

Tribute to Tom L. Johnson

IN the City of Cleveland there are two graven images which the visitor should not fail to see, as well as several which he will be just as happy if he doesn't see. One is the statue of Mark Hanna, looking more like an ancient Roman than most ancient Romans, in University Circle. The other is the genial representation of Tom L. Johnson in the Public Square.

* * * * *

The new Cleveland has pulled itself out of the post-war stagnation by its own bootstraps. It looks ahead to an industrial growth upon which can be erected as beautiful and as cultured a city as money can buy. That is the Mark Hanna of it.

TOM JOHNSON'S EPITAPH

But it is only partially the Tom Johnson of it. Nor can Cleveland be explained wholly on the Mark Hanna basis. For Mark Hanna the success of a city could probably be measured by bank clearings, industrial output and increases in population—and there are doubtless worse yardsticks. But Tom Johnson wanted more—wanted the sort of attributes that are indicated in the inscription which "The People of Cleveland" put on his monument:

Beyond his party and beyond his class
This man forsook the few to serve the mass,
He found us groping leaderless and blind,
He left a city with a civic mind.
He found us striving each his selfish part,
He left a city with a civic heart.
And ever with his eye set on the goal
The vision of a city with a soul.

There are Clevelanders to whom this inscription seems vaguely libelous. Some of the rancors engendered linger, and his former opponents, or their descendants, do not like to admit that Cleveland had to wait for its soul until he presented it with one. But Tom Johnson did as much as any one man to make the city realize that the thing that was aching, far below the mantle of its rough prosperity, actually was a soul. He was one of the first Americans to teach that cities exist for the sake of their average men. The doctrine may be either sound or fallacious but it is the one upon which Cleveland, in its more creative moments, has been acting ever since.

Johnson's eight-year fight for the 3-cent fare cannot be considered a lasting victory—the single fare on Euclid Avenue is now seven cents. But the faith that a city is not only a place to work but also a place in which to live did win out. Cleveland did acquire a civic patriotism which went beyond bringing in new industries.

—R. S. DUFFUS in *New York Times*.

An Experiment in Prosperity

IN a broad sense, everyone in the United States is prosperous. Of course this is not literally true, but it comes so much nearer being true that it ever has been in our history that it is worth while to consider its implications and so far as we can to note some of its effects.

* * * * *

We may, for example, recall such visions as that of Henry George, who steadily preached the gospel of material prosperity, and headed one of his chapters "That we might all be rich."

Henry George's thesis was that poverty was not only one of the greatest curses of the human race but that to permit conditions whose fruitage was widespread poverty was a crime on society's part. He believed that with the abolition of poverty most human ills would disappear.

Were Henry George alive today he would, we think, be fortified in his belief. The present era of prosperity that has come to the American people may well prove to be one of the most important and beneficial land-marks in human history. The children that are growing up today have a fair chance of taking part in a vast experiment, conducted on a vaster scale and potent with greater possibilities for human betterment than all but a very few of the advances that have been made by humanity.

* * * * *

In short, the preliminary results at least tend to show that Henry George was right. Increase by a few jumps the distance between the average man and poverty, and it looks as though it were true that the fierceness, the life and death struggle marked by the play of every instinct of cruelty and desperation, do in fact rapidly abate. It is only now that the tremendous implications and possibilities of mass production, of manufacturing costs lowered by the development of power and its application, are beginning to find realization. As pointed out by Mr. Wells in a recent article in the *New York Sunday Times*, it is hardly more than a matter of yesterday that the common man has come into the picture in the way of actual betterment of his material lot. Could our prosperity be made really universal, its foundations definitely and durably established, we might indeed be on the verge of a brighter day in the long human story that has run for so long in the shadow; a day when we might begin an altogether different kind of history.

—MCCREADY SYKES in *Commerce and Finance*.

ENGLAND has the honor and glory (such as they are) of conquering Afghanistan, but the only influence over the destinies of the working masses of England has been to increase their taxation. France has had the glory of annexing Tunis, but the only difference it has made to the Frenchman who works for his living is that he has had to pay for the acquisition and retention of it.—MONGREDIEN.