

A Word With You

SOMETIMES a non-Georgist will look a Georgist over quizzically and muse, "you really think you have the answer, don't you? And you're pushing it with a single-track mind, like a religious zealot. Well, there's a lot more to the world than is implied in your naive beliefs!"

My non-Georgist friend, there is something to what you say—but *you* haven't said the last word, either.

Belief—*faith*, if you please—is part of the Georgist make-up. Religious zeal, if you want to call it that, is there, too.

But the zeal and the faith have been *earned*—by an arduous mental analysis, objective and factual.

"I have in this inquiry," wrote Henry George at the end of *Progress and Poverty*, "followed the course of my own thought. When, in mind I set out on it I had no theory to support, no conclusions to prove . . . But out of this inquiry has come to me something I did not think to find, and a faith that was dead revives."

This is also what happens to the typical student of George. He must approach the subject with a free and open mind. He wrestles and reasons, argues and struggles—and when finally the whole picture emerges, he is filled with the excitement of discovery, followed by zeal in his new belief.

When a conclusion is so reached, and can be demonstrated objectively

its proponent is entitled to some zeal.

As for the Georgist philosophy not being the whole truth about everything—what is? Is it not something to have carved out of the confusing totality of life a corner where certain matters are clearly explained? Must it be discarded because all problems of the universe are not thereby solved?

Skepticism is a good beginning, and should be encouraged at the outset of any inquiry. But as the inquiry progresses, objective analysis should yield some results that one can believe. The eternal skeptic, like Peter Pan, never grows up. Presented with the most indisputable evidence, he prefers not to give up his skeptical throne—like the farmer who, even after he saw the giraffe, insisted, "There ain't no such animal." He is the victim of his own imperishable doubt!

On the other hand, the "true believer" is known to carry his credulousness to the point of irrationality, and to abide by his belief in the face of no matter what contradictions.

The Georgist will not fall into this trap if he is true to the inquiry he himself has made. He need only look at the facts squarely, ask questions about them, and reason the matter out.

Human beings need some kind of belief. Better to believe in something that stands the test of facts and reason. This test is met . . . I believe! . . . by the Georgist philosophy.

—Robert Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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