

## Power Is With the Masses

By P. A. EKLUND

RECENTLY while attending group meetings to study *Progress and Poverty* and *The Science of Political Economy*, I wondered why the classes were so small, when insight into the world's dilemma could be obtained so inexpensively.

Until I read *The Life of Henry George*, I had no idea that during his life, George was known to millions in Europe, Australia and the United States, as a friend of the working classes. The masses of his time loved him for his character and fighting spirit, but like the masses of today (who seldom hear his name mentioned) they did not fully comprehend his single tax proposal.

What Henry George tried to do, and the reasons for his failure, are revealed in his books—also in the biography by his son, mentioned above. "Social reform," he wrote, in the much quoted lines from *Social Problems*, "is not to be secured by noise and shouting; by complaints and denunciations; by formation of parties, or the making of revolutions; but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought there cannot be right action; and when there is correct thought; right action will follow. Power is always in the hands of the masses of men; what oppresses the masses is their own ignorance; their own shortsighted selfishness."

After one of George's public addresses in England a journalist wrote: "He is perfectly simple and straightforward: A man with a mission; born to set right in a single generation the errors of six thousand years."

At that time, and under the circumstances, this editorial no doubt sounded sarcastic, but today doesn't it prove that the masses will not accept a new science until they have a strong conviction of what it can mean to them? To change man's thoughts about ownership of land after living in one culture pattern for a thousand years is not a simple task.

Henry George and his followers seem to have concentrated on selling the single tax, and therein lies the error—for the single tax as an end to land monopoly is one basic factor in a vast enveloping science. The single tax is vital in the production of wealth, but it cannot be taken out of its context and sold piecemeal. Until there is some sort of majority acceptance by the masses, of the fundamental structure, only a few will accept any part. No one welcomes a change in the living pattern, especially when the outcome is much in doubt.

Wasn't George's objective furtherance of social justice through proper taxation of land values? His works show that all the natural laws, when unhindered by human laws, will give to mankind the peace and happiness God intended him to have. All these natural laws therefore must function freely and collectively; whatever man does to hinder any one natural law affects to some degree all the other laws, and consequently all mankind.

Since many people associate natural law with the Creator, it would seem that the clergy (if they had a practical knowledge of this science) could be of invaluable help in reaching the masses. Many churches might then provide classrooms for much needed enlightenment and the study of "human progression."

Let's all work for the answers.