

The Spirit of Henry George

—PRISCILLA DUNWIDDY—

Henry George was interested in a solution for human suffering—one that would actually make possible an equality of rights and opportunities for all people. He presented with it a philosophy which has been widely discussed and argued, but for the most part nothing impressively new has been added.

He also provided grounds for specific action, which, in view of the present economy and prevalent ideas, seem more like a dream than a possibility. However devoted we may be to the ideas of Henry George, we must admit that there is, on the whole, not the kind of effort that expects success. The tendency has been to travel in a circle of ideas and values instead of trying to apply them.

The Georgists are indeed a small minority within a contrary system and they are made to feel their impotence. Greater numbers might give impetus to the movement—but while waiting for the growth of Georgism, there is another less obtrusive way to move forward.

A Plan of Action

Let each one lay down the proposition that equality of rights for all is the solution of many of our serious problems. Then let him, in his own work and human relations, try to make possible equal rights and equality of opportunity for more and more people.

The spirit of Henry George was like a flowing stream, not a self-contained pool. His attitudes toward people and things were always constructive since they were based on his conviction that there is no value but human value—or *use* value.

Each individual who takes this great man as a model should therefore also be sensitive to the effect of every one of his acts and thoughts on others. His behavior may at first seem to have little significance, but it sets in motion the true principles of Henry George.

This action is immediate and it is within the reach of everyone—not limited to specialists. It is the only way in which things that have long been advocated in general can flow into a stream of particular and specific accomplishment.

The course may seem slow but it will be as resistless as an ocean tide. A few minds will in time be open to changes in a system which now seems impregnable. In any case, this is the only way to bring to reality of operation principles about which now we only talk.