized in terms by the Federal government. It was protected only by the states. So the slave-holders first joined and then captured the great party of American Liberalism. They pushed States' Rights to the limit of secession and they and the party were ruined by the Civil War. Yet the Liberal Republican party, that arose to punish and overthrow them, fared little better. Partly as a result of the war for the Union, partly because of principles inherited from the Whigs and the Federalists, the Republican party was the party of a strong central government. Those were the days when Plutocracy, or the rule of wealth, and monopoly, the plutocratic form of special privilege, were coming into existence. The Plutocrats wanted a Protective Tariff to guarantee special privileges and to make it possible for trusts and combines to erect profitable, artificial monopolies within our borders, through tariff protection. They wanted the great natural monopoly, the railroads, kept in private hands and subsidized by enough government grants of free lands to build those railroads for private monopolists. So, just as the slave-owners once joined the Democratic party and captured it, in 1861 the rising Plutocrats joined the Republican party and captured it. They supported the Union on the condition that the Union should give them the high tariff and the railways and the land-grants. That was their price. In return for that price, the Plutocrats helped the American people to defeat the slave-owners and to win the Civil War. Then, under the administration of a great general, Grant, who never really understood either politics or business, they pocketed their gains. Henceforth America was doomed to monopoly and the rule of wealth.

Before Plutocracy could enjoy its gains in quietness, however, Liberalism had to be beaten. For Liberalism had been very strong in America. It was strong in the South almost until the Mexican War and it was still strong in the North until the World War. John Fiske, whose books on American history and civil government were very popular in the nineties, was a zealous Liberal. So were many of the authors and public men of the North

until the World War. Grover Cleveland was elected president in 1884, more or less by political accident. He revived the old Liberalism of the Democratic party and, in the campaigns of 1888 and 1892, made that the issue. This Democratic championship of Liberalism failed.

As a result of issues connected with the war and the negro-question, the southern part of the Democratic party held a large number of persons who were not Liberals at all and these Illiberals fought against President Cleveland from within his party. In the North, because of the same issues, a great many persons of Liberal views hated the Democratic party and joined the Plutocracy in fighting the Cleveland-Liberalism. Later on, President Theodore Roosevelt, who also attained the highest office through accident, the tragic accident of McKinley's assassination, tried to revive the old Liberalism of the Republican party. It may be that Theodore Roosevelt was rather more successful than Grover Cleveland. His approach was, of course, very different. Nevertheless, the Plutocracy maintained its hold on the party. When Theodore Roosevelt attempted a Progressive revolt, he finally failed. Whatever Woodrow Wilson might have done, the World War took up all his time. After the World War, at least from 1921 to 1933, the Plutocracy had a free hand to rule America.

Individual members of the Plutocratic party may have always recognized that the Plutocratic theory could not be realized, but publicly a theory, true or false, had to be presented to the people to win them to Plutocracy. For America was politically a democracy. The Plutocratic theory, then, was somewhat as follows:

Granted that the private ownership of all the natural monopolies and of the unearned increment of land values, as also the privileges given by the Protective tariff, is a great complex of inequality and special privilege; nevertheless, if we are going to have individualism at all, there must always be some rich men and some poor men. But the arrangements of monopoly and special privilege hitherto have made and always will make business good and business will take care of everyone. That is better than to ruin every one for the sake of Liberalism, in any of its varied forms. True, the few will be very rich, but that is the reward of their ability, an ability necessary to exploit the continent and to give America prosperity. Special privilege, tariffs and monopolies, have created prosperity and every one shares it in proportion to his business-efficiency. Business is good. There is work for every one. Wages are generous. Prices are low. The demand for labor was never so great and the standard of living was never so high in any country on earth. Compared with England and Western Europe, where everyone is poor, or with Russia, where every one is starving, our America of monopoly and special privilege and prosperity is the paradise of humanity.

This argument converted the American people. Times were good, so the argument seemed realistic. The great

American democracy came no longer to care for doctrines, like freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity. They came to care and only to care for material things; high wages, high standards of living, privilege, and prosperity. Some have charged that materialism and the abandonment of such ideals as liberty and justice is the result of the teachings of the so called New Deal. In fact, this unprincipled Materialism was the argument by which the Plutocracy won the support of the people and especially of youth, disillusioned by the futile and self-seeking termination of the World War, for the plutocratic programme of monopoly and privilege.

The theory that Plutocracy and monopoly create prosperity and that prosperity takes care of everybody certainly had its day. From 1921 to 1929 under Harding and Coolidge we enjoyed boom-times. Everyone was working for good wages and everyone had automobiles, radios, and moving pictures. Mechanical toys, however, are a poor substitute for the great spiritual goods of liberty, justice, and equality of opportunity. Retribution came under President Hoover. The depression was all the more hated, because it was loaded with prohibition, to which Hoover seems to have been devoted. Prohibition aside, the depression ruined the Plutocratic theory of things. The rich were very rich. Monopoly and special privilege held business and labor by a strangling grip. But the great people, with the power of the ballot in their hands, were fooled, deluded, robbed, impoverished, starving, and out of work. There rose a great cry. They had been taught to reverence privilege as the source of prosperity. Prosperity had come to an end. The vast multitude now demanded privilege for themselves.

When there is a great demand there will generally be some able and enterprising persons to attempt to arrange for the supply. The answer of the demand of America was the New Deal. It is not anti-monopoly, the abolition of special privilege, Free Trade, nor freedom of any sort. It is privilege, only it is privilege made democratic: relief, artificial employment, minimum wage, old age pensions, national security; all the things that the Plutocracy had promised for a generation, under other forms and in a quite different way, and which, after 1929, the Plutocracy had failed to deliver. It is what the people were taught to ask and what they now are determined to have. So, in election after election, enormous majorities are rolled up for the New Deal. It appears that it must be tried.

Suppose that the new theories of privilege for everyone prove just as impossible of realization as the plutocratic theory, that special privilege will make prosperity for everyone. The Liberalism of Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt may be as completely forgotten as the Liberalism of Tiberius Gracchus. But suppose that the New Deal fails to fit into the universe. Then the experiment will prove just another, even if more generous, illusion. What will happen then?

Causerie

BY THOMAS N. ASHTON

BOSTON'S BEST

SEVEN outstanding law firms—"Boston's Best"—publicly are charged with promoting a racket in real estate valuations and abatements.

The gentlemen, who comprise the seven firms, are not interested in Single Tax whilst they alibi their challenge activities by asserting that "real estate" is over-assessed.

Several years ago a very few enterprising members of society—quite adept in legal conniving—secured the enactment of a statute creating a Board of Tax Appeals. The purpose had an air of bigger and better "justice" for owners of real estate—the programme was palatable and potable—it was easy to swallow. Single Tax was not necessary.

Comparable to all reforms of expedient nature, the BTA scheme immediately disclosed, upon functioning, its mechanical defects. Among these it was found that the cost of appealing at once placed the department beyond the reach of all but wealthy petitioners who—it now transpires—annually have reaped a harvest in tax abatements. Legal fees ran into sizable sums for the members of "Boston's Best" who secured satisfaction for their clients and for themselves. As to who must carry the tax load, which these gentlemen avoided under a tax system which they favor, was of no legal concern to them, and legalities are as far as "Boston's Best" go in the matter of economics. Single Tax is of no moment.

During only one calendar year these wealthy petitioners have secured abatements totalling more than six millions of dollars in *their* few cases.

It now transpires that in each succeeding year the Board of Assessors, complying with their oath of office, consistently has marked up the valuations of property concerned. With equal consistency, in each year, "Boston's Best" successfully has secured abatements from the BTA. Perpetual motion has been discovered and all parties concerned are profiting by the mechanical procedure involved.

The welfare of the uninitiate, the guileless, the illiterate the ignorant, the uninfluential taxpayer—and he is legion—is of no importance. He is unable to think, he cannot afford to connive toward "legal justice," he is at an almost insurmountable disadvantage in this game of tax-dodging under our vicious system of taxation.

Of course, "Boston's Best" are far too busy to engage in social ethics—their business lies in law. Morals and ethics must not be permitted to jeopardise "legal justice," and as long as the influential can legally evade their "ability-to-pay" share of taxes they can still afford to advocate ability-to-pay methods.

As a thief I favor wholesale pocket-picking as long as I