

## Founder of Boston Extension

John Sturgis Codman, honorary president of the Boston Henry George School, a retired executive and well known author on specialized business subjects, died on September 8th at the august age of 91. Mitchell Lurio, the president who succeeded him, writes that "up to the last moment he corresponded with business men, writers and speakers everywhere who were in a position to influence people. His theme was always the same: Freedom and justice. He wrote with simplicity, with clarity and force, to make people acquainted with Henry George's analysis of the obstacles to freedom and justice and the method of overcoming these obstacles."

He came upon *Protection or Free Trade* in the early 1900's and its logic appealed to him at once. He then read *Progress and Poverty* and other writings by Henry George. By 1935 he was ready to help found the Henry George School in Boston and he was its active head for many years. Said Mr. Lurio, "those of us who knew him well will miss him sorely."

Mr. Codman objected to using the word "tax" for rental value, believing it to be misleading. In his last article in HGN, February 1956, he stated:

"Our program should be to get rid of all taxes, not to approve any form of them. If, however, some followers of Henry George insist on making the question one of taxation, then at least they should advocate that the tax be levied, not on the selling value of titles to land, but on the annual rental value. In such case it would be reasonably plain that the collection of rent

was intended."

That his Georgist influence was wide is testified to by Robert Clancy's early experience with the Boston leader. Here is the way he tells the story of his first copy of *Progress and Poverty*:

"I first studied the Georgist philosophy under Oscar Geiger in 1932, shortly after he had launched his new Henry George School. One night he announced that a Boston manufacturer would send a free copy of George's *Progress and Poverty* on request. It didn't take me long to write to the kind Bostonian, John S. Codman, from whom I soon received a complimentary copy of "P & P."

"Meanwhile, however, Mr. Codman wrote to Mr. Geiger, gently explaining that this offer was only supposed to be for customers of Mr. Codman's Fabreka Co.; however, he would be glad to extend the offer to Mr. Geiger's students, upon the assurance from Geiger that they were indeed his students.

"Mr. Geiger, embarrassed, explained that he misunderstood the circular wherein the offer was made, and asked Mr. Codman to ignore all further requests from his students; and he announced the mistake to his students.

"But I had already received my "P & P." I think I was the only student who so received it.

"Years later, I told this story to Mr. Codman. He was quite pleased, having meanwhile forgotten about it—but he never forgot it thereafter. Nor have I."