

The Hickman Campaign

DR. IRENE HICKMAN is the first woman ever to have been elected an assessor, and "California," she said, "has the best assessors money can buy." This was a reference to scandals exposed by the newspapers.

Taxes are just about bankrupting everybody but the people on the payroll, and she believes she is a symbol of a turning point in recognition of people who have prepared the ground for what is happening in California. It is evident now that interest in assessment equalization is "getting hotter all the time." This is "the idea whose time has come."

Loyal Georgists have kept justice alive all these years and brought this about, she said, "especially Henry Cramer and Sidney Evans of San Diego." Without folks like these, all building together to make it possible, the result would not have been the same. She asserted that Henry Cramer was directly responsible for the innocent act which started her on the road toward the political victory in Sacramento County. He asked her to make a comparison of assessed values with purchase prices in a school district.

Before she finished she was getting a little angry, and very curious, and she didn't stop with the assignment he gave her. She went on to see what the city was paying for slum clearance. All were paying so much more than the value placed by the assessor that it was like a wonderland. "The Mad Hatter," she said, "had nothing on the assessor," who alleged he was using a 25 percent market value figure, in spite of the fact that the state legislature says land shall be assessed at full market value. The state constitution says further that two property owners shall be taxed equally on identical properties. Many assessors will not deny the first, but will overlook the second.

She found so many things were "a mess" that she finally brought a formal protest against the board. The fact that she dared to demand a fairer assessment ratio caught the attention of a TV program, just by chance, and things moved along fortuitously with, as she believes, the help of the Man Upstairs. Here she spoke with restraint because, as she said, "it's become all right in Sacramento to be for Henry George, but not for religion."

By this time more and more tax scandals were being brought to light. Her campaign was managed by her husband and herself. All the contributions of friends to her fund have already been repaid in full, and so announced in the press; hence no one can expect to make a bid for favors based on campaign contributions. Dr. Hickman regards herself merely as an instrument for a job that needs to be done, and while she did not want the job and does not expect re-election, once the committee approached her, she "ran to win," and did, with a difference of 9000 between her total and that of the chagrined incumbent.

She freely admitted she had taught Henry George classes for 15 years and was a member of the board of the Statewide Homeowners, and surprisingly enough it didn't seem to injure her much, because the Statewide Homeowners in California have caught on and gained a good impression, thanks to John Nagy, the president, and others who have spoken on behalf of this organization. In trying to attract attention in the press she thinks a committee name sounds more important than that of an individual, so she recommends giving one's self a "committee name."

In the course of her campaign Dr. Hickman spoke to many organizations,

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time on lesson materials. All agreed that a better way should continually be sought to improve the courses, particularly the first one, Fundamental Economics. Mr. Clancy reported that a revision of the third basic course in Economic Science has been completed and should be ready for the fall term.

All too soon it was time for the banquet, which signals the end. In the absence of the school's president, Joseph Thompson of San Francisco, Lancaster M. Greene of New York presided. There were messages from good friends at home and abroad, and two fine addresses which are condensed on pages one and three of this issue. Others will be coming along next month.

Gratitude for a Leader

A moment of recognition in which all could share with feeling was the presentation by Miss V. G. Peterson, of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, of a surprise gift to Dr. and Mrs. Harry Gunnison Brown. In appreciation of the years during which he has been an exponent of the principles of Henry George, to a large degree at personal sacrifice owing to the unpopularity of the subject, and of the prestige his scholarship has lent to the Henry George movement, he was awarded a holiday visit to England in the near future where he will give a series of addresses. Dr. Brown was

for many years a professor of economics at the University of Missouri. At present he and Mrs. Brown divide their time between their home in Columbia, Missouri and Central Lake, Michigan.

Still fresh and full of vigor, the company sallied forth to visit "Gaslight Square." There the entertainment was lusty and varied, but even at its alluring best Don Freeland of Canada reported that he was discussing taxation principles oblivious of the feminine charms. Such, alas, is the rugged character of Georgists.

The finale on Sunday morning was held in check by the good chairmanship of Loral Swofford, the host, who asked only two questions of each director and extension representative — give the high spot and the low spot of the year. This provided a good resumé of a year's work and brought all to that wistful moment when goodbyes must be said or adroitly avoided. Loral Swofford is one who does not like to say goodbye and so all those in the room just stood up and said a tender thank you with applause, long and meaningful.

Here and there as friends parted one heard the words floating back, "see you in Montreal next year!" Yes, Montreal, next year's Fair city, will see another milestone in the Georgist movement as it holds to its principles of justice and true reform.

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and she prepared a number of charts showing lots and their locations with the assessment figures in wide contrast to each other. Her audiences got the message, so there was no occasion to do any mud slinging. She wanted an honest, responsible campaign based on the highest principles, and since she is that kind of person, that was the only kind of campaign she could have. But will her county be able to believe and

understand these superior standards later when the reassessment figures are made public?

"We aren't going to get any movement unless we stir the people," she said. For this purpose she used the charts, many of which she made herself. People went around talking of these revelations and apparently believed what she said. "This," said Dr. Hickman, "got Sacramento County a new assessor."