

How Typical Is the Typical Student?

By DOROTHY SARA



STAGE fright is the ever recurring experience of the instructor, at the opening of each ten-week course in fundamental economics and social philosophy, at the Henry George School of Social Science. The feeling of apprehension is normal; it is based on the "blind date" concept, because the teacher and the students may or may not be attracted to each other at first sight. If the student group showed similarity in mentality, attitudes, age and personality, the work in the classroom would be clear, uphill learning together. But each new class is composed of an easily discernible heterogeneity; the teacher can only hope that, before the ten weeks are over, these distinct individuals will find a common bond in study. When this happens the instructor's tension is released and the role of "moderator" for a mutually interested group of students becomes a joy. This sense of comfort is, of course, merely temporary — very soon comes the next date with the next new group of students, and it starts all over again!

I am often asked, "What type of student comes to your classes?" and find much difficulty in responding. There is no type. There are only people. Each student comes to the Henry George School for individual reasons, which may be broken down loosely into these classifications: (1) an intellectual desire to explore the cause and cure of poverty, (2) an emotional desire to do the same, (3) the desire to meet new people, and (4) the desire to "sample" every free course available. Each is *seeking to satisfy a desire*, and some individuals find its fulfillment at the school, while others may not. Usually, my observation has been that those in the first three classifications are more likely to remain throughout the entire ten weeks of the course, while those in the latter group may drift away by the second or third lesson. Occasionally, however, a "sampler" remains to become a "graduate," then he often becomes most vociferous about his newly-found knowledge, and takes great satisfaction in the fact that he was at last able to curb his roaming tendencies and concentrate his enthusiasm on one subject.

The reasons for coming to the school are as diverse as the personalities of the individuals. During the opening class session, I try to find out why the students have enrolled, and their replies range from "I want to find out why, when I earn four times as much as I did ten years ago, I have less money left to enjoy," to "Just curious, never studied economics and I thought I'd come in to find out what it's all about," or "I just figured something must be wrong, we have so many wars and we go from one depression to another." Some are quite frank in saying—"Oh, I have some spare time, and I thought I'd find out why this is a free course." The reasons they advance for coming to the school afford no rule on which we may base a premise as to whether or not they will complete the course. Some of the people who

start on a purely intellectual basis may lose interest; on the other hand some who were just "shopping around" may develop an exceptional enthusiasm, and go on to the advanced classes. About the time the teacher believes he or she can compile statistics on the percentages of those who will remain as serious students, and those who are merely "killing time," the intangible element of human nature enters to upset all the statistics. The excitement of teaching year after year is based largely on this factor of uncertainty.

Another clue to the students' attitudes is revealed when they tell us what prompted them to call. As one part of the amenities of the first evening's session, I like to find out how the students heard of the school. Their answers may be "I got an announcement card in the mail, but I don't know who gave my name," or "I read an advertisement in the newspaper," or "One of my friends took a course, and suggested I come, too." Others read our class announcements on the bulletin boards of the public libraries. There is no one way to determine the most effective way of appealing to prospective students in adult education.

Citing a class which I had recently, we were a group of men and women, ranging in age from 20 to 70, who met one another for the first time in the classroom. Most were native Americans, and some came from various foreign countries—we had an interesting collection of accents and grammar, which sometimes occasioned good fun, and our foreign friends felt they were able to improve their "American" speech while learning about Henry George's theories and philosophy. Not wishing to rely on memory, I am copying the following list of occupations from the roll call of a "typical" class which I kept in file:

WOMEN

Radio writer
Clerk
Advertising writers (2)
Housewives (2)
Dietician

MEN

Draftsman
Consultant
Army lieutenant
Exporter
Buyer
Automobile dealer
Actor
Students (2)
Lawyer
Accountant
Advertising salesman
Y.M.C.A. secretary
Teachers (2)
Stock broker
Toolmaker
Engineer
Dentist
Retired

This variety of occupations, coupled with the wide range of the students' ages, home and educational backgrounds, and their distinctly individual emotional personalities, is hardly the "pat" answer which the questioner expects when he asks what type of student gravitates to this school.

We would be carrying optimism to an absurd degree if we said or thought that a class of this kind could run on a consistently even keel. Frequently an imbalance occurs where one or two students assume a persistently belligerent attitude and fight the teacher and Henry George's views on every point, in an effort to prove their superiority. No matter how earnestly the teacher strives to maintain a harmonious classroom atmosphere, other students sometimes resent this sufficiently to discontinue attendance.

However, on the credit side, we can take pleasure in the many students who do graduate from the fundamental course. We also take pride in the number of students who return for advanced courses, and especially those who reach teachers training classes and later emerge as instructors themselves. This incentive—encouraging teachers to come up from the ranks—is highly regarded and appreciated by the students. The fact that they come to the school of their own free will, do not need to take entrance or graduating examinations, and are left strictly on their own to study and participate in the open classroom discussion, is a source of wonderment to many, and they are enthusiastic in expressing their gratitude.

At the end of ten weeks in the fundamental course, the class chooses (by democratic vote) the valedictorian to represent it at the commencement exercises. In about half the cases, the elected speaker turns out to be someone who, during the first two or three weeks, was shy and inarticulate, and suddenly blossomed forth as a vocal participant for the rest of the term. The impromptu speeches of three minutes' duration, given by the class representatives, are as versatile in theme and delivery as any cross section of New York could be. These expressions

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A Word With You

By ROBERT CLANCY

Of all the countries I can think of, Canada is the one that seems to be going somewhere, not just milling around in confusion.

Going somewhere—that is, moving forward, increasing in population, attracting foreign capital, discovering its resources, expanding its industry, and balancing its budget. This last is no mean feat and is enough by itself to cheer about.

I can't quite explain why, but it's also exhilarating to me that the Canadian dollar is now actually worth more than the U. S. dollar. It is sought even more eagerly in the world market, according to a story in the N. A. M.'s new magazine, U. S. A.

For all this there are reasons. Canada is a big country and a young one, sparsely populated. It has immense natural resources, a mere scratching at which has excited the world. So far, all this is true of Brazil, which is not exactly booming, though that "coming attraction" has been widely publicized. Why the difference?

Well for one thing, Brazil is riddled with tight controls and restrictions, ill-advised nationalization schemes, favoritism and corruption, trade barriers and all the rest of it. Canada is no Utopia in this respect, but comparatively there is much less interference with the free market. Canada is not trying to hoard within its borders that poor substitute for stability, gold. Taxes are lower, incentives are greater.

Finally, and far from least, Canada has adopted a pretty sensible policy with respect to its biggest magnet, its natural resources. The rights to such resources—oil, minerals, etc.—are reserved to the Dominion or to the provincial governments. Private operators, domestic or foreign, are welcome to have a go at the resources on the same terms, chief of which is payment of a royalty to the government. Thus, an effective brake has been applied to the biggest blight of booms—wild and feverish speculation and grabbing of such resources. Private industry is encouraged and in addition, healthy sums are obtained for the treasury.

Brazil, on the other hand, while nationalizing and restricting the wrong things—industry and commerce—allows rampant private exploitation of the wrong things—its natural resources.

So—a salutation to our newly awakened neighbor to the north, Canada.

Gems for Georgists

By NOAH D. ALPER

Hidden Economic Poison—Taxes

"Hidden taxes are increasing faster than the more obvious income and sales taxes, as pointed out by the Commerce Clearing House. In the last five years, manufacturers' excise taxes have increased 13 times faster than all other federal taxes, the author calculates.

"Taxes on autos, parts and tires totaled \$1,692,000,000 last year and \$532,000,000 on other durables. It will be more this year because rates were raised last November first."

The C. C. H. pointed out that because these taxes are paid by the manufacturer, and are part of the price, most of them carry normal wholesale and retail mark ups, pyramiding the cost to the consumer.

—From *Today's Business*—Elmer Roessner, St. Louis Globe Democrat, April 22, 1932.

Great Conclusions by Hunch

Dr. Firmin E. Bear of Rutgers University soils department thinks the United States could feed a billion people, and he tells how in an INS news dispatch from Philadelphia based on an article in *The Farm Journal*. Involved in his program are items of irrigation, draining swamps, diking gulfs, fertilizing and water storage.

Professor Bear says that people might not enjoy "today's extravagant diet" but that they could, at least theoretically, "get by."

No doubt the good professor failed to include the potential for improvement in food production possible by the application of the principles of untaxed production, and the public appropriation of rent for public use. This would, undoubtedly, add assurance to his estimates.

However in spite of the analysis of Professor Bear, and of outstanding chemists as to the future of food supply, many will, as if by reflex action, continue to parrot the fear of too many mouths to feed.

One of Millions of Details

Gold plating 1/100,000 of an inch thick on a collar stay is not subject to a federal excise tax. If the gold is thicker the 20 per cent tax applies. This is the reply received by the National Retail Dry Goods Association from the Internal Revenue Bureau.

Land Question Business Booming

Henry George told the Irish people and the world that the boiling, bubbling, tearing question in Ireland in the late years of the last century, was not the "Irish land question" but *The Land Question*. With so much meaningful history—past, present and future—surrounding this question, the wonder is why the warnings went unheeded by all but the Communists.

For instance, take a peek at India where they nibble at the problem: "The Supreme Court of India acted to abolish Zamindari, or feudal landlordism.

"Under today's decision, the state governments may confiscate and redistribute tenant estates, with compensation to former owners.

"India's land system was a device adopted by the former British rulers whereby certain favored individuals were entrusted with tax collecting responsibilities over agricultural land. Whatever they could obtain from the tenants in addition to the taxes due to the British they could keep. In time they became virtual owners of their territories."

Original laws of state abolishing Zamindari were declared unconstitutional. Recently an amendment to the Constitution was upheld by the court. The above quotations are from a special dispatch to *The New York Times* from Delhi, October 5, 1931.

Chicago Student Queries World Readers

"Do all men have the right to inhabit the earth?" This insistent question arises again and again as it must. Wilbur Johnson, graduate of the Chicago extension, asked it in an editorial in the *Chicago World* on December 15, 1931. "There are two kinds of property," he stated, "Firstly, natural property, or that which comes to us from the Creator of the universe—such as earth, air, water. Secondly, artificial or acquired property—the invention of man . . ."

"Deprive a man of the free right to inhabit the earth and he automatically becomes a slave deprived of the liberty guaranteed by the preamble of our Constitution," he stated. The existence of the inequality of inheritance of the earth, is not due to the lack of a solution, but to the lack of realization that men have never been free. Goethe wrote: "None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free."

"If you are interested in the complete abolition of slavery, both moral and physical; if you are interested in your divine inheritance," the student-author pleaded, "then inquire about the Optional Graded Tax act incorporated into the law by the Pennsylvania Legislature."

John C. Lincoln
says

A great many people agree that the government is taking from individuals in taxation wealth to which it has no right. If such is the case, then it follows that a great moral wrong is being committed. The most charitable description that can be made of such confiscatory taxation is to say that it is unethical.

But there is a method by which needed public revenue may be raised that is neither moral nor confiscatory, nor unethical. That is by the appropriation for the public use of the annual rental value of land. Strictly speaking, no tax would be involved.

Moreover, the landlord would receive immediately and directly the highly valuable privilege of holding land as against his fellow men. In addition, he would be relieved in large part, if not entirely, of his share of the taxes which now fall on the products of labor and capital.

It may be interesting to note in passing what some recognized authorities have thought of such a method of raising public revenue. THEODORE ROOSEVELT: "The burden of municipal taxation should be so shifted as to put the weight of taxation upon the unearned rise in the value of the land itself, rather than upon the improvements."

H. J. DAVENPORT, Professor of Economics, Cornell University: "It is obvious that the bare land with its contents and the waters that flow through it and about it, constitute the nature-provided environment of human beings, and are rightly the subject of their equal claims . . ."

ADAM SMITH: "A tax upon ground rent would not raise the rent of houses. It would fall altogether upon the owner of the ground rent, who acts always as monopolist and extracts the greatest rent which can be got for the use of the land."

HENRY GEORGE: "We say that it is a bad policy to tax men for what they add to the common stock of wealth . . . that the man who builds a house is doing something not merely for himself, but for the whole community; that the state should encourage industry, not discourage it; that no tax should be laid upon the industry that produces or the thrift that accumulates; that in this great fund that comes from nothing that the individual does lies the proper, the intended means of supplying all public wants. That fund we propose to take by abolishing our present taxes and laying a single tax upon the value of land irrespective of improvements."

—From the *Mary Lincoln Letter*

Reserve! Reserve!

The annual conference of the Henry George School moves to the Queens Hotel in Montreal for its eighth session, July 10 to 13—reservations should be made at once.

Among distinguished guest speakers will be A. W. Roebuck of the Canadian Senate and John Gilmour, Canadian Forest Commissioner. Miss V. G. Peterson of the Schalkenbach Foundation will speak; also Colonel E. O. Harwood of Great Barrington, Connecticut and Dr. Geoffrey W. Eady of Princeton, New Jersey; both trustees of the Henry George School.

The International Conference to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade meets July 29 to August 4 in Odense, Denmark. Over 120 American delegates are already booked, but there is still time to make reservations.

Viggo Stærcke, leader of the Danish Justice party will be an honored speaker. Prominent Georgists from England and France will also be heard. J. Rupert Mason, of San Francisco, will preside.

The Typical Student

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sions are a source of satisfaction to the teacher which cannot be measured by any material scale. Although no faculty members at the Henry George School receive a cent in monetary compensation, they feel amply rewarded if their graduating students show promise.

At the end of the course, the teacher relaxes and takes inventory:

There are always students who, with zealous ardor, ask, "If this is so good, why hasn't it been put into force? What can we do about it?"

There are some who can be recommended as potential teachers, either in the classroom or the correspondence course.

A few friendships have developed among some of the people in this heterogeneous group, based on their new common language and interests. Occasionally there is a romance (a charming by-product of the school) which leads to matrimony.

Although groups which were "hand picked" might seem desirable, we have decided in favor of students drawn independently through a variety of announcements, advertisements and personal recommendations. The students pay no fee—the textbook is offered for sale at a nominal cost—but they are not even forced to buy that.

This paramount freedom which is inherent in Henry George's philosophy affords to the student a natural right to his individuality. Thus, the multi-faceted pattern, consisting of every kind of person, is the ideal one for us. If the class showed a preponderance of one type of personality and mind, one age, one occupational group, or one nationality, the work of the teacher would of course be simplified. The result, however, might be a lack of vitality, and students would be robbed of the benefits which come from meeting the challenges of a variety of opinions and people. The class which has a minimum of similarities is most exciting and stimulating—it offers the greatest attraction (aside from the subject itself) and affords opportunity for logical, objective discussion.

We cannot typify either our students or teachers. However, if the uncompromising inquirer presses you for an unqualified reply to his query about "what type comes to our classes," bring him to any evening session and let him see for himself. Perhaps he, too, may become one of us typical non-typical Georgists.

PLAIN TALK by Jerome Jacobson

The word *profit* is one of the most misunderstood words in the American economy. Large industrial concerns run full page ads frequently describing it variously as a reward for risk-taking, as a necessary incentive to management and various other interpretations. Economists have defined profits as the sums left over after wages, interest and economic rent have been paid.



It would seem that even a little analysis would show that it is not, as implied, a thing apart. If a workman works a little harder, a little more intelligently and a little more effectively than he might have done, his production increases. To say that his usual effort results in wages and his better than usual effort is profit is purely contradictory. All that results from his effort is wages. If it is given to him as such and not appropriated by another he will have every reason for working diligently, efficiently and capably. Even giving him part of this extra produce often encourages him to work more effectively. Systems which give him part of this extra production are called incentive systems. But if he is forced to give up a portion of this extra production, he will not work as well as if he receives it all.

If the wise investment of capital results in greater production, there appears to be little reason to call the normal return from investment *interest* and the additional return *profit*. If part of what results from the investment of capital is called *interest*, there should be no change of terms merely because some capital is invested more effectively than other capital.

The return which goes to individuals who have control of natural resources or who have government granted or tolerated privileges is often called economic rent.

Its increase is usually the result of changes in general economic trends. Economic rent does not increase because of the actions of the privileged owner. It results from the actions of the social group.

To illustrate: Suppose "A" buys a choice corner in a city. Later the people in the community make great improvements in the vicinity of this corner. Greater activity, sponsored by the group, now makes this corner extremely valuable. Soon someone wishes to use that corner to build a store or a factory to serve these people. He naturally pays a higher price for the corner than he would have paid if the community had not made these improvements. The gain, which "A" now has, he calls profit. Actually it is capitalized economic rent. He may even decide to lease the corner rather than sell it, in which case he could command a much higher rent than he could had the community not made these improvements. For the sake of illustration let us say this gain was \$10,000.

Without having helped to increase production in any way, he is now able to share in what that community produces to the extent of

\$10,000. Because he is able to command \$10,000 worth of the group's produce, those who did aid in its production must take \$10,000 less than they would if somehow he could have been prevented from appropriating this gain. Nothing he did helped the community increase its production. He merely placed himself in a position where he could demand \$10,000 for getting out of the producer's path. Perhaps the word *profit* could be used for this type of gain but it also is often called economic rent.

Socialists claim that the owner of capital gets a similar return and feel that the group should appropriate this sum. But the machines, the tools and other items called capital did aid in the production of wealth.

Suppose that during the life of these machines or capital items their owner was given \$10,000 worth of the goods which the community produced. He would be given this amount only if the use of his machines increased the total production of the community by at least \$10,000. Such an owner would help—as any other worker might—in the production of goods—but instead of applying his labor directly to the goods, he would apply it to the making of tools to be used on the job. Failure to pay for the use of capital would be a refusal to pay a laborer who had done his part of the work away from the job.

If such a laborer is extremely capable and makes tools that increase production rapidly, he may receive much more than he could have received by working directly on the job. Many want to label this extra gain as *profit*. Obviously it is merely the reward for more effective work and represents additional wages. Actually there is no such thing as *interest*. What is called *interest* is the reward which goes to those who use their effort to create tools which they believe will be needed to do certain jobs in the future. If they make the kind of tools that will be desired and needed they will be rewarded much more than if they direct their efforts to making something which will not be needed or which has already been made in sufficient quantity or with less effort.

Until our industrial leaders, our labor leaders and our political leaders have a better realization that *profits* are really the additional produce which results from energetic, effective effort—we will continue to wrangle about them as if they were something different from *wages* and *interest*. The only possible "profits" that can exist in our society are those unearned increments collected by people who place themselves in the paths which producers must take and who have to be "bribed" or "bought out." Until we properly distinguish between those who produce and those who exact tribute we will continue in a path which will ultimately equalize us all at a level where no one will have much of anything.

"YES, WE HAVE NO POTATOES," writes OTTO K. DORN

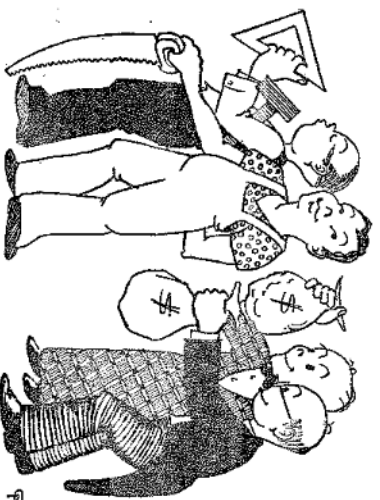
It seems only yesterday that the government was spending your money and mine to buy potatoes over which kerosene was poured to make them inedible, in order to raise the price on the rest of the crop. When the 1951 output turned out to be 25 per cent under that of 1950 the O.P.S. applied ceilings. Then came the black market. Recently a San Francisco produce official reported, "We're living according to O.P.S. rules and we are out of business."

Rent Collection Steps Up Prosperity

By PHIL GRANT

Now he that planneth and he that watcheth are one; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.—1 Cor. 3:8.

LET'S return now to the land speculator who can no longer profit by holding land idle since the community collects the full land value from him whether he uses his land or not. Obviously, since he can't afford to pay out rent for land that earns no income for him, he is left with no choice but to improve his land to its full economic capacity, or to abandon it. Which ever choice he makes, the entire community must benefit. For it doesn't matter whether he himself improves his land or whether someone who takes over after he walks away from it, does the actual improving. The result is that additional labor is put to work on additional land.



Most owners of better-than-marginal land would most likely choose to improve their land because: (1) they'd want to get back in rentals at least as much as they would have to pay to the community in land rents; (2) any improvements they should make, no matter how elaborate, would be completely tax free; and (3) since the community wouldn't want to collect the full land rent, but would be satisfied to allow present landowners to retain a small part rather than permit the abandoned land to fall into the hands of government and thereby attract thieving politicians, the landowners would still be getting an advantage.

Since the landowner, like all humans, seeks to satisfy his desires in the easier way, and he can best satisfy his desires by getting back out of his land more than he must pay out in land rents to the community, he'll happily tear down the slum tenements, shacks and outmoded buildings now on his land, and will replace them with more modern structures. Not because he wants to beautify the city, but because being human, he knows that putting up modern improvements would be the easiest way for him to attract tenants. He'd clearly see that under a system of free enterprise, there'd soon be an abundance of housing and business structures, and only the better ones could attract tenants. For who would agree to live in a slum or do business in an outmoded fire-trap if modern quarters were available at the same rental?

Almost immediately, then, after community collection of land rents began, the nation would see the longest-lasting building boom ever dreamed of! Landowners, who formerly held land only as a speculation, would now desperately improve their properties for use. And, to do so, they'd scurry about wildly trying to hire

architects, bricklayers, steel-construction men, carpenters, electricians, painters, and all of the many other types of building-trades labor. There'd certainly be more jobs than men to fill them, and the result, undoubtedly, would be much-higher-than-union-scale wages. Whenever the supply of labor is lower than the demand, wages naturally climb much higher than man-written laws, strikes, union bargaining or socialistic controls can artificially force them.

Moreover, let's remember that buildings aren't made of labor alone. Building materials—mountains of them—would be needed too. The quantities of brick, lumber, plumbing, electric wire and fixtures, girders, concrete, glass, nails, paint, refrigerators and the thousands of other manufactured articles used in building would be needed far beyond our imagination. And to produce this fantastic quantity of goods would require an equally amazing quantity of labor and capital! In order to produce the manufactured articles, raw materials—logs, iron ore, oils, paint pigments, copper, asphalt, rubber, cotton, and so on—would have to be produced by miners, farmers, and lumbermen—more labor and capital profitably employed.

With all these extra jobs and income—in both wages and interest—everyone will certainly be able to afford more and better food, clothing and shelter; better schools and better-paid educators. And that, of course would mean more jobs for the manufacturers of our food, clothing, shelter and gadgets; more funds for schools and top wages for our teachers.

Educated as we have been to an "economy of scarcity," our description of production under a free economy—an economy of plenty—is hard to believe. That simply collecting all land rents to force idle land into use and doing away with all taxation could result in such far reaching benefits for all men is certainly unbelievable at first sight; but that it is indeed true has yet to be logically disputed!

The alert reader may be wondering what we're going to do with all this production—especially with so many new buildings. Certainly, there must be a limit to the number of offices, apartments, stores and theatres that even the largest of cities can use. The builders will argue, since the value of city land is so high, and the owner will accordingly have to pay so much to the community in land rent, that only very tall buildings can be erected. For in order to get back enough in rentals to make up for the amount of land rent paid out, the owner would have to pile rental units story on story. Since even today, not all skyscrapers are fully rented, what's the point in building more of them? All of these arguments are sound.

But—builders aren't fools. When the demands for office buildings and apartment houses are completely satisfied—and it is very unlikely that the day will ever come when man doesn't want even bigger, better, newer or more convenient quarters for living and for business—builders will, as they do today, stop building them. The one- and two-story taxpayer buildings now covering most of big city areas will most likely be torn down, and if not replaced by a skyscraper, will leave many large vacant areas spotted between the tall buildings. If these idle lots can't be afforded for private production purposes, the community may use some

Time-Honored I

The new (sixth) edition of *Progress and Poverty* in Danish is an excellent condensation. "Jakob E. Lange surely rendered a great service to his countrymen in producing this work. It seems to me far more complete and adequate than any attempt I have seen in English to shorten the work," writes Joseph Jespersen of New York who translated the author's introduction, excerpts from which follow:

"HENRY GEORGE, the greatest contemporary thinker and writer in the field of political economy and social science is—as has often been the case with bond-sundering spirits—far from being a product of the usual academic and university education. It is not through school books and dissertations that he has learned to know life—*Progress and Poverty* and his other works reveal this on every page...

"But *Progress and Poverty* bears the stamp not only of its author's travels and his insight. The book is the work of a mature man. George was more than forty years old and his sons were almost grown when he wrote his first work.

"And still as inquirer and writer he was precisely youthful. He not only possessed to the full youth's natural thirst for knowledge, that spiritual hunger which in him had not been weakened by the usual stuffing on the school bench, he was also abreast of the new learning's vital interpretation of the whole of classical political economy, the principal works of which he had plowed through. He had studied them, not in the manner of the twenty-year-old student reading for an examination, but in burning thirst for the answer to the vital social questions he saw raising themselves more and more menacingly the more rapidly all the modern progress became effective, along with its followers—unemployment, need and dependence on one side and unearned riches on the other.

of the land rents collected to turn them into beautifully landscaped gardens fitted with tables to which office workers may bring picnic lunches in the spring and summertime. Some of these areas might be transformed into swimming pools, ice-skating rings, out-door libraries or tennis courts. Or, if the community preferred, it might earn additional revenue by making them into fruit-tree bordered parking lots. Empty spaces in our cities certainly aren't the city-planners' problem today. It's the overcrowding caused by too many low squallid buildings, too narrow streets, lack of recreation areas and auto-parking facilities that present the difficulty facing our city-planners and slum-clearance architects. It is plain to see that once the community collects land rents instead of taxation, cities will become less crowded and the wilderness that separates cities today will become more populated.

Many land speculators owning marginal and sub-marginal land will prefer simply to walk away from it rather than improve it. Economically, such land would have no value; but that is not to say that such land would have no use value. For on such land—we'd rarely find it in cities where population is heavy—people will most likely build their homes, schools, churches and public buildings. As such land is sub-marginal, those using it would pay no land rent to the community because, according to Ricardo, marginal and sub-marginal land yields no rent. Since all taxation on improvements will have

Book in Denmark

"He sought the answer, sought wholeness and clarity in scientific works, but found only confusion and contradictions. So he had then to seek his own way. Therefore, the beginning of *Progress and Poverty* naturally enough takes shape as a criticism of classical political economy. But it is no pedantic criticism of misplaced commas; one immediately feels the master's hand in the work, the ordered superiority and great simplicity. He does not hypocritically reject those stones which are fit—he discards and replaces only the useless—and introduces order and coherence so that from the confusion of materials a structure is raised single and harmonious and resting on solid ground.

"It is now twenty-five years since *Progress and Poverty* was published; but the years have not weakened the work. It seems on many points almost more timely than when it was written. The book which found its first publishers with the utmost difficulty, has now been translated into all principal languages, and its thoughts are discussed throughout the world."

With the fifth edition a study guide emerged which is also included with the recent sixth edition. This was developed by the Ecotechnical High Schools and is intended for use by students as well as teachers. It covers the text in ten lessons and particular attention is called to certain passages. The questions are similar to those used in American extension schools.

One of the places mentioned in the introduction is Odense, where the author, Jakob Lange, made his revision. This derives its name from Odin's Island; buried there is St. Knud, the King Canute of English history. This island was the birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen, and it will be the meeting place of the conference (July 29 to August 4) of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade.

been done away with, those making their homes on such land might live there—regardless of how extensively they improved their houses—at no expense whatever.

But it is the marginal land which will be abandoned by the speculator, that really makes the collection of land rents by the community so worth while. As we saw in earlier pages,* wherever free land is made available to any who care to use it, unemployment is impossible! Marginal land that yields no rent does yield wages and interest to the user—wages and interest equal to that earned on all land—even the best. When free land is available for the taking, and with more jobs available than there are men to fill them, humans will no longer crowd into cities to compete with each other for a limited number of available jobs and thus drive wages down to a level far below decent subsistence. Those preferring to work for wages would be sure of being paid at least as much as they might earn working for themselves on marginal land. In fact, it is more likely that they'd earn a bit more, for under such conditions, hired labor would be scarce and therefore at a premium. Employers, as they do during war-time labor shortages, would find it to their interest to offer the most attractive wages, working conditions and special inducements in order to attract labor and keep it.

*From *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, by Phil Grant—a modern version of *Progress and Poverty*, being published by Devin-Adair Company, New York.

"Life's a Bowl of Tariffs"

LEO HEIMAN, a columnist writing in *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville) on March 25, made a plea for "A lone tax deadline instead of 58." He said, "taxes keep people mentally worn out," and then, without quite getting the point of Henry George's philosophy, he stated it thus:

"Henry George had a solution of a sort. George was an economist who lived from 1839 to 1897 and spent a good deal of his life preaching the doctrine of the Single Tax. He proposed that all taxation be condensed into one levy—on land. All other taxes, he contended, were unnecessary.

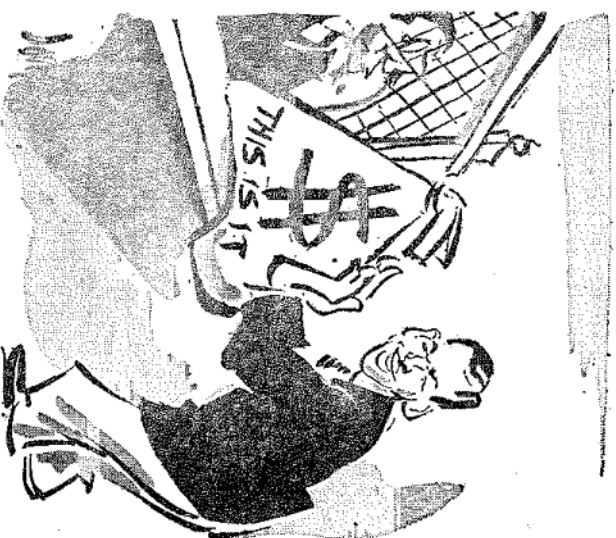
"It was a quarter of a century after George's death that the Single Tax movement reached its peak. Even then, it didn't get very far, although there remain many advocates throughout the United States."

We feel Mr. Heiman missed the point where he commented that this tax would be easy to evade.

"A number of communities in Australia," he wrote, "actually get public revenue entirely from a tax on land; but maybe George's idea isn't feasible over here. It would be easy for a person to go through life tax-free simply by steering clear of land ownership."

A little cogitation would probably convince this kind man that the land value tax is the only one which cannot be passed on and cannot be

evaded since everyone in the final analysis, depends upon land. It would therefore be much more just than the single tax on incomes which he conjures up as a possible solution for today's problem.



A SINGLE TAX WOULD BE A WHOPPER
Courtesy of Lee Heiman and *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville.

The Muni Fare Affair By ROBERT TIDEMAN

WHEREVER San Francisco's municipally owned railway has been extended, land values have gone up, crystallizing the rise of rent which accompanies material progress. People are naturally willing to pay more for land well served by public transportation.

It is not only residential land that is increased in rental value by the Municipal Railway. (Only 15 per cent of San Francisco's property values are in the residential district.) To a much greater extent the Muni produces land values in the shopping areas, mainly downtown, where it brings thousands of customers an hour to certain business locations.

Supervisors MacPhee and Mancuso opened the present controversy January 28, when the Muni's \$22,232,000 budget request was examined by the Board. They expressed alarm that \$3,300,000 was to come out of property taxes, as compared with \$1 million the year before.

The Muni fare controversy amply demonstrates what competent observers have always recognized—that the landholders, who for reasons of policy call themselves "property" owners, are a potent force in local affairs. Their taxes cannot be shifted. So long as a railway is in private hands this powerful interest views fares only as something to be kept down, so as to keep rents up. But when a railway becomes publicly owned this view may be overshadowed by the idea that the fare can be made to substitute for the property tax. The pressures that have brought sales taxes to more than 150 California cities in the past 20 years are then exerted on behalf of higher fares. Of course higher fares tend to reduce land rents as MacPhee acknowledged (although he seems not to realize that a sales tax does the same thing), but this is never so clear and immediate a problem as "next year's tax rate," and it seems easier to

escape taxes by raising fares than by driving perpetually for economy.

As Utilities Manager Turner indicated, a utility is apt to be more efficient if the benefited landholders contribute to the cost of running it. The landholders press for economy, and the utility managers themselves take an interest in providing efficient management to sustain the rents that support the utility. Only in this way can the profit motive which keeps private railways efficient be brought with any security into government operation.

Probably the main reason city governments are more efficient than state and federal governments is that the constant tendency to bureaucratic waste is offset by the economy block of "property" owners. There is no such check in the federal government, because Uncle Sam has levied no tax on land values since 1861. The states too have been replacing property taxes with sales taxes, etc. The treasury watchdogs are being bought off by tax exemption.

Not only are the potent forces of economy thus lost, but the very same forces then begin to work for expenditure. The same landholding interest which fights to keep down San Francisco's property tax rate vies with the landholders of other counties for "its share" of the State Highway Fund, which is supported by gasoline and license taxes. So great is the pressure of landholders for handouts from this pork barrel that a continuous drive is on to raise taxes for it. Senate Constitutional Amendment No. 5, for instance, which will be on the ballot at the next election, has this aim.

Thus relieving the benefited land not only calls off the treasury watchdogs, it turns them into the treasury to feed. Instead of landholders and tax collectors checking one another, they then join hands to milk the citizenry.

Letters

To the Editor:

The California Supreme Court has decided that the Alien Land law of 1920 is unconstitutional, notwithstanding the fact that it was previously held constitutional by the same court, and by the Supreme Court of the United States. The case is *Sei Fujii v. California*—decided April 17, 1952.

Upon re-examination, the court decided that this statute violated the equal right to life and liberty provision in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. This may pave the way for repeal of other state tax and land laws, which infringe on the equal protection of the right to life and liberty, as secured by the "supreme law of the land."

This decision of the California Supreme Court has great importance, far beyond the statute disallowed by it.—J. RUPERT MASON
San Francisco

To the Editor:

The writer has just received copies of the February and March issues of the News. It seems that Dr. von Mises is in error when he says "there is under the Georgian scheme no reason for the farmer to move toward more fertile land," etc.

He assumes that as the soil is depleted the taxes will be reduced. This should not be the case. In order to assess the land fairly we must consider the average yield of similar land in a given area over a specified period of time and consider that as a constant unvarying factor. Thus those who build up their soil will not be penalized for doing so and those who simply mine the soil will not be rewarded by reduced taxes for their lazy and destructive methods of farming.

We who believe in the organic method of farming and gardening know that the soil can be built up as well as torn down. The single tax would furnish incentive to build up the soil in the same way that it would give incentive to the building of other improvements.

As the tax would not be reduced on farms which had been exhausted they would tend to be abandoned. The reduction in competition would leave a better market for those who had improved their soil by putting back the waste products, etc. A poor soil would mean a low sale value for buildings and other improvements.

No matter what may be the nature of an improvement, it must not be taxed so long as it can be shown to be an improvement and not a gift of Nature.
—VERNON R. HONE
Post Falls, Idaho

To the Editor:

I am enclosing \$1 for one year's subscription to The Henry George News. I am also submitting an item which you may wish to print. Webster's Twentieth Century Dictionary defines the word "George" as follows: "Ge—the earth—orge (from the Greek ergon) to work." Thus the very word "George" means to work the earth. So when we use the expression "The George Economy" it has this special and significant meaning.
—MRS. BESSIE MITCHELL,
Secretary, Los Angeles S.A.G.R.
Santa Monica, Calif.

To the Editor:

As an appraiser and former county assessor, I am naturally concerned with the practical application of the single tax. Ten years of experience in the field of real estate appraising has taught me that it is not always an easy matter to determine or measure annual ground rents. In the case of farm and urban lands the problem is not too difficult as we have a yardstick for measuring them. We at least can come close enough to measuring them for all practical purposes.

On the other hand when it comes to the taxing of mineral and timber resources on this basis, we run into difficulties which may be insurmountable. Other single taxers have come to this conclusion. To them and not to me must also be given the credit for first pointing out a practical plan for taxing such natural resources. So difficult is it to determine even the market value of mineral deposits, especially where they are unimproved that even the legislatures in mining states have provided for a tonnage or severance tax in the place of the general property tax. The State of Idaho, which is rich in minerals, is one of these. It would be even more difficult to determine the annual ground rents of mineral resources with no capitalized value to guide us. The fact is it would be impossible. A severance tax appears to be the only answer to this problem and to the problem of standing timber as well.

It occurs to me that we are also taking the rental value of such natural resources when we take the royalties and stumpage profits in taxation. Of course this would not be true of those mineral and timber resources that are not in use. As I see it, our unused timber and mineral resources do not present any serious economic problem.

In the first place if you were an assessor and the law required you to determine the annual rental value of unused mineral or forest lands, how would you go about it? By what economic formula would it be possible to measure such value? I know of no such formula. While the annual rental of land above the minerals and beneath the timber could be ascertained with a considerable degree of accuracy, it is quite another matter when the minerals and the standing timber are included. In this case we have nothing in the way of private transactions to guide us.

In the second place, if the annual rentals of such resources could be determined and taken in taxation, I am not sure that such a fiscal policy would be a good thing for the nation's economy. If the annual rent collected in taxes should be higher than present taxes on mineral lands and standing timber, and high enough to discourage the holding of such lands out of use, it might result in the premature removal of such timber and mineral products.

It is the opinion of many tax authorities and timber conservationists that even the present low ad valorem tax on standing timber is not in the interest of timber conservation. They believe that timber should be treated as a crop and like any other crop should not be subject to taxation until it is harvested. If my memory serves me correctly, a stumpage or severance tax has replaced the general property tax on timber in at least one or two states. Such a tax policy, as it relates to standing timber, has considerable merit. Of course we have raised a hypothetical question as there seems to be no possibility of assessing timber on an annual rental basis. Were

the assessor in such a case to make capitalized value the basis for determining annual rental value, it could only lead to the premature destruction of our forests.

One of the main arguments advanced by those who are opposed to a severance tax, is that it will be shifted to the consumer in higher prices. What they overlook is that annual ground rents are also paid by the consumer either directly or indirectly, for in the last analysis the user of land, whether he be owner or tenant, must pay the rent. In paying the rent he would be paying the taxes. This may be news to many single taxers who are confused by the fact that commodities can be produced and sold as cheaply on high rent land as on low rent land. Let us not overlook the fact that everyone uses land whether he owns it or not, and that everyone pays rent either to himself or someone else. The person who rents a house or a room in a hotel not only pays the rent on the house or hotel (interest upon capital) but also the rent for the use of the land upon which the house or hotel stands. He should pay it too, as he is the user of such land. Likewise a dentist or the merchant who occupies an office or business site but who does not own it, has to pay rent for the site as well as the building. As such land rent is one of the costs of doing business, the merchant and the dentist must and do pass it on to those who patronize them. Under land value taxation the landlord merely becomes a rent collector for the state. I am sure few single taxers will dispute the soundness of this claim. The fact that a tax on rent cannot be shifted does not in any way refute this contention.

We might as well be frank about it and admit that if we are going to collect rent for public purposes from either timber or mineral resources, we must do it by means of a severance tax. Such a tax is practical and is even now being used for this purpose in the rich oil districts of Western Canada. It is putting oil royalties into the provincial treasury of Alberta that otherwise would be going into private pockets, and the community up there is being made richer by reason of this fact. What is good for Western Canada should be just as good for all other communities.

DON L. THOMPSON
Spokane, Washington

J. B. Ellert

Many among us will remember the first time "Milk River" was held up to us as an example of Georgist accomplishment. For older Georgists especially, Milk River (Alberta, Canada) was synonymous with J. B. Ellert, and they will be saddened by the news of his death on February 15, which reached us belatedly through a brother, Henry Ellert.

In 1907 J. B. Ellert went to Canada as a pioneer and bought a section of land from the Canadian Pacific Railway Company at \$7 an acre, at a railway stop called Milk River. There he built the first house, which is still standing. In 1934, according to a news report, "he with other leaders of Milk River, studied the Henry George plan of political economy and so governed the town several years through the single tax system, thereby defeating the Canadian Pacific Railroad in the tax system."

Mr. Ellert was a speaker at the annual school conference in Chicago in 1948. For many years he taught the philosophy of Henry George in evening classes in Milk River.

Los Angeles

The spring term opened the week of April 21 with twelve fundamental classes and one advanced class; 213 students enrolled by mail for the fundamental classes—187 students were in attendance at the first one or two sessions of the fundamental classes, and 12 attended the advanced course in American History. The three largest classes were at Los Angeles High School (31), Marshall High School (30), and Gardner Street School, Hollywood (26).

Los Angeles Henry George School students and friends were honored on May 9 and 10 by a visit from Lancaster M. Greene, New York School trustee and investment analyst and counselor. Mr. Greene was here in connection with the National Convention of Financial Analysts. A tea was held the afternoon of May 10 in his honor at the home of Bill and Marcie Truehart. Among the interesting remarks made by Mr. Greene were comments on his trip to Denmark in 1936. He told of talking with leaders of the Danish Folk High Schools, which were largely responsible for popularizing the ideas of Henry George among the Danish farmers. Principles were taught which cut across party lines and across all religions—and the "Living Word" (through the lectures) supplemented the printed word.

The leaders in Denmark remarked to Mr. Greene that the Danish Folk High Schools were successful in the rural areas, whereas the Henry George Schools in the United States were operating successfully in the cities. Folk school leaders were unable to make headway in their cities. Mr. Greene believed this was because the use of lecture method left students open to criticism, argument and ridicule (because they were farmers). He suggested that they use the question and answer, or Socratic method, which the Henry George School in the United States uses. They would thus, by asking questions, throw their critics on the defensive and force them to think logically and prove all their points. They were delighted with this suggestion, took the American Henry George School lesson material which he furnished them, translated it into Danish, and formed Ecotecnical High Schools, which spread rapidly.

San Francisco

Total enrollment in the 13 basic spring term classes is 190, with 19 additional in two classes studying *The Science of Political Economy*. The basic enrollment figure of 190 exactly tied the previous record set in the winter term last year.

The Fourth Year Fund Campaign is scheduled to open June 20. Campaign Chairman Rose Papini, who headed the very successful south San Francisco division last year, reports that Mrs. Caroline E. Thompson, Ralph S. Huntington and Earl A. Hanson have so far been named division chairmen. Six more division chairmen will be appointed by Miss Papini to help organize the committee of 50 who will call on 300 interested friends of the school during the 13-day campaign June 20 to July 2.

Ten advance pledges, several of them increased over last year, have so far been made for a total of \$1,736. A goal of \$3,200 has been set for advance pledges to be secured before the kickoff meeting June 20. The campaign goal was set by the division chairmen at their meeting on May 26.

It is hoped that the campaign result will enable an increase in the class program and make possible a monthly lecture series for graduates and friends.

New Jersey

The New Jersey school which uses *Economics Simplified* as the textbook for the fundamental course, also has a correspondence course based on that book. Students have enrolled for this course from many cities in the U.S. and foreign countries. A letter recently received at Newark headquarters tells of a student who "finally decided to take advantage of the course" after two years, and sent in Lesson No. One neatly filled out.

"People are going to mistake me for an intellectual—I read *Economics Simplified* on the Fifth Avenue bus yesterday," wrote Pegcen and Ed Fitzgerald in a letter acknowledging receipt of this volume from a New Jersey graduate. The letter states they will probably be talking about it on WJZ.

The spring term got under way with two classes at Newark, one in Orange and one in Hackensack. Arrangements are being made for a summer class in Free Acres, the Single Tax Enclave in New Jersey.

The Faculty Seminar and Workshop is now ready to begin the new presentation of the course as developed by the Commerce and Industry Division of the Chicago school. A completely new *Leader's Guide* has been outlined following closely that used in Chicago. Results of the survey of winter term students are proving valuable in planning the promotion and presentation of the fundamental course.

Dean Goldfinger addressed the Chamber of Commerce of East Rutherford recently, and the audience expressed interest in having a class for their members next fall. Director Tetley spoke at a meeting of the Belleville Rotary Club.

St. Louis

The Henry George Women's Club, now a member of the Federation of Women's Clubs of Missouri, celebrated its first birthday on May 15 with a buffet supper at Hotel DeSoto. Anthony W. Daily, a corporation lawyer of Alton, Illinois, who made a thorough analysis of *Progress and Poverty* while a student at Saint Louis University, where he took A. B. and L. I. B. degrees, gave the audience "Some Side Lights on Practical Politics." Attending the meeting as guests (paying guests, that is), were members of the school's Advisory Board. Supper was followed by the first annual report showing that the membership has nearly tripled in a year. The annual picnic to be held at O'Connell's Grove on June 28 is sure to be a three-star occasion.

Krilium, Monsanto Chemical Company's new and amazing soil conditioner, was the subject of a sound film presented to graduates and friends at the Central Public Library on May 20. A short talk on "Economic Krilium" was given by Noah Alper, pointing out that as Krilium, the soil conditioner, is to plant life, so is the system of public revenue, as revealed by Georgist education, the "land conditioner" for free enterprise and the other freedoms cherished by Americans.

A second "A" film, "Fires of Freedom," a Johns Manville Corporation production, was also presented as part of the program. This great story of one company is a saga of American business enterprise and shows what, in spite of handicaps, has made this country a land of technical achievement.

"Let's Take a Look at Free Enterprise," was the subject of a talk before the West End Union's Club at the Roosevelt Hotel in May by Bertram H. Mann, Jr.

Twentieth Anniversary Banquet

New York Georgists should make reservations now for tickets to the annual banquet on June 18, at Town Hall Club, 128 West 43 Street, at 7 p. m.

Raymond Moley will speak on "Henry George and the Forgotten Man." "There Are no Royal Roads to Knowledge" will be the subject of an address by Lawson Purdy. Mrs. John Dewey is expected to be present and will bring "A Message from our Honorary President."

Robert Clancy, director of the Henry George School, will preside. Reservations may be made at 60 East 69th Street, New York, where tickets are available at \$3.50 each.

Chicago

The Sixth Annual Commerce and Industry dinner of the school honored J. C. Penney, founder and chairman of the board of the J. C. Penney Company, Inc., who spoke on "Responsibility: The American Way" in the LaSalle Hotel on May 12. Mr. Penney was presented by James B. Forgan, vice chairman of the First National Bank of Chicago. Edwin O. Griffenhagen, senior partner of Griffenhagen and Associates, management consultants, was toastmaster. Noah Van Cleef, retired partner of Van Cleef Brothers, presented a gift to C. Bayard Sheldon on behalf of the Commerce and Industry Division, in recognition of his services as chairman of the monthly Commerce and Industry luncheons.

Edward W. Jochim, national president-elect of the Society for Advancement of Management, in his report on "Education for Freedom: 1952" paid tribute to the companies, institutions and individuals who have made notable achievements in the field of economic education in industry during the past year. Introduced at this annual dinner, as a supplement to Mr. Jochim's report, was The Freedom Fair, featuring booths and exhibitions representing the American Economic Foundation, the Chicago Junior Association of Commerce and Industry, Freedom Club of Downtown Chicago, Illinois Council on Economic Education, Inland Steel Company, International Harvester Company, Middle West Service Company, Republic Steel Corporation, R. A. Stearns and Company, the William H. Stevenson Company, and the Henry George School. Out of town guests at the dinner included Ummo Franklin Luebben of Omaha, inventor of the Roto-Baler, manufactured by Allis-Chalmers; Richard D. Krieg of Crucible Steel Company, Milwaukee; and Mrs. Krieg. Other guests were Harlan Eugene Read, author and commentator; George M. Sunday, Phillip A. Knowlton, Henry Pope, Jr., Harold P. O'Connell, Herbert J. Watt and Melvin E. Haas, business executives; and Dr. John W. Harms of the Church Federation.

New York

Combined headquarters and regional completion exercises will be held on June 16 at 8 p. m. in the auditorium. All graduates and friends are invited.

A series of six lectures on the "Problem of Inflation" was given before 900 students of the Stuyvesant High School by Albert Gants, Charles Kee and David Goldstein under auspices of the speakers bureau.

Robert Clancy was interviewed on three New York radio stations in May, at the request of Bern Hall of Bern Hall Associates. Mr. and Mrs. Hall were students of Dorothy Sara (see page one).

Hunger—Cause of Over-Population

THE GEOGRAPHY OF HUNGER. By Josue de Castro. Little, Brown and Company, Boston. 1952. 337 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by MARSHALL CRANE

We have become accustomed, these days, to taking terrifying statements and predictions more or less in our stride. But I think even such a hardened character as the citizen of today would consider it a matter for some serious concern if he were told that two thirds of the human race suffer chronically from lack of food. Hunger is a terrible thing.

Few men in the world today are so well qualified to speak on this subject as the great Brazilian scientist, Josue de Castro, head of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. And he does speak on it, convincingly and powerfully in this unique book on man and his food.

He mentions of course the awful famines which periodically ravish certain parts of the earth, but neither they nor the problems involved in the production of food are the real subject of his book. He writes as well of the equally dangerous and much more insidious "hidden hungers," the often unsuspected deficiencies which come from the lack of the right foods, and which are the direct cause of various sorts of malnutrition and anaemia, of such ailments as rickets, beri-beri, pellagra, scurvy and endemic goitre, and which may be contributing factors in tuberculosis and many other contagious diseases. Dr. de Castro concludes, from definite evidence and official statistics, and from conservative estimates where exact figures are not obtainable, that for every one of us who is adequately nourished there are two who are not.

Has the world at last become too small to feed its teeming millions, as the gloomy Malthus so confidently predicted it would? Every consumer of three meals a day—particularly if he is a disciple of Henry George!—will be relieved to know that the answer is—emphatically No! The author gives estimates from a number of sources that our production of food could be approximately doubled without even turning new soil. And he points out that less than a quarter of the arable land on this earth is in use at the present time.

It seems that for hunger, as for so many of his troubles, man has no one to blame but himself. It is perfectly true that all do not have enough—indeed, only one in three is properly fed—but there is enough and more than enough for all. Dr. de Castro proves conclusively that the problem of feeding mankind is primarily a problem of distribution.

This book would go into the "must read" list even if this admirably clear picture of the vital challenge which faces us today were its whole message. But to the economist, and to every voter who goes to the polls, its most important feature is surely the author's statement of the general thesis that *hunger is the cause, not the result, of over-population.*

It is a scientific fact, too little noticed in the past, and too little applied to the problems of population, that as the level of nutrition—specifically, protein nutrition in animal life—falls, there is an increasing stimulation of the reproductive fertility. As the individual organism is threatened with extinction its life processes respond by exerting themselves to insure at least the continuance of the species. This, says the author, is the real cause of over-crowding. The

control of population, therefore, need not be left to the four grim horsemen.

The force of reason and the evidence of history laid the body of the Malthusian doctrine in the dust long ago, but its ghost still calls. This book comes at an opportune time to exorcise a malignant influence.

All hail to Josue de Castro!

[Following is a letter, not intended for publication, which accompanied Mr. Crane's review of the above book.—Editor]

I expected the de Castro tome to be just another dose of agricultural-cum-medical science, perhaps a soil erosion survey, or an eat-your-spinach-like-a-little-man sermon. This sort of thing is fascinating, no doubt, but it does get a little tiresome after the first million words.

There is nothing tiresome about de Castro's "hunger" book, though. For the outstanding point in it is one which truly complements the valid but purely economic argument against the Malthusian doctrine. He shows that the most essential type of malnutrition causes a sort of suicidal fertility reaction in the animal organism, a last gasp attempt to insure the continuance of the species.

A novel theory, at first slight, but really, it is rather surprising that sociologists and population experts have not gotten after it before, for the idea is anything but a new one. Have you ever heard (or asked) the question, "Why in blazes is it that folks who can afford them least always have the most children?" I think so. And farmers and gardeners have been taking advantage of the principle for centuries. Have you never "girdled" a shrub with a piece of wire when it refused to blossom, cutting off, or, rather, slowing up the flow of its food supply through the cambium? If not, take my word for it: It really works.

I remember picking up an over ripe specimen in my tomato patch, one morning back in September, 1950. I cursed perfunctorily, and heaved it out where it would not get underfoot. It made an impressive crash landing in a little piece of waste land, definitely submarginal. But the primal instinct to live is a very urgent one, even in rotten tomatoes. For one of its couple of hundred seeds managed, some eight months later, to find soil enough to sprout in. It was probably four or five weeks old when I first noticed it. To all appearances it was getting along about as well as those which I had set out so carefully in the garden, and mothered with so much toil and fuss. Enough to humble the pride of the cockiest gardener. And this dog-gone vegetable object lesson kept itself alive all through a summer of withering drought, in surroundings which discouraged even the toughest weeds.

Along toward the end of the growing season it still looked pretty healthy, and I took a gander at it to see if there was any possibility of its bearing. I was amazed to find that it was simply covered with fruit. Every branch was loaded, but the fruits were no larger than cherries!

Curious, I showed it to a friend, whose complex of activities includes professional biology as well as amateur gardening.

"Wonderful, isn't it?" he said, laughing. "I'll bet there would be a lot fewer species around today if it were not for that self-protective reaction. Maybe you and I wouldn't be here."

Harry Gunnison Brown Honored

The American Journal of Economics and Sociology, April issue, is dedicated to Professor Harry Gunnison Brown, in recognition of his long and laudatory service at the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.

All contributors are former students of Dr. Brown, and each selected his own subject. Professor Pinkney C. Walker, himself a student of Dr. Brown, edited the issue, and wrote of him in the preface: "Professor Brown helped his students to formulate for themselves a conception of the ideal—a conception which could serve them as a basis for appraising existing economic institutions and proposals for economic reform."

Single copies are available at 50 East 69th Street, New York, at \$1 each.

"This dead-end kid finds itself living in a sandbank tenement that ought to have been condemned by the authorities years ago. There aren't even any garbage cans to eat out of. So what? It declares that a state of emergency exists. Living on its slender capital, it makes a last supreme effort. Somehow—don't ask me how—it cooks up a mess of hormones, gets hopped to the eyes on them, and goes into a whacky reproductive orgy to save at least the species from extinction. Self-sacrifice, in spades. I doubt if there are more than six or eight seeds in any of those little berries, and you can bet their germination percentage is way below the seedsmen's standards of quality. But does the parent plant care? Huh! Not a bit. The crisis has been met. The germ plasm is there. Life can go on. Next spring divine Horus will rise again from the sacrificial corpse of Osiris."

I matched his classical reference with a Biblical quote: "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied, and the more they spread abroad," which you will find somewhere in the first chapter of Exodus, in the account of the sufferings of the children of Israel under the Egyptian lash. The same thing could be said of the children of India, Java, or China.

De Castro says in one place:

To concede that the earth sets a fixed impassable limit to human population is to revert to the old geographical determinism of the times of Ratzel, according to which nature lays down the law while man is no more than a passive pawn in the play of natural forces, devoid of creative will and powerless to escape the crushing authority of his environment. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Man, with his creative and inventive techniques, is well able to evade the coercion of nature, to free himself of the conception of geographical determinism and to transform natural limitations into social opportunities.

Hic jacet Thomas Robert Malthus! Dr. de Castro perhaps flouts the present day scientific fashion, in having a cheerful and optimistic explanation for a social evil, but I will buy him a drink any time he wants it. I am only sorry that my review falls so far short of doing justice to his book. (Indeed, I am afraid I have told you more about it in this letter than in the review!)

MARSHALL CRANE

