

Postscript

by Margaret E. Bateman

Newspaper headlines of today emphasize again the importance of Henry George's reference to "the Huns and Vandals of whom Macaulay prophesied."

In a letter to the Honourable H. S. Randall of New York in 1857, Lord Macaulay wrote, "As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land, your labouring population will be far more at ease than the labouring population of the old world . . . But the time will come when New England will be as thickly populated as Old England. Wages will be as low, and will fluctuate as much with you as with us. You will have your Manchesters and Birminghams, and in those Manchesters and Birminghams, hundreds of thousands of artisans will assuredly be sometimes out of work . . . Distress everywhere makes the labourer mutinous and discontented and inclines him to listen with eagerness to agitators who tell him that it is a monstrous iniquity that one man should have a million while another cannot get a full meal . . . The day will come when, in the State of New York, a multitude of people, none of whom has had more than half a breakfast, or expects to have more than half a dinner, will choose a Legislature. Is it possible to doubt what sort of a Legislature will be chosen? . . . I seriously apprehend that you will, in some such season of adversity as I have described, do things which will prevent prosperity from returning, that you will act like people who in a year of scarcity devour all the seed corn, and thus make the next year a year, not of scarcity, but of abso-

lute famine . . . As I said before, when a society has entered on this downward progress, either civilisation or liberty must perish. Either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand; or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth;—with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country . . ."

Note that this situation is not likely to exist, "As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land."

And What of Today?

George Streater in a New York Times book review (March 24th) of MY AFRICA by Mbuno Ojike (John P. Day, \$3.50) quotes the author as stating, "Africans have learned through the ages that free access to land is the key to all freedoms . . . The land belongs to a vast family, of which many are dead, a few are living, and a countless number yet unborn." Streater goes on to say that Ojike "also speaks for the peasants of Europe, for the Okies and Arkies, for Southern Negroes, for Mexican peons, and for the peoples of India and China . . ."

Thomas Costain in THE BLACK ROSE (Doubleday Doran, \$3.00) says, "We have learned many things through the long centuries—one thing above all else: that the land belongs to everyone and not to the few." Senora Isabella Palencia's SMOULDERING FREEDOM (Longmans Green, \$2.50) exposes land monopoly as the primary cause of war in Spain. It is encouraging to see this trend in modern literature.