

the people from buying the goods which now pile up into surpluses.

The banks will make the profits (the present owners of businesses after paying all credits into the banks of their particular industries, will get only a flat rate of interest on an assessed valuation of their properties) as well as direct the industry, re-investing such profits in the industry. These capitalizations of profits will be represented by interest bearing shares which the bank will hold on account for the workers, equally dividing the interest among them. Eventually, with the increase of the unearned increment, efficiency of production will rise to the point where a few workers will be able to supply all the desires of the people. By that time the constantly re-invested profits will supply the technologically unemployed population with the necessary purchasing power to keep the system running. Major Douglas expects that this happy consummation would come about not long after the adoption of his plan, for he thinks it probable that the potential productive power of modern society, if allowed to operate efficiently, is already equal to the full supply of men's wants with little labor. Moreover, it would not be possible under his system, to hold back invention for the purpose of saving private vested interests when everything would be controlled in the private interest. And men and money would be eagerly devoted to developing the direct use of solar energy when society would have the means to purchase its project, and evidently considers its success of prime importance to social economy.

* * *

I hope that all of the above is clear to the reader, but I doubt that he will easily master the subject from this brief summary. It is more likely that it will master him if he tries to grapple with it seriously. The author himself barely emerged from the study of it with his sanity, and his head is bald from tearing out his hair in a fine frenzy of confusion over the difficulties of "Credit Power and Democracy," Douglas' magnum opus. However, he has pulled through with sufficient strength to present the reader with the main elements of the Social Credit Plan of Douglas. If that reader is still uncertain what those main elements are, I will leave him with this final word: Douglas has had some popular success because he attacks a real and notorious evil, though a minor one, in the practice of bankers of issuing credit on false values, and because he promises something for nothing with a vengeance. His finer-spun theories are not at all understood by most of his followers, who are content with a Devil and a Paradise.

—DAVID J. CHODOROV.

I DO not like the English landed system, with its absence of peasants and its predominance of squires.

CHESTERTON.

"First the Blade—Then the Ear"

SOME of the students of the Henry George School of Social Science have lately been interested to discover in an old number of the *SINGLE TAX REVIEW*, what was undoubtedly the germ idea of the School as it is developing, in a paper by Oscar Geiger, read at a Conference in Buffalo, September, 1914. Their idea is to present this paper in full, and then show, by comments on its contents, why they see it so clearly to be the H. G. S. of S. S. in embryo.

(The points especially commented on in the article have been italicized and are taken up in order.)

READING CIRCLES

BY OSCAR GEIGER

Fundamental Social Betterment, to be lasting, must come in response to a demand from the people, and the people must understand before they can demand. If we are ever to get the Single Tax on the statute books so that it will stay there, we must first get it into the minds of the people. We must get the people to want it and to get them to want it we must first get them to know it.

It is proper for us to try to get whatever measure of justice we can by such legal enactments as with the present state of the public mind we are able to obtain, but we must not delude ourselves into believing that merely direct effort toward legislation in the people's state of mind will secure fundamental justice, or if by chance it does, that it could be maintained. The people themselves would soon undo or sanction the undoing, passively if not actively, of any law, however just or right it may be, which they did not understand. Vested interest would soon proclaim the sacredness of contract, the inviolability of predatory and time-honored institutions, and successfully show how their sacred rights were being violated.

The people are not proof against resounding phrases, against the wiles and cunning of the political boss and the corporation hireling. They must be educated. There is no enduring short cut to freedom. The path of democracy lies through education.

This accepted, there remains only the selection of effective methods of educating the people. There are many ways, most are expensive, while many are fraught with the requirement of undue effort, and therefore wasted energy. Most methods of educating the people are a sort of hit and miss affair, more often missing than hitting.

This wasted energy we should try to overcome, and I believe the method I am about to propose in great measure does this. I hope you will give it your consideration.

Our propaganda should be separated into two component parts. First, publicity, by which the Single Tax is brought to public attention sufficiently to stimulate the curiosity and the interest of the individual to want to know something about it; and, secondly, educating that aroused interest.

How publicity can best be promoted is not my purpose to explain in this paper. We have among our membership experts in the art of publicity, who, I am sure, if called upon to do so, will ably and willingly plan a State-wide campaign of publicity that could be carried out with economy and produce results.

My purpose is to interest you in one method of educating the individual. Like the fellow who wanted fried fish and conceived the happy idea that he must first catch his fish, so to educate the individual we must first get him.

Individuals merely are not hard to get, but not all individuals will serve the purpose of our propaganda. We must get the individual who wants the light and having got the light is able and willing to spread it. The Single Tax cannot be forced on any one. When we think we have accomplished such a feat we have merely wasted energy. *We must draw from the ranks of those who want to learn*, and I believe the Reading Circle lends itself as the best instrument for the purpose.

One's willingness to join a Reading Circle is also the touchstone of his quality; of his fitness for the Single Tax. This man is willing to learn. *He is willing to go somewhere to listen, to ask questions, to argue, perhaps to read and then in turn to instruct.* In short, it is his action that proves his quality. Our duty is to supply the *place to which to go, the things to hear, and the person of whom the questions may be asked.* I know of nothing that so effectively supplies these as the Reading Circle, conducted, of course, as is intended with subject matter and formula carefully prepared.

Furthermore, the Reading Circle soon becomes the meeting place, the clearing house of idealism and philosophies, and what attraction is there greater than a crowd mutually met to talk?

One of the great advantages of Reading Circles as a method of propaganda is the ease with which they are started, and, once started, the ease with which they are kept going. In fact, once started, they cannot be stopped.

As in describing any circle, however, we must have a centerpoint, a place from which to start, so in a Reading Circle we must have the point around which the circle can be described. This point is the reader or leader of the circle. These readers must at first be chosen from ourselves, nor should the choice be limited. These readers must be ourselves.

We are not teaching a philosophy merely. We have a gospel to spread, and we should not delay longer what should have been done years ago.

What a difference it would make today if "Progress and Poverty" were known and understood throughout this State as only Reading Circles can make it known and understood. What would be the possibilities at the coming Constitutional Convention if for twenty years the Single Tax had been systematically and positively taught?

It is not too late now. This league has been organized for the purpose of bringing about the Single Tax. It has among its members those who have done much for the Single Tax, many who want to do more, all who can do something. Each and every one can help. Holding meetings and conventions is not enough. It is the work that we do among the people that counts. And nothing will bring us closer to the people than the Reading Circle, and I have spoken on street corners for years and button-holed people wherever I could find them.

The Reading Circle gives you a grip on your audience that nothing else can give. *It creates a feeling of fellowship that tends to break down the bars of prejudice and bigotry* and puts the reader into sympathetic relation with his hearers.

Perhaps the most important advantage of the Reading Circle as a method of propaganda is that it does not require great skill, or, in fact, any previous practice whatever on the part of the leader. Of course, any experience in public speaking that the reader may have is that much gained but no previous practice in teaching or public speaking is necessary. What most likely will result is that not only the reader but also the other members of the circle will eventually be able to express their thoughts in public if they were not able to do so before.

Not least among the advantages of the Reading Circle as a propaganda method is the fact that money is not an essential requirement for its success. Meeting halls are not necessary. Meetings can be conducted in the home of the leader or of one of the members. In fact, the home as a meeting place has many decided advantages. Some may prefer school rooms, where such can be obtained.

The only thing that is needed to successfully conduct Single Tax Reading Circles is a guide, a primary book such as Rusby's "Smaller Profits, Reduced Salaries and Lower Wages," or "The Story of My Dictatorship," followed by some such book as "Social Problems" and leading eventually to "Progress and Poverty." Or as has been suggested, starting with a series of questions and answers made up from such a book as Rusby's, and filling a session of about two hours. These questions and answers are intended to direct the discourse and not necessarily to be used in stereotyped fashion, unless that method for obvious reasons may be deemed the best.

All that is needed is a beginning. The League, or some one authorized by the League, should prepare and have ready new matter for this purpose, and be ready to direct and advise when such advice is needed.

There is no limit to the possibilities. Men congregate naturally. It is in the nature of things for them to do so. Our mission should be to use this tendency to induce men to gather to talk the philosophy of Henry George.

I believe Single Tax Reading Circles can be made a custom. The reading circle spirit, once properly inocu-

lated, is catching, being both infectious and contagious.

The possibilities are unlimited. Each Reading Circle will, in the natural course, draw to it some person from a more distant neighborhood, who in time will form the center of a new neighborhood circle himself. Whoever has once been part of a Reading Circle will readily serve as the nucleus for another.

It will be part of the work of this League to keep in touch not only with the readers or leaders of the various Reading Circles, but also with each member of such circles, and to help and encourage this work. It will give the League a list of names (if indeed not a list of members) that could not be otherwise obtained. And who does not see the possibility of an endless chain of circles each ever prolific of further increase?

I can see only one outcome to the proper expenditure of effort in this direction on our part. *The people will respond if we are in earnest and our work will be crowned with success.* We will lay the foundation of justice and democracy so firm and true that it will not be dislodged, and that Freedom, Social and Economic, will be served.

* * *

In the foregoing address delivered by Oscar H. Geiger nearly twenty-two years ago, we can see his thought then turning in the direction, which, nineteen years later resulted in his establishing the school which he named the Henry George School of Social Science.

As we read this appeal of his, that consideration be given to this idea of "Reading Circles"—as the best way then evident to him for educating people towards social and economic freedom,—and as we ponder upon the development of the work of this school which he began, we seem

"To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point, till on to dawn, when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day."

Let us examine some of these points of similarity between the idea of the Reading Circles, then promulgated, and the reality of the School he later founded.

"We must draw from the ranks of those who want to learn."—was to be a principle of the Reading Circle.

The School seeks to do just this by its plan of offering widely by means of its triplicate postal, a free course which shall give the individual a clearer understanding of

Why Poverty Persists with Plenty

Why Depressions Recur

Why Nations Go to War

Why Labor and Capital Fight, and a host of similar questions of vital interest.

"One's willingness to join a Reading Circle is also the touchstone of his quality . . . He is willing to go somewhere to listen, to ask questions, to argue, perhaps to read, and then in turn to instruct."

Those who actually respond to the postal sent out

by the School by their presence in the class room, are those who thus prove their quality by their action.

Next, we learn from this address given so many years ago, that it is

"Our duty to supply the place, the things to hear, and the person of whom the questions may be asked."

Years afterwards, when this idea of the Reading Circles had become further clarified in his mind, Oscar Geiger provided a classroom, and a logical set of questions on the teachings of Henry George as set forth in "Progress and Poverty," and became himself the devoted teacher of eleven classes meeting weekly in that room. In this we see him united at last with his thought. From that unity a greater unity has sprung! There are in this country alone one hundred and eighty-seven instructors now, in over one hundred cities of this broad land using offices, homes, or class rooms, thus following his lead. At present writing, these instructors are about to make use of the third revision of his teaching manual, which many of them worked upon recently in order that it should become a more perfect teaching instrument. This body of instructors has largely been developed from those who came to learn, and stayed to teach!—as was Oscar Geiger's hope in contemplating the Reading Circles.

"Furthermore the Reading Circle soon becomes the meeting place, the clearing house of idealism and philosophies" . . .

Here we see the direction where our great leader would have these students look, and it behooves us to keep it ever in mind. A wider vision, and then a journey to further heights, should be our aim, as it was his.

As one of the steps we have our Part II Course. Of the power of such a circle, we note—

"It creates a feeling of fellowship that tends to break down the bars of prejudice and bigotry."

Nineteen years after this, Oscar Geiger was to say to one of his pupils, "I have always dreamed there might be a Henry George Fellowship," and his students catching the vision were to establish it, in his own class room, on a memorable evening, April 19, 1934, two months before he left that little band of loving and grateful students, who thereupon determined to continue the work he had so well begun.

"It will be a part of the work . . . to keep in touch not only with the readers or leaders of the various Reading Circles, but also with each member of such circles, and to help and encourage this work."

In the steadily expanding work of the school with its extension classes this part of the work has been going patiently forward,—the aim being to record at the School's headquarters the name of every student in the country as he or she completes the course in "Progress and Poverty,"—together with the name of each instructor, with a record of the classes and students taught by him.

"To help and encourage this work," as suggested, there are constantly going forward from the Main School, letters explaining the method, with all necessary material—helps for conducting the classes, such as lesson assignments, teaching manuals, and copies of the Henry George News Service, a weekly message serving fifty-four Georgeist publications throughout the world, for use without cost.

"The possibilities are unlimited."

True—of the School, indeed. There are extension classes now in England, Denmark, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, as well as over one hundred in the United States, all appearing since September, 1933, when Oscar Geiger began to put to the test the idea he had presented in its germ form as "Reading Circles" nineteen years before. Through the years, he had come to see that for his purpose of making clear the philosophy of Henry George and spreading the gospel of that message, no book approached "Progress and Poverty" in its power to convince the student—so he devised a method of question and answer following logically through the book, which was the basis of the present Teachers' Manual. He said of the Reading Circles:—

"The people will respond if we are in earnest, and our work will be crowned with success."

What must have been his inner joy as a sign of the coming fulfilment of his God-like purpose, to help men to free man, after establishing the School—to find strong, young lives rallying to the task beside him!

Of the School, developed from this idea germinating slowly during those years, we have a fervent faith the words last quoted will prove to be prophetic. It was the faith and work of Oscar Geiger that produced the ear following the blade; to produce the full corn in the ear will require no less faith and work on the part of his students and friends in the movement.

HELEN D. DENBIGH.

Just Ignorance

IN the unabridged dictionary that is being offered by the *Post* of this city there is a definition of Single Tax as follows: "A form of taxation advocated by some, consisting of a levy on land, irrespective of its value, and on no other form of property."

This is a good definition of what the Single Tax is *not*. It may be said that most of the dictionary definitions of economic terms are "cockeyed." A plan has been worked out to examine these definitions in various dictionaries and communicate with the publishers of these lexicons. A newspaper article could then be written which might be syndicated and find publication in farm papers and elsewhere. There are possibilities in this suggestion, which originates with Mr. Ellenoff of Brooklyn, author "How to Create More Jobs than Men," and other widely circulated pamphlets.

Privilege for Every One

FREDERICK S. ARNOLD, A.M.

LIBERALISM is a word that seems to be used loosely for almost any change in public affairs, from the administrative reforms and the suppression of ecclesiastical abuses by the Emperor Joseph II, in the eighteenth century, to Communism and Atheism. We can't get anywhere with a term as loose as that. It ought to be defined. European Liberalism historically came to mean individualism, freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity. In the nineteenth century it meant equality of all men before the law, religious toleration and freedom of speech and person, a reformed civil service based on merit, representative government, universal suffrage, a secret ballot, Anti-slavery, Free Trade, and the abolition of special privileges. In the British Islands and in America it came to include local self government, home rule, and States Rights. As great monopolies developed in modern business, Liberalism came to mean Anti-monopoly. Therefore, where monopoly is natural and necessary to the business, but nowhere else, Liberalism came to mean Government Ownership. In this sense of the word, Fascism, Socialism, and Communism are not Liberalism, but its antithesis. In Russia, Communism is explicitly regarded as opposed to Western Liberalism. Defined in this way, Liberalism becomes something definite enough to discuss. It is a philosophy of the complete freedom (*libertas*) of the individual, based on the ethical and metaphysical value of personality.

Our last Democratic president of the Liberal school was Grover Cleveland. Perhaps the last old-time Liberal Prime Minister in England was Campbell-Bannerman. The last Liberal Roman of antiquity was Tiberius Gracchus. His own brother, Gaius, introduced the dole and Julius Caesar was a Fascist Dictator. That was the final defeat of ancient Liberalism. Liberalism has failed to win a good many times, since Gracchus, B. C. 133.

When Grover Cleveland was president and Governor Russell administered Massachusetts and Bayard, Breckinridge, Mills, Schurz, and many others were leaders of the Democratic party, Democracy meant about what it had meant under Thomas Jefferson, George Clinton, Martin VanBuren, Thomas Hart Benton, and Samuel J. Tilden. It meant States Rights, Free Trade, local self-government, the gold standard of sound money, and thrift. Grover Cleveland himself added the principle of the merit system, or civil service reform. All that is nineteenth century Liberalism. The economics of this philosophy began with the French Physiocrats, Condorcet, Turgot, du Pont de Nemours, du Quesnay, who deeply influenced Thomas Jefferson. This *laissez faire* economics developed through Adam Smith, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill and others in England. It became the philosophy of economic Liberalism. These are the his-