

every utility service, increase the demand for and the wages of labor, make more jobs than men, free the capitalistic system from the incubus of privilege, and free the government from corruption incident to the control of the privileged interests.

I submit this programme for your consideration.

It should always be borne in mind that every great idea has to be carried to the people in the beginning by so-called agitators, and that when as a result of the sacrifice and labor of these pioneers the idea reaches the political stage, the agitator seldom has any equipment for political leadership. Garrison and Phillips could never see anything in Abraham Lincoln but a political trimmer and a coward. They were unable to understand that the abolition of slavery was as dear to his heart as it possibly could be to theirs. When we reach the political stage we must be prepared for the same conditions.

However we may differ upon methods of propaganda and politics, and however discouraging our progress may seem to be, the land question is the great question of civilization, and no reasonable argument has ever been advanced against our fundamental position. In the end our cause must triumph because it is the embodiment of justice.

Let us take courage from the inspiring words of Emerson:

"The idea itself is the epoch. The fact that it has become so clear to any small number of men as to become the subject of prayer and hope and concert, that is the commanding fact. This much having come, more will follow. The star having once risen, though only one man in the hemisphere has yet seen its upper limb in the horizon, will mount and mount until it becomes visible to other men, to multitudes, and climbs the zenith of all eyes."

## The Gospel of Plenty

**I**N the present condition of things throughout the world there are many setbacks for the Henry George movement. For one, I do not blink these things, I do not minimize them. That the land hunger of the growing population of Japan should seek satisfaction through aggressive, heart-sickening war; that Britain, the last temple of free trade, should be taken over by self-seeking worshippers of protection; that landlordism everywhere should be able to build for its own defense higher and still higher walls of national prejudice and isolation—these things are saddening and discouraging.

But it would be sadder still if those who labor for the cause of justice as set forth by Henry George should count only their disappointments and temporary failures. Let us lift our heads and look about us and we shall see a whole world that has adopted half the reasoning of our great leader, making thus a condition of public thought of incalculable advantage to our movement.

George's great book, "Progress and Poverty," has two

principal parts. In the first, the author argues that the explanations of poverty current in his time—first, that capital cannot stand the drain upon it; second, that nature is "niggardly" and demands more and more of human toil as population increases—are erroneous. He demonstrates that the very reverse of these things is true: progress brings plenty, not poverty; the forces of economic production yield progressively more and more, not less and less. Finding no solution in the field of production, he infers that the solution must be sought in the field of distribution. Searching this second field, he does find the cause of poverty and is able to offer a simple and effective remedy.

It is quite true that the world at large has not a proper understanding of Henry George's reasoning on these points of diagnosis and remedy. The belief prevails that everything in human society can be "fixed" if only a majority can be got for the "fixing" proposal. The fact that the body social has its natural organs and functions as truly as the body physical is unknown or disregarded. At present, the second part of "Progress and Poverty" is not understood, and therefore is not accepted.

But let it not be forgotten that when the book was published, in 1879, the whole world of thought was deadly opposed to the first part also. Henry George stood absolutely alone in declaring on grounds of fact and logic that this is a world of plenty, not of dearth. He could not quote one single thinker as agreeing with him. True, there were believers in Divine Providence who held that religion was the cure of poverty and all other ills, but their declaration was based on faith, revelation or authority, not on investigation of the economic facts. All the so-called thinkers upheld the dour doctrine of Malthus, that population tends to increase more rapidly than subsistence. The idea that plenty was possible, natural, inevitable, actual, was denied and derided by them all.

What a change has come over the world of thought since that day! All who pretend to teach the people in this age say what George said over fifty years ago—that modern discoveries, inventions and methods have made possible the production of far more of every kind of supply than the people can use. In fact some see this actual or possible supply as a danger. They tell us that there is overproduction and therefore want—certainly a queer notion. But the ordinary man does not need to consult authorities on the subject, for he knows that there is not a thing that he can wish for that is not already produced and on the market.

Men may deny the correctness of George's diagnosis of our economic problem, they may scout the remedy he proposed, but they cannot, and do not, find fault with his conclusion that abundance has actually been achieved and that, the problem of production being thus solved, we must seek our answer in the field of distribution.

This abundance which exists today was not made in obedience to any royal command, nor in compliance with



any statute, nor was it devised by politicians. Gutenberg and Caxton were not ordered to make an art of printing, nor Columbus to discover America, nor Watt to invent the steam engine. And the same with scientists and discoverers of every kind; the same with traders in every line and every land, and the same with the workers in every form of production. All these people sought satisfaction for themselves or others, and their labors combined in ways which the wit of man could not have designed, and now cannot explain, to make abundance of everything for the satisfaction of want in the economic field.

Now come forward the self-satisfied wise ones with their schemes for the division of this plenty. They would pass laws, establish bureaus, appoint workers of every kind at the public expense, and all with the childlike belief that they, the wise ones, know exactly how to direct the multifarious actions of men to bring about a right distribution of all this wealth. It is easy to see that had such people been allowed to interfere with the production of wealth, they would have done what their kind in a hundred extinct civilizations actually did—they would have made production impossible and would have destroyed the natural and voluntary relations which are of the very essence of economic life.

Henry George shows that the same law of simple justice that has produced the abundance of today can be trusted to distribute that abundance far more equitably, far more equally, far more to the benefit of society and the members of society, than can any presumptuous meddling on the part of the supposedly wise.

Let us greet the world as wholly converted to Henry George's first proposition, that modern methods of production can abundantly supply modern demands. Henry George used to say, "Men and brethren, the future is ours." That future is the present. This is the "Golden Age" upon which mankind have looked back; it is the "Good Time Coming" to which they have looked forward. Events and our own efforts have convinced the people of the fact of plenty, which is the first part of the truth that we have always proclaimed. Surely this is no time for apprehension or discouragement; it is a time for renewed confidence and more earnest, joyous effort.

All the "fixers" in the field of economic reform are thinking the thought of dead and gone leaders who opposed Henry George half a century ago. Every scheme of theirs is based upon the assumption that dearth, not plenty, is the basic condition. Examine their schemes one by one and see if this is not so: tariffs (even with easements of guarded reciprocal trade); taxes on industry in any form; money and credit proposals with their infinite regulations and fine adjustments; and all the rest. Viewed in the sunlight of Plenty, these schemes are seen to be obsolete, absurd, impossible.

People must be won to straight thinking on economic matters. They cannot start wrong and go right. The basic fact of modern economic life is that which Henry

George was the first to demonstrate as a matter of science, the fact that Plenty is the natural condition and Dearth is an artificiality, the outcome of violation of the natural order of society. A bitter experience has taught the people that plenty actually exists, even though its benefits are withheld from many. They are ready for a new evangel, and I would like to see that evangel preached in the name of the man, Henry George, who revealed it to all thinking minds more than fifty years ago. That evangel I would declare as "The Gospel of Plenty." A. C. CAMPBELL.

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## A Reply to Professor Fairchild

THE article "The Fallacy of Profits," by Henry Pratt Fairchild, in the February number of Harper's, is just one more example of the attempts of economists to lead a thinking public away from the real cause of depressions. The writer was greatly pleased with the way in which Professor Fairchild started out, and he found everything that the professor said for part of the journey to be unassailable from any angle.

The professor states a truth that should guide all students of economic problems when he states: "Discover the way to restore purchasing power and you have discovered the remedy for the existing depression. Find out how to maintain purchasing power and you have found out how to prevent depressions in the future." With such a good beginning it is a pity to be disappointed as one reads along. Gradually it dawns upon one that the professor in seeking to show that profits are not necessary in a more evenly distributed purchasing power has made the subject more difficult than simple, and one wonders why these leaders of thought seem to enjoy confounding the issue for the average citizen who is floundering about in a sea of perplexity, ready to grasp at any straw.

It is not necessary to go to much length to show that profits are unnecessary. The example of the child picking berries is as simple an illustration of land and labor applied to it as can be found. The berries are the child's wages. No profits enter into the simple demonstration of land, labor and wages. If there were two children on a picnic and one picked berries while the other picked wood for the fire or carried water there would be no profit in an even distribution. One would pick berries for two and the other would fetch water for two. When society and methods become more complex it is easy to see that in spite of all the complexities there should be no profits unless some one is getting something for nothing, and in that case someone is receiving nothing for something.

In a simple system of society any production over and above immediate necessities of life means a surplus to be applied to living needs when production is impossible because of unfavorable environmental conditions. This surplus is difficult to apportion in a vastly complicated society, but the basic principle is the same. If any ind