

ber will take the position of teacher of philosophy in the University of North Dakota. This is the essay read at the convention of the American Philosophic Association in this city in December, 1929, and highly commended by those who heard it.

Young Mr. Geiger, son of our Oscar Geiger, is master of the philosophic vernacular. "Values" means ethics, but only in part; the term is broader and more inclusive.

The article is a survey of tendency in economic discussion, and its purpose is to call attention to a much neglected part of that philosophy as currently treated, due, as Prof. Geiger points out, to a very natural reaction from 18th century standards. This shift has been toward a reactionary concept in economic theory, though Mr. Geiger discerns a trend toward a newer postulate in which economics, while rejecting the more metaphysical interpretation of the doctrine of natural rights, inclines to what he terms the "normative," and a new evaluation.

Before sounding this note of encouragement to those who hope for better things he does not spare the economists. He says: "Moral values have long since been expelled from the physical sciences and now they are being squeezed out of the social sciences. Indeed, it would begin to appear that the exorcism of standards and norms is now a prerequisite for any enterprise which desires to achieve respectability."

There is a depressing hardness in this very definite accusation. But it must not be thought that the article conveys quite so hopeless an outlook. Prof. Geiger has done a thoughtful, impressive and scholarly bit of work.—J. D. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE IRRELEVANT AND THE RELEVANT: A REPLY

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The argument of Mr. Antonio Bastida in May-June LAND AND FREEDOM is presented most courteously. And, indeed, I sympathize sincerely with much that he has said in it. Yet he has certainly, though perhaps through my own lack of clearness, entirely misapprehended my meaning. For I never intended to suggest that land tax advocates should, as a group, adopt any such irrelevant issue as free silver, membership of the United States in the League of Nations, socialism, prohibition, public ownership, or even free trade. I have little faith that the advocates of these policies would, in any appreciable numbers, be thus converted to our cause or help us in it.

Not such, however, were the kinds of current controversy that I had in mind. Rather did I have in my thought controversies or issues which *clearly involve* the principles in which we are especially interested. And I mentioned particularly the current slogan, "tax relief for real estate," which implies putting taxes elsewhere and definitely proposes taking taxes *off of land*. This is a proposal that unquestionably *does* involve, by flouting them, our most fundamental principles. And by entering into the controversy, in which we shall have many allies who do not now understand our philosophy, but who are opposed to taking taxes off of land and putting them elsewhere, we may do much to bring our principles into public discussion.

When, in my "Open Letter," I urged our joining actively in the fight over this specific issue, I took occasion to remark that the slavery question came into practical politics and came to be a really burning issue, not as a question of abolition but as a question of further extension versus territorial limitation. *And slavery disappeared*. We have now a real issue to fight over, an issue which arouses wide popular interest far beyond the boundaries of our little group of active workers for the land-value tax, yet one which can be fought out largely on the principles we profess. It is not an issue, like that of free silver, *unrelated* to our principles or, like that of free trade, related only remotely and contingently to the idea of appropriating publicly-produced value to public uses. On the contrary, it *directly and clearly* involves these principles and this idea.

We are confronted at the same time by a magnificent opportunity to get attention for the principles we hold fundamental and also

by a most dangerous threat to the small application of these principles that America already has.

If in our desire to preach our full and complete doctrine regardless of how few will listen, we ignore this opportunity to get our principles before the public through a controversy which interests many, we shall prove ourselves, in my opinion, hopelessly inept in political skill. And if, for the privilege of spending time repeating to each other's admiring ears the glories of our one-hundred-per-cent. programme, we give up on an issue made, as if for the very purpose of bringing our principles into discussion, and let the landowners secure, without a fight, that "tax relief for real estate" which they are so vociferously demanding, then, it seems to me, we are practically recreant to our great cause.

It should be our job to make the current slogan "tax relief for real estate," not only unpopular but "a hissing and a by-word" among all persons who pretend to any slightest degree of liberal sympathy. And in doing so we can make the economic facts about land and the reasons for taxing it instead of labor and thrift, for *greatly raising* rather than lowering the tax on land, more and more clear to an increasing number of voters.

Such a method of propaganda most certainly does *not* mean that if landowners should agree no longer to request reduced taxes (how likely!), we would thereupon cease our agitation.

To Mr. Bastida's suggestion that what I am urging means emphasis on the public appropriation of land rent from the "fiscal" point of view only, I most earnestly object. Does Mr. Bastida know what I have said, in articles and books, regarding rent as a payment which some men are able to exact from others, for permission to work and live on those parts of the earth which community growth and development, together with the past operation of geologic forces, have made relatively desirable? Is such, in his view, a *merely* "fiscal" discussion?

May it not turn out, after all that Mr. Bastida and I are more nearly in agreement than he appears to think?

Central Lake, Michigan.

HARRY GUNNISON BROWN

A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE N. BEACH

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Believing that at least some of our readers may hark back in memory to the little group of Texans who were active in spreading the gospel of the Single Tax in the eighties of the last century, I take it upon myself to record the passing of a crusader for free land, free trade and free men of that period in the death of George N. Beach, who escaped the tax gatherer at the Veterans Hospital in San Antonio during the latter days of May.

George N. Beach was working at the printer's trade in Waco, Texas, when his attention was called to "Progress and Poverty" by a friend who had read the book and, impressed by its message, induced George to read it. The young printer "saw the cat," and was fired with enthusiasm for the vision of freedom and equality of opportunity, which he thought no one could fail to see if only the message were carried to him. With the co-operation of Freeland, John R. Spencer, another printer, and a few other Waco friends, he issued a call for a conference to be held in Galveston. Regardless of the fact that there was already in existence in Texas a Single Tax organization, of which Beach knew nothing, the call brought together a goodly assemblage, and one speaker announced that "A Daniel has arisen among us," and arrangements were made for Beach to make a tour of the state delivering lectures on the Single Tax and organize local societies. The tour lasted but a short time, as financial difficulties arose, but George N. Beach never failed, until the breath left him, to expound the gospel at every favorable opening.

Impressed with the assurance that a beneficent Creator had provided sufficient to meet the wants and desires of every created being, he spent his days for many years, except for the time necessary to earn his living working at his trade, and in searching the untrodden wastes of New Mexico, Arizona and Old Mexico for the precious metals. He met