

Henry George School

THE Autumn Term of Economic Study Classes which began in and around London, the Provinces and Scotland during September is progressing well. The classes were listed in our last issue. Enrolments varied from branch to branch, the average being somewhere in the region of 12.

NORTH-WEST KENT

The development of Classes in the North-West Kent area has been particularly encouraging. From the original classes started at *Welling* there has grown a strong nucleus of volunteer workers and helpers but most gratifying has been the emergence of four tutors who have taken over the running of classes that have expanded to nearby districts. They are: Messrs. M. Monk, A. Hall, R. H. H. Jones and C. Short. The latest branch to be opened in that area is *Eltham*. Active in the organising of these classes is Mr. Stephen Martin, with Mrs. Martin acting as Secretary to the Sidcup Branch. Mr. Maxwell is Secretary for the Eltham Branch. A class is also in session at *Beckenham*—the first for three years. Tutor is Mr. P. R. Stubbings, assisted by Mr. B. W. Brookes.

In addition to the publicity in the local Press and railway stations a wide distribution of pamphlets from door to door has been undertaken.

WEST HAM and WESTMINSTER

At the instigation of Mr. Oliver French, prospective Liberal Candidate for West Ham North a Course has been started among the local Liberal supporters, using their regular meeting place as classroom. Mr. French conducts the class himself.

More than 60 students are attending classes each week at Westminster, the majority of them being new Basic Course students. Advertisements in *The Observer* and *Sunday Times* were responsible for a large proportion of enrolments. Publicity for the Westminster classes also included leaflet distribution and posters on the underground railway.

A recent addition to the panel of tutors is Mr. John Bennett, who has previously assisted in the organising of classes in the Ilford area. With a class of more than 20 he makes a good beginning.

PALMERS GREEN

The series of lectures we run monthly at the Samaritan Hall, Palmers Green, began on 23rd September with a lecture by Mr. V. H. Blundell on "The A.B.C. of Inflation." The next lecture will be held on the 21st October and will be entitled "Free Economy versus Planned Economy."

CARDIFF and ISLE of WIGHT

Two new branches of the Henry George School have opened this term. In the Isle of Wight Mr. Keith Picton Evans is both organiser and tutor and in Cardiff the class is being conducted by Dr. F. J. Jones and organised by Mr. F. R. Giggs. Both Mr. Evans and Dr. Jones are conducting their first classes and we wish them every success.

MEETINGS at CHURCH HOUSE

The monthly series of lectures to be held at Church House, Westminster, opens on Wednesday, 16 October (7 p.m.). The subject will be "Slavery in the World To-day" and the lecturer is Mr. C. W. W. Greenidge of the Anti-Slavery Society.

The subject for the November Meeting at Church House (Room 8) is: "Economics at the Street Corner" and will be given by John Barker White of the Economic League. The date is the 20th November and the time 7 p.m. Questions and discussion, friends invited.

Introducing NORMAN CASSERLEY'S COLUMN

The adventurous, globe-trotting young Irish-American Georgeist, Norman Casserley, is known personally to many of our readers on four continents. He has lectured in India and lived with the Eskimos. He was International Secretary of the American Henry George School in New York, 1955-56, the President of the (now disbanded, American) Society for the Advancement of the George Economy (SAGE). Here he recalls how he encountered Henry George's teachings, and introduces his column which, subject to space, we hope to publish regularly.

SOMEWHERE back through the curious years of adolescence, the good fortune befell me of chancing to read the stuffiest pocket magazine article ever. It was on scientific taxation and told about the injustices, duplications and inefficiencies of most current tax structures.

This magazine article outlined how our modern system would be if only its basic canons of taxation were applied fully, as they are (to a large extent, on a local level) in places as diverse as little old Denmark, large new Australia, new little New Zealand, and elsewhere. That "scientific taxation" was outlined in the Weimar Constitution of Germany in 1919 and promised to China in Sun Yat-Sen's "Three Principles Of The People" in 1898. It is in operation locally in Arden, Ardentown and Arden-croft (Delaware) and Fairhope (Alabama); it is constitutionally embodied in Pittsburg and Scranton (Pennsylvania) and legally optional in Pennsylvania's 47 third-class cities. It has been advocated at various stages in their careers by Churchill, Einstein, Huxley, John Dewey, Henry Ford and U.S. Presidents Wilson, Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt.

Land & Liberty

The system of taxation about which I read so long ago was described as one which abolishes all taxes on labour, wages, skill, incentive, progress. Instead, public services are run on the unearned return that accrues to the monopoly of natural resources. The moral support for this argument is that such unearned revenue is produced, not by the individual monopolist, but by the demands of the community as a whole. Therefore it should be returned to the community for community purposes.

All this made little impact on me at that time. I was a schoolboy in Ireland and the only injustice in history, I then believed, was the British monster Cromwell, and his maiming and drowning of Irish women and children in Wexford harbour. However, as the fleeting years sped by my mind broadened in scope. It learned to hate not the injustice of Britain alone, but also that of the Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Then Communist Russia and China. And decadent France and materialist America. For a time, all the world was wrong and mine were the only feet in step.

What initially prodded action in my own case was California Professor Wasserman's *Modern Political Philosophies*, and his section on Henry George.

Owing to some subconscious mechanism of memory, the article on scientific taxation read during my early schooldays kept haunting me later. Even the most casual impressions of childhood are sometimes indelible. This point is worth noting by those who would spread long-term ideas without a practical approach to youth. After all, why leave youth education and missionary work in the monopoly of such strange bedfellows as religion and communism!

Both the casual magazine article of my youth and Wasserman's *Modern Political Philosophies* are responsible for driving me through some 50 countries of East and West, studying the philosophy of LAND & LIBERTY and working with its affiliated movements. This may read like the work of a retired millionaire, but, believe me, the opportunities are wide open and a-begging for people to travel round the world influencing newspapers, radio stations and organisations. It takes neither genius nor great wealth. Just a *little* brazen-ness and obstinacy.

With practice, overhead expenses can be kept low; and there is always something to do for a living, if one (or one's wife) isn't fussy. In my case it's been chauffeuring, sorting parcels, shovelling coal on steam locomotives, digging ditches, cooking on ship, teaching dancing. In Montana it was radio announcing. Now it's selling luggage in a Washington department store. (And I hope some day to prove it can even be done with a wife!)

How about you? Do write to me, c/o this column.

Giddy Goat. Nothing more is likely to be heard about the painful case of the goat which butted a council housing estate inspector. According to a psychiatrist, it was just a crazy, mixed-up kid.—“Peter Simple” in the *Daily Telegraph*.

October, 1957

Hoodlums in Levittown, Pa.

BY NORMAN CASSERLEY

MANY American and international reports have given the impression that it is the people of Levittown, Pennsylvania, who have created the opposition to the moving in of a negro family to their community. Even those reports which indicated that this was not so seem to have overlooked the following factors:

Firstly, *the area mailman*, on delivery of the first mail to the new negro home, ran to the local newspaper with the gossip that a negro family had moved into Levittown. But for this, the event might have gone unnoticed by the press.

Secondly, the local paper blew-up the story into a piece of *newspaper sensationalism*. Then, crowds of cameramen outside the negro home attracted crowds of curious spectators. When the still cameras, motion picture and TV cameras pointed at the crowds, camera directors asked the people to shout and wave their hands so that they would not look stupid to their friends who would see the pictures. Then the organised segregationists arrived and stirred-up the crowd into a mob. Neither the mailman nor the segregationists could have made nationwide or international publicity, however, without the newspaper sensationalism.

Thirdly, the police were called by Levittown organisations, but *the police superintendent* would do nothing to remove or control the crowds, which were composed mostly of fun-seeking teenagers. The camera-men would have had nothing to photograph, if the superintendent had ordered his policemen to keep people moving and to prevent mob gatherings.

Fourthly, *real estate interests* were the most powerful single influence in trying to keep the negro family out of Levittown, on the false fear that land values would go down. Actually, the arrival of the negroes in Levittown has not driven land values down in the least. On the contrary, the value of the negroes' own property has already increased from their \$13,000 purchase price to some \$15,000. The latter is the price offered to them on the quiet by the Assistant District Attorney, who happens to want the property. The Assistant D.A. is presumed to have the duty to remain neutral, at least financially disinterested; because it is his office that would prosecute if there were any government court proceedings.

The regrettable efforts of the mailman, the news reporters and the cameramen, and the lack of effort of the police superintendent, could not have made sustained nationwide and international publicity out of a negro buying a residential site and home, were it not for the sustained vast resources of the real estate interests, who mistakenly believe that negroes depreciate land values.

Little reporting coverage was given to the fact that the new negro family was showered with gifts of cakes, meats, etc., from their Levittown neighbours, and received dozens of welcoming letters.