

THE STANDARD / 31 August, 1892

On the Closing of *The Standard*

By: Henry George

Mr. Post writes me that this will be the final issues of THE STANDARD, and gives me opportunity to say a last word through its columns to those who have been so long to me more than personal friends. I do so with deep appreciation of the useful field THE STANDARD has filled, and of the friendships it has been the means of enkindling; but without regret. The work that THE STANDARD was intended to do has been done, and in the larger field into which our movement has passed, there is no longer need for it. For the usefulness of a journal devoted to the propagation of an idea must diminish as its end is attained. Needed while it is the only means of presenting that idea to the public and keeping its friends in touch, that need ceases as the idea finds wider expression and journals of general circulation are opened to it.

I did not start THE STANDARD for the purpose of establishing a paper, but for the purpose of advancing a cause. And when that cause had passed through the difficulties and dangers of its first entrance into the political arena, and a great political party had entered fairly, though reluctantly, upon the course that I had from the first looked upon as the means of bringing our ideas into general discussion, I felt that THE STANDARD no longer demanded the effort I had at the first devoted to it, as for the time the largest work I could do. But, in deference to the judgment of friends, who thought THE STANDARD should still be continued, I retained my connection with it though that could not be much more than nominal, while I went first to Great Britain and then to Australia in the effort to help on the work there. And when at the close of 1890 I finally withdrew from its publication, it was with the conviction that the idea of the single tax was now so firmly rooted that any need for the farther publication of THE STANDARD had passed.

It was my intention then to stop the publication of THE STANDARD, but as Mr. Croasdale wished to continue it, and believed in the possibility of making it self-supporting, and I knew that he would continue it on the same lines, I did not wish to stand in the way of his experiment, and, withdrawing myself, turned it over to him. The sudden death of Mr. Croasdale left his experiment not fairly tried, and Mr. Post consented to step into the breach and continue it for a reasonable time. After a year's hard work under great difficulties, in

which he has followed the policy that I began, and held THE STANDARD to its best traditions, he has come to my earlier conclusion, and has determined to stop its further publication. In my opinion he is acting wisely. For I feel that he can devote his energies to more useful work, and the affection I have for THE STANDARD, the love and devotion and noble purpose with which it is associated in the memories of so many of us, make me much prefer that it should be discontinued than that it should pass out of the control of those who were concerned in its inception, or that its character as a paper of one idea should be changed.

THE STANDARD closes its existence with a clear and honorable record. Its files may show the mistakes that are inseparable from all human effort, but from first to last they will show nothing dishonoring the great cause it has served. And they record an advance of that cause it has served. And they record an advance of that cause unprecedented in the history of such movements. Where in the beginning it stood alone, there are now scattered over the United States hundreds of local journals devoted to the same cause, while the columns of general newspapers of the largest circulation are freely opened to the advocacy of our views. They are, indeed, making their way through all avenues of thought – the pulpit, the stage and the novel, in legislatures, in Congress, and on the political stump. The ignorance and prejudice which the earlier files of THE STANDARD show that we then had to meet, have, in their cruder forms at least, almost disappeared, and among our most active friends are thousands of men who then believed our success would be the destruction of society. Within the last few months nearly a million copies of a single-tax- book have been distributed under the sanction of one of the great political parties, and the free trade sentiment to which we were the first to give practical and determined expression, has so grown that at the recent Democratic National Convention it was strong enough to break the slated programme and to force a free trade declaration into the platform.

THE STANDARD ceases to exist because larger fields are opening and mightier agencies are taking up the work.

Let us say good-bye to it; not as those who mourn, but as those who rejoice. Times change, men pass, but that which is built on truth endures.