



Rev. W. Wylie Young

Ministers Are Told About Henry George

An interesting experiment in direct mail education has been conducted during the past year under the sponsorship of International Headquarters of the Henry George School. The Rev. W. Wylie Young, of Batavia, N. Y., who believes that all enthusiastic Georgists should cultivate their own spheres of influence, assumed responsibility for writing a series of ten letters, ranging from three to four thousand words each, to all active pastors of the Presby-

terian Church in the United States of America. There are over 7000 such ministers. The names of a thousand members of his own congregation as well as a number of educators and others were also included in the list.

The first letter in the series was mailed shortly after January 1, 1945, outlining the plan of sending other letters and recommending that copies of "Progress and Poverty" by Henry George and "Economics Simplified" by Bowen and Rusby be obtained in order to understand the system of economics adhered to by the writer. Shortly after the first mailing, orders for about 500 books were received by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, which had cooperated in the undertaking by offering to send the books to Mr. Young's readers at a discount.

The letters, written by Mr. Young, were mailed at intervals of from two to three weeks. The response was so heavy that a full-time secretary had to be employed to help handle the correspondence. Naturally, opinions varied as to the worth of such letters. A number flatly refused to read them. Others accused the writer of overstepping his obligations as a minister. The great majority, however, received and read the letters with varying degrees of appreciation. Some were enthusiastic in their praise. Many expressed gratitude for having been introduced to the philosophy of Henry George, and several have declared their intention to include it as a regular part of their educational curriculum.

Mr. Young has been teaching Fundamental Economics to classes in his own church for three years. Nearly one hundred of his own members have taken the course. He has thereby won the support of an influential part of his con-

gregation, many of whom volunteered their services in getting out the mailing every few weeks.

Mr. Young brought to his task a firm grasp of the basic principles and presented his ideas in a pungent, readable style. It became evident that hundreds of ministers were reading the series with growing interest. As the argument developed, many wrote that they had become persuaded that here was a theory that deserved serious attention.

As this issue of the HENRY GEORGE NEWS goes to press, the last letter in the series is being mailed by Mr. Young. A postage-paid return card is enclosed with each letter so that readers may express their reactions and request additional information as to the material that is available to them through the facilities of the International Headquarters of the Henry George School in New York City. Mr. Young appealed to the ministers to assume the responsibility of teaching their people the basic fundamentals of economic theory as presented by Henry George. His insistence that these principles be formally taught in the educational department of the church, he said, was the result of long experience which proved that preaching from the pulpit was not only ineffective but almost certain to arouse unnecessary antagonism.