

A Word With You

THE world is now covered with paper.

There is a whole complex of paper money, checks, deeds, instruments, conveyances, stocks and bonds shuttling back and forth, by means of which the world's business is transacted. A Gulf Stream of correspondence: letters, enclosures, envelopes and postage stamps, flows incessantly into every nook and cranny—to say nothing of the irresistible flood of circulars and advertising matter.

Of the making of books there still is no end, and to these must be added the multitude of newspapers and magazines that pour off the presses remorselessly. All this and more has finally caused a thin layer of paper to settle over the entire earth. It is a very thin, invisible layer, hugging every contour, much as does a certain type of thin wrapping over candy or cake, which you have to unpeel.

A day will come when the paper will be unpeeled from the earth, and this is how it will come about. Certain messengers are among us, and it is their job to put certain questions to us. I am not at liberty to give the details, but everything depends on how we answer the questions. Our answers will reveal whether we are attached to the Real World or to the Paper World. If the latter, nothing will happen; if the former, the paper at our feet will imperceptibly melt away.

Then, at a given signal, the paper

will be unpeeled. Those who have the paper melted around them will be left on the Real World; and the others will be lifted off along with the paper.

The Paper People will be those who are satisfied with their hoard of paper: their stocks and money, diplomas, deeds to land, and their paper dolls.

The others will be those who may use paper but are not attached to it—who want learning rather than a diploma; who want access to land rather than a deed; real wealth rather than paper notes; and real people rather than paper dolls. The people will at first notice that some of the population is missing; but by and by they'll get used to it and settle down to the real business of living. They will work at liberty and justice for all, not merely the paper evidence of it. It will be a millennium, you could say.

What about the Paper People? Their Paper World, lifted off the Real World, will be dropped into space. They will go on living their lives, and they, too, will notice that some of the population is missing. But they will get used to it and settle down, still believing that *theirs* is the real world.

But after a time the Paper World will slowly fade, as does a dream, and it will be dissipated into the Nothingness of the Allness, there to be resolved into the primitive components of future worlds where paper may be needed.

—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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