

More Crusading Spirit

by JOHN R. FUCHS

THE Henry George principles are still living, breathing and growing every hour. There may be a few among us, fortunately only a few, who doubt this. They lose hope only because truth seems to stand still at times, though it can never die.

Practical and personal experiences have taught me that people take little interest in the law of rent. Few understand it. But they will be moved by the truth that man cannot live without land, and that all men have an equal right to it. They will readily agree that he who is granted exclusive possession of this common property should pay the full value of such privilege.

Some readers feel Henry George made a mistake in urging that land be made "common property." No one claims an infallibility for George, least of all, he himself. But in my opinion he made no mistake in using this term. "Common property" is the very foundation of his philosophy. Over and over he made it clear that he did not propose that land should be divided, nationalized or administered by the state. On the contrary, he insisted that private possession re-

main inviolate.

The land question is the slavery question all over again. The crusading abolitionist would never have been elected to office, yet he served his purpose. Abraham Lincoln was no less opposed to slavery. He hated the institution and often said so, but he was a practical politician and did not advocate its immediate abolition. Had he done so he probably would never have become President of the United States.

This gives us a pattern for applying Henry George's teachings by taking small but uncompromising steps. Mere material suggestions, though very essential, will never stir the people like pronouncements of great moral truths, for people cannot be moved to action by reason only. Without crusaders we will never accomplish our aim. They are needed to pave the way for others who can present practical applications without compromising the basic principles. Too many advocates of Henry George's philosophy pull their punches for fear of offending.

These are my ideas. Others may have better ones.



HIMSELF SURPRISED

Paul Hershey of New York was walking along 57th Street one day when his attention was arrested by a bust in a bookstore window. He thought this looked very much like Henry George and suggested as much to the director of the Henry George School who naturally investigated.

Sure enough, it was a life-size plaster cast bust of George himself, which the proprietor, Allan Elsner, had dug up in the yard behind the store. Not knowing who it was, he nevertheless adopted it as his "mascot," and uses a photograph of it on his letterheads, labels, etc. The bust is on display in his window, often bedecked with hats and trinkets. Many come in just to inquire who the subject was. Mr. Elsner now knows—but the mystery remains: how did the bust get buried in the back yard of 247 East 57th Street?