

laws that govern the distribution of wealth in the modern state. Think of a system so devastating mentally and morally, that can compel and that does compel thousands of alleged teachers of the youth and maidens of this country, whose real office is to tell our boys and girls the truth about political economy who dare not do it, and who in order to make a living, and very often a mean living at that, are compelled to "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning." Can anything be more contemptible? This, too, in the face of demonstrable fact that the laws of distribution are as natural, as rhythmic, as harmonious, as beautiful and as wonderful as the blending colors of a sunset.

They are just as harmonious as the marvellous laws that govern production and infinitely more useful because we live in a world overstocked with goods on the one hand and charity-mongers on the other, and both out of balance, the one in economics and the other in mental equipment.

Any system that will bring the purchasing power of the worker up to par with the producing power will settle this question and nothing else can. Toryism will not do it; it is too stupid. Charity will not; it is too ignorant. Trade Unionism will not; it is too circumscribed and too self-centered.

Socialism and communism will not, not so much from lack of will but from sheer lack of ability; favoritism and colossal overhead charges alone prevent it to say nothing of their ignorance of economic principles and inability to distinguish between equality of opportunity and equality of income, which are antipodal principles.

Only one practical suggestion has ever been made looking to an intelligent and scientific solution of this problem and that is the one made by Henry George in 1879.

Almost half a century ago Henry George wrote the one outstanding classic that has been written upon the subject of political economy. He did for this science what Copernicus did for astronomy, and what Darwin did for biology. Three great outstanding heroic contributions to the intellectual and the material advance of the human race.

That book today rests upon the granite pedestal of truth, face up, open for the thinking world to scan. There it is, matchless in logic, beautiful in diction, perfect in illustration, unchallenged and unchallengeable, unanswered and unanswerable, an everlasting monument to the intellectual and moral integrity of the man who wrote it, and there it will remain forever.

IN our opinion, to Hon. Anthony J. Griffin, member of the House of Representatives from New York City, goes the credit of having made in April last the best speech delivered in the House against the McNary-Haugen Bill. Mr. Griffin is one of the outstanding free traders in Congress and a friend of former register Edward Polak.

Forerunners of Henry George

ADDRESS OF TOASTMASTER A. P. CANNING,
BANQUET HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

I WONDER if the honor conferred on me as timekeeper of this distinguished gathering is due to the fact that I have had some training for the job.

When floods of after dinner oratory are turned loose on an unprotected audience, it is well to have on hand one who has spent his most useful years in the plumbing business. Plumbers not only know how to handle hot solder and stop leaks, but also how to charge up the time consumed in so doing. Objection was always made because we charged not only for the time at work, but for the time consumed going to and from the job. Tonight I warn speakers (especially our home talent) that all time consumed will be charged against them, from the moment they are called, until they sit down again. All attempts to cast ridicule on the chair with alleged jokes at the expense of Scotland and the Scots, will be charged at double time rates.

I do not like to take advantage of my temporary power to scold any member of the audience, except to protest the action of the ungracious pastor of the Vine Street Congregational Church of Cincinnati, who without provocation singled me out last night as one who would probably oppose his aristocratic scheme of old age pensions, as a remedy for the ills of democracy. Last night was not the first time Dr. Bigelow took advantage of his office to make jests at the expense of useful citizens. I recall that once, in his attempts to keep his audience from going to sleep, he began a lecture—he called it a sermon—on the "Servant in the House," after this fashion: "The aspiring and ambitious clergyman had a brother who was no asset to him in his efforts to climb. This brother was a ne'er-do-well, a drunkard. Worse than that, he was an agnostic, worse than that, he was a plumber." Evidently poison ivy is the only vine which grows well around the Vine Street Congregational Church of Cincinnati.

A brother Scot from Aberdeen on your committee, I suspect, is responsible for the topic assigned to me. He and I are agreed that the only "forerunners of Henry George," worth talking about—Moses excepted—are those who were lucky enough to be born in that part of Great Britain which lies north of the Tweed. Such men as Ogilvie, Carlyle and Burns. And the last shall be first.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROBERT BURNS

When I first read Henry George, it was the identification of his philosophy with that of Burns which impressed me most. If we had time it would be interesting to trace in the poetical prose of George so much of the same gospel that was preached in prose and verse in the 18th Century by Burns.

In "Progress and Poverty," we read, "Though contempt of worldly advantages is necessary to supreme felicity, yet the keenest pain possible is inflicted by extreme poverty." Also "From whence springs this lust for gain, to gratify which men tread everything pure and noble under their feet; to which they sacrifice all the higher possibilities of life; which converts civility into a hollow pretense, patriotism into a sham, and religion into hypocrisy; which makes so much of civilized existence an Ishmaelitic warfare, of which the weapons are cunning and fraud? "Does it not spring from the existence of want? Carlyle somewhere says that poverty is the hell of which the modern Englishman is most afraid. And he is right. Poverty is the open-mouthed relentless hell which yawns beneath civilized society. And it is hell enough."

Neither George nor Burns spent much time in describing the imaginary situations, which so often engage the attention and talents of fiction writers or dilettantes in literature. Both have written largely from their own experience or from what they beheld with clear understanding and deepest sympathy, in the lives of their contemporaries.

That the sentiment which enriches the work of Burns constantly animated his own bosom in the intercourse of life, is found in many of his private letters, as for instance, in his letter to Peter Hill, we read:

A REMARKABLE LETTER

Ellisland, 17th Jan., 1791.

"Take these two guineas and place them over against that damned account of yours! which has gagged my mouth these five or six months! I can as little write good things as apologies to the man I owe money to. O the supreme curse of making three guineas do the business of five! Not all the labours of Hercules; not all the Hebrews' three centuries of Egyptian bondage, were such an insuperable business, such an infernal task!! Poverty! thou half sister of death, thou cousin-german of hell! where shall I find force of execration equal to the amplitude of thy demerits? Oppressed by thee, the venerable ancient, grown hoary in the practice of every virtue, laden with years and wretchedness, implores a little—a little aid to support his existence, from the stony-hearted son of Mammon, whose sun of prosperity never knew a cloud; and is by him denied and insulted. Oppressed by thee, the man of sentiment, whose heart glows with independence, and melts with sensibility, inly pines under the neglect, or writhes in bitterness of soul, under the contumely of arrogant, unfeeling wealth. Oppressed by thee, the son of genius, whose ill-starred ambition plants him at the tables of the fashionable and polite, must see in suffering silence, his remarks neglected, and his person despised; while shallow greatness, in his idiot attempts at wit, shall meet with countenance and applause. Nor is it only the family of worth [that have reason to complain of thee; the children of folly and vice, though in

common with thee the offspring of evil, smart equally under the rod. Owing to thee, the man of unfortunate disposition and neglected education, is condemned as a fool for his dissipation, despised and shunned as a needy wretch, when his follies as usual bring him to want; and when his unprincipled necessities drive him to dishonest practices, he is abhorred as a miscreant, and perishes by the justices of his country. But far otherwise is the lot of the man of family and fortune. His early follies and extravagance are spirit and fire; his consequent wants are the embarrassments of an honest fellow; and when to remedy the matter, he has gained a legal commission to plunder distant provinces, or massacre peaceful nations, he returns, perhaps, laden with the spoils of rapine and murder; lives wicked and respected, and dies a scoundrel and a lord."

When in the coming day of democratic civilization for which so many are hoping and so few are working, we shall better understand the ploughman poet, who when the night was darkest, had a vision and remained true to it, of that better day coming when those who do the worlds work shall win the worlds prizes. Or, as he expressed it—"When sense and worth, o'er a' the earth, shall bear the gree, and a' that."

BURN'S CRITERION OF GOODNESS

Note again how this 18th Century ploughman expressed your ideal when he wrote:

"Whatever mitigates the woes or increases the happiness of others, this is my criterion of goodness, and whatever injures society at large, or any individual in it, this is my measure of iniquity."

I am not forgetting that it is Henry George's birthday, not that of Robert Burns, which calls us together. But surely in speaking to the text of "Forerunners of Henry George," you will pardon this reference to an 18th Century Scot, who through his love of Justice and Humanity and by his exposure of aristocratic pretense, privilege and priestcraft, became the champion and patron saint of democracy. A forerunner who ploughed deep the soil into which the seed sown by Henry George should grow, as you well know it has grown over there, and will continue to grow until the kingdom preached by the young man from Jerusalem shall abolish the hell of poverty and war, which again threaten our civilization. Why should we doubt the coming of that kingdom of Peace and Plenty? If Burns in the darkest days of the 18th Century could see it afar off, surely we can, with hope, work and

"pray that come it may,

As come it will for a' that,

When man to man the world o'er,

Shall brithers be for a' that."

CARLYLE, TOO, SAW THE LAND QUESTION

Time and your patience will not permit us to say much about that other forerunner of George, the man of Eccle-

fechan, except to refer you to his chapter on *Aristocracy* in "*Past and Present*." While Carlyle was distrustful of democracy, my friend White here insists he saw the land question as clearly as Henry George. Calling attention to the fact that the Feudal Aristocracy, in return for the reaping of England's land and land values, had to do all the "Soldiering, Policing, Judging and Lawmaking, even the Church-Extension; whatsoever in the way of Governing, of Guiding and Protecting could be done. It was a Land Aristocracy; it managed the Governing of this English People, and had the reaping of the Soil of England in return. It is, in many senses, the Law of Nature, this same Law of Feudalism;—no right Aristocracy but a Land one! The curious are invited to meditate upon it in these days. Soldiering, Police and Judging, Church-Extension, nay real Government and Guidance, all this was actually *done* by the Holders of the Land in return for their Land. How much of it is now done by them; done by anybody? Good Heavens, 'Laissez-faire, Do ye nothing, eat your wages and sleep,' is everywhere the passionate half-wise cry of this time; and they will not so much as do nothing, but must do mere Corn-Laws! We raise fifty-two millions from the general mass of us, to get our Governing done—or, alas, to get ourselves persuaded that it is done; and the peculiar burden of the Land is to pay, not all this, but to pay, as I learn, one twenty-fourth part of all this. Our first Chartist Parliament, or Oliver Redivivus, you would say, will know where to lay the new taxes of England!—Or, alas, taxes? If we made the Holders of the Land pay every shilling still of the expense of Governing the Land, what were all that?"

Protests Against the Name Single Tax

THE following letter was addressed to the late Henry George Congress:

"I wish, at the Congress, some protest might be voiced as to the continued use of the term "Single Tax!" While it is correct as the ultimate issue of Henry George's principles, it is wholly misleading to the ordinary mind, trained as it has been, for immemorial centuries, to the idea that government, monarchical, oligarchic, republican, democratic, alike,—has the power and right to levy taxation upon *all* forms of property. Why, a man asks, confine taxation to any one kind of property? To such, the idea of a single tax is the "red-rag!" Why create an opposition that is useless when you have at hand a better term and its synonyms; namely, Natural Taxation, Taxation of Land Values, Taxation of the Site-Values of Land? Of course, *we* know that such taxation would inevitably eventuate in but *one* tax,—that of the *economic rent of land*,—the only public value that the community has any *moral right* to levy upon. But it is foolish to ignore the transi-

tional steps from general taxation to single tax; it is against the evolutionary order and law. Any *violent* attempt at variation of a given species in nature, means death; *gradual* change, adapted to the welfare of the species and the individuals hereof, means life and progress. Why not, then, be law-abiding? The chief adverse criticism I have to most reformers is, that they tend to jump too rapidly from Vision to Consummation. And I am of the opinion that Henry George's ideals have been too long held back by the insistence upon the term, "Single Tax," instead of using the term, "Natural Taxation." Place the first tax-levy upon the Site Value of Land; then, wait up on events.

I wish some such word could be read at the Congress, and set forth in LAND AND FREEDOM.

—A. W. LITTLEFIELD

Official Board Luncheon Meeting

HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS, SEPT. 11.

THE annual meeting of the Board of Trustees and Advisory Commission of the Henry George Foundation at Chicago was very well attended, about thirty members being present at the luncheon on Tuesday at the Congress Hotel, with President George E. Evans in the chair.

Announcement was made of the election at the annual meeting of voting members held September 4th, of eight trustees, viz: Otto Cullman, George E. Evans, George P. Loomis, John Mellor, C. D. Scully, Carl D. Smith, George W. Wakefield and Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy. Messrs. Hennessy and Cullman are the new members of the board, the former having been chosen to fill the vacancy arising from the death of Senator Ferris of Michigan. One-third of the board of twenty-one are elected each year for a term of three years.

The trustees unanimously re-elected all of the officers who had served during the past year; President George E. Evans; Vice President, Joseph Dana Miller; Honorary Vice President, Mrs. Anna George de Mille; Treasurer, Wm. E. Schoyer; Executive Secretary, Percy R. Williams; Assistant Secretary, Francis W. Maguire.

In the election of the National Advisory Commission, a number of additions were made to the membership of this commission, including Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown, Dr. Frederick W. Roman, John Z. White, Ernest B. Gaston, Andrew P. Canning, A. Lawrence Smith, Mrs. Emily E. F. Skeel, Henry H. Hardinge, Clayton J. Ewing, George M. Strachan, Miss Mildred Tideman, Oliver T. Erickson, Barney Haughey, E. Stillman Doubleday, J. R. Hermann, George F. Cotterill, Fred T. Smith, August Williges, James H. McGill, Frederick F. Ingram, Jr., and Prof. Wm. H. Dinkins.

A resolution was adopted favoring Pittsburgh as the place of meeting for the Henry George Congress of 1929.