

Prove P & P False and Win \$1,000

“OUR educators cannot read either,” wrote Wilbur Johnson in the Chicago Gazette, a Negro newspaper in which his “Needle” articles have been appearing for 20 years. This brought a rush of telephone calls to the Gazette office and aroused so much controversy that another paper is reprinting the article.

Mr. Johnson is laying the blame for the students’ poor reading habits at the door of teachers who “absolutely refuse to struggle with the homework problems created by themselves and society, of which they are the most educated members.” There is more to reading than just uttering the written words, he says. They are the tools of correct reasoning. Evidently he believes many of the teachers have failed to use the tools of reasoning, and he backs it up with a wager which he has repeated many times without anyone ever having tried to collect.

Mr. Johnson writes: “To demonstrate the fact that 90 percent of our educators are retarded readers unworthy of the wage scale they are now getting, I propose a test for our educators and the various Boards of Education through the nation. How many of them are able to read *Progress and Poverty* by Henry George and give a categori-

cally correct yes or no answer to the contents within this book?”

“I am a high school drop-out (freshman year) but I will wager \$500 that not even 50 percent of the city’s teachers can begin to comprehend it.”

He says he will “permit the teachers to pick their own judges with but one qualification, the judges must be logicians who have published a text on logic currently being used in some college or university. Parents wanting a brief explanation of this book may obtain the same for 50 cents by writing to the Gazette office for a copy of *The Crime of Poverty* by Henry George. Special rates for PTAs.”

After this challenge was published in the paper in October, Robert A. King of Chicago wrote to the Gazette saying he would up Mr. Johnson’s wager by \$100. When his letter was published, Edith Siebenmann and Marguerite Dewey of Chicago pledged \$200 each, so the wager now stands at \$1,000.

Mr. King offered to send a copy of *Progress and Poverty* to the first five readers who wrote Mr. Johnson a letter pro or con. To the next ten he offered copies of *The Crime of Poverty*.

“One Negro Don Quixote is challenging the nation to bet on Henry George,” said Mr. King.



At a meeting of the Henry George League of Western Australia in Perth, Elliott Levitt, a student at HGS in New York during 1964-5, was the guest speaker. The meeting was attended by 65 persons including various state figures—among them the candidate who was later elected to the post of Lord-Mayor. In his paper, Mr. Levitt spoke of Henry George’s critics: Spencer, Pope Leo XIII, Shaw and Hyndman (both socialists), and Campbell (8th Duke of Argyll). He said Henry George approached these “great and learned men with proper respect due them and genuine admiration,” though often rebuked and insulted in return.

Mr. Levitt, in viewing “the apparent decay in American life and statesmanship,” has just about decided to settle in Flat 4, 62 Subiaco Road, Subiaco, W.A., Australia 6008. His address is given here in case any other restless roving young men want to get in touch with him. He makes the observation that as nations seem to climb up the hill in their youth and reach a summit before sliding down, he sees Australia three-fourths of the way up and the U.S. in the first one-fourth down.