

# The Georgist Journal

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## Comment

### WHY THE GEORGIST MOVEMENT PERSISTS

In our last issue (No. 48) we reproduced as a Guest Editorial an article from Progress of Melbourne, Australia. Its original title was "Why the Georgist Movement Persists."

This subject also appealed to the San Francisco Henry George School, which at a Board meeting had a round robin on the question, "Why does the Georgist movement persist?" Some interesting responses were offered, among them, the philosophy's profound and central truths, its combination of the spiritual and practical, its sense of justice.

It is at least a refreshing change to have discussions on why our movement persists rather than lamentations on its sad state, decline, and why aren't we making more progress. Granted that we want much more progress, a survey of our recent Conference (reported in this issue) surely does not represent a movement in decline.

For our movement has persisted, whereas many over the years have disappeared. To the reasons given by Progress and the San Francisco group, another factor could be added as to the persistence of our movement - and that is the reasonableness of its philosophy. If we look at various philosophies and movements of past and present that have come and gone, we would see slogans and demands, many superficial, many unreasonable, many unrealistic. Also, we would see the pressure of special interests with little regard to the good of the whole society.

The Georgist philosophy is best approached by thinking it out. That could partly explain both its persistence and its not being a mass movement. Henry George in his various works admonished his readers to think for themselves. In Protection or Free Trade he even wrote, "all I ask of the reader is that he shall in nothing trust to me." Hardly the words of a blind leader of the blind! Indeed, one of the characteristics of our movement is independence of thought and deed while still sharing a common cause.

And we might add a closely related quality - a philosophy which looks to the good of all society and each of its members. That's a contrast to most movements, whether left or right, up or down, starry-eyed or materialistic.

There is evidence that the Georgist philosophy may be more influential than we can see. Our "movement" admittedly is not very large. But things keep coming to light which show that there is a great appreciation of the concepts among educators, writers, officials. Our progress may come as much from a quiet spreading of the ideas - as a little leaven that leavens the loaf - as from our own actions. So above all, let's keep disseminating!

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