

30th School Year Sees

NOW the Georgists are "out of the woods" and look forward hopefully to constructive action on every level. The joint conference in Pittsburgh from July 11th to 15th (18th annual conference of the Henry George School and 20th congress of the Henry George Foundation) will be remembered not only for its program of action, but for the beauty of its setting. The hosts, Percy R. Williams and Robert C. Bowers, selected Chatham College, with a 30-acre woodland campus, as the conference site—an ideal place for the nearly 100 delegates to meet, walk and talk.

All visitors were invited to a Jerry Lewis variety show on the eve of the conference at the Civic Arena where the gigantic domed roof slowly rolled open to reveal the Pittsburgh skyline.

New York, with 20 visitors, claimed the largest delegation, but Detroit was well represented, also Toronto. The first school session, on Thursday morning, was on problems of promotion, led by Elizabeth S. (Betty) Breese, enthusiastic representative of the new extension for which she was largely responsible. Emmanuel Choper, the principal instructor and director, was not present—but the "girl from Syracuse" provided diversion wherever she went.

At the luncheon which followed, Robert C. Bowers, director of the Pittsburgh extension, presided. Reinald McCrum, Secretary of Chatham College, welcomed the visitors, and the Honorable Joseph M. Barr, Mayor of Pittsburgh, made delegates graciously aware of his knowledge of Henry George's philosophy. He said that was the only large city in the country where there had been no land speculation for a long time, and gave credit to the Graded Tax plan which makes it possible to

tax land higher than the buildings. Ideally we would like to see the entire tax on the land, with no tax on the improvements, but Pittsburgh's years of progress prove that even this much of a differential helps to build a beautiful city. Mayor Barr said the city's Renaissance began when they formed a non-partisan committee with executives from 26 large corporations. Their services, which would have cost millions, were offered gratuitously, and the results have been wonderful to behold. Yes, Pittsburghers are justly proud of their city which is now one of the cleanest in the country (see page two).

Another politically active visitor, Vernon Kilpatrick of California, supported the Mayor's remarks and said there should be a crusade throughout the nation, since out in California people have not heard about the graded tax. He spoke of Fresno as a pilot city and county in which they hope to present to the legislature next January, a plan outlining tax advantages for home owners, business and industry—with the hopes of reducing relief rolls and deterring urban sprawl. He said areas which had been open, unused land were now being sold for a great field of houses. They have just appropriated a 3-million-dollar bond issue to a small city considered *impoverished*, and are paying \$45,000 an acre for the land. Why are they impoverished? Because homes are being sold at high prices to people who have no security and are paying too many "gyp" taxes.

Everyone moved with eager anticipation to another hall to hear a panel discussion moderated by John Weaver, well-known "single taxer" of Pittsburgh, who also moderates a popular radio program known as the Allegheny Roundtable. (See page 4). Percy R.

Public Acceptance Growing

Williams, Executive Secretary of the Henry George Foundation was introduced first as a proponent of tax reform who is cautious, conservative, extremely accurate and "always careful not to claim too much."

Another eagerly anticipated meeting in the evening brought the hopeful report from Miss V. G. Peterson, Executive Secretary of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, on what she had seen in her tour through Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia. A co-speaker was the Professor Yoshisaburo Yamasaki of Kobe University, who was present, but whose paper on "Henry George's Influence in Japan" was read by Joseph Stockman. Since one issue of HGN will not hold all the words of wisdom from one conference, we are forced to ask you to wait until next month to read these international reports.

The "spectators' balcony" was again filled on Friday morning as the directors met to discuss teaching methods, with James Ramsay of Toronto as chairman. The Henry George School prides itself on the use of a Socratic teaching method, but in a spirit of self-criticism the question was asked "do we lecture instead of eliciting the answer from the students?" Noah D. Alper, St. Louis director and author of *Brief Cases in HGN*, contended that students know more than they think they know, so he merely helps them organize their knowledge.

Someone observed that the Socratic method reached its aim by asking leading questions, and asked searchingly, is the teacher equipped to teach by this method until he himself has studied formal logic? It was suggested that George's books afforded training in logic. Others said there is nothing wrong with lecturing, for it is pre-

sumed that the teacher knows more than the students about the subject he is teaching.

Time out now for a change of pace, and an afternoon excursion on Pittsburgh's three rivers. For most visitors it was their first experience of going through a lock. On the observation deck Casimir J. Pellegrini, an architect of Pittsburgh, was answering questions and acting as guide, while on the lower deck there was merriment to the sound of music.

The evening program swung into action—Erie and Southfield political action—so cheering to those who have long wished to see more practical results. First came a report of achievement from Mayor S. James Clarkson of Southfield, Michigan, whom we recall as a member of the Michigan State Legislature two years ago at the Detroit conference. He looked very mayorial and impressive. A shortened version of his address is on page 15 of this issue.

Enthusiasm ran high as W. Wylie Young reported on his progress in introducing the Graded Tax law to third class cities in Pennsylvania, and especially when he introduced a panel of members of the Erie Land Tax Association (ELTA), who demonstrated how they conduct a tax seminar. Mr. Young was in Erie the past year speaking to groups, teaching classes and preparing promotional material for use by the Junior Chamber of Commerce members (see HGN, Aug. 1961, p. 8).

Percy Williams was the chairman at this session but withdrew after introducing Charles A. Hall, president of ELTA, who reported on recent activities in Erie, and then introduced Thomas Green who told how the association grew out of a series of class sessions among the Jaycees, taught by

Wylie Young. This group prevailed upon the Junior Chamber of Commerce to give the Graded Tax its official endorsement (see HGN Dec. 1961, p. 4; Jan. p. 8 and Feb. p. 7). Gerald Weber, for ten years an Erie City Solicitor, talked about downtown obsolescence; and William E. Walker, a manufacturer and real estate developer, said he recognized tax reform as the key to a proper functioning of the free enterprise system (see page one).

Mrs. Eleanor Pryer, who has been active on this team for many months, said she wants to see Erie rid of slums—a city where children will be able to walk into a livelihood, and where there will be no need of federal help (in a recent redevelopment project \$5 million was spent in taxpayers' money to net \$1 million of property).

Work in cities of the third class is being continued by the Economic Education League of Albany and the Henry George Foundation of Pittsburgh. Wylie Young and Harry Gunnison Brown will be speaking in various cities—Dr. Brown in a volunteer capacity. John (better known as Jack) Motley, whose conference publicity in the Pittsburgh press was outstanding, is to be retained in a public relations capacity. He was a key figure in Erie where, as one of the Jaycees said, he "kindled the fires of action," and helped to reach the public with meetings, radio, and more than 6,000 mailing pieces, including a newsletter. He arranged for paid advertisements to be inserted in Erie newspapers. Helpful editorials resulted from his efforts.

Probably no words have ever sounded sweeter to a Henry George schoolman than those of Charles Hall, ELTA chairman, when he concluded by thanking the school for "not letting it wither and die" until they came along.

William E. Walker of Erie, Secretary of ELTA, attended a directors' fund raising session the following morning

and was asked to comment on attempts to interest Erie's industrial firms in contributing. He said such a program must be well organized to get effective results. Prominent citizens were also invited to help. Raymond Perron, Montreal's new director, presided at this session which considered special benefit programs, the possibility of approaching foundations, and the advantages of personal calling campaigns.

The afternoon was spent in listening to special reports from a number of related organizations. (Look for them in your September HGN).

As the banquet hour approached on the last evening of the conference all the same people came back looking a little more dressed up. The president of the Henry George Foundation, Judge John R. Fuchs of New Braunfels, Texas, author of *Constructive Taxation for Free Enterprise*, was a glowing toastmaster.



An attractive oil painting of one of the Pittsburgh Henry George classes in session, by Janet Cameron, a student of the class, was presented to the director, Robert C. Bowers. (above)

Barney McGinnis, Senator for 24 years in the Pennsylvania Legislature, was the first speaker. All Georgists owe a great deal to him for his foresight in having introduced the bill to tax land and buildings separately which now "makes all the difference." Our people in other states would welcome such legislation most heartily since it would partially open the way toward a con-

sideration of something resembling the Graded Tax law.

As a student at Cornell University in 1905 young McGinnis had taken a course in Political Economy, and heard a lecture by Henry George. Later in Pittsburgh he heard Henry George, Jr. say, "if you tax land you'll force it into use." This fitted in with William A. Magee's remark when he saw land in Pittsburgh being used for cattle grazing. "Double the tax on land in relation to buildings," he advised. They did and soon there was not a cow left. Scranton was a ghost town in those days, but someone was wise enough to promise, "if you come to Scranton we won't tax your buildings, and we'll tax your land only half."

Senator Arthur W. Roebuck of Canada looked younger and even more distinguished than he did 10 years ago when he addressed a group of our delegates in Montreal. He admits to an age of 85 but his youthful bearing belies this. You cannot share the pleasure we had in hearing a true orator such as one rarely finds nowadays, but we believe you'll feel rewarded if you read his address in the September HGN.

Judge Fuchs brought the program to a close after several musical selections, and said what he wants is an amendment that will grant all cities the power to exempt improvements from taxation and tax the unimproved value of the land. The Judge recently talked to the grand jury of Comal County, Texas, in words which fairly sing of the "attachment between man and nature." As a barefoot boy he knew every tree and every rock on his father's ranch. He knew the place where the wild flowers grew, the trees where the raccoons found shelter and the hollow trunk where bees deposited their burdens of honey. Speculation has all but destroyed the small farm, as over five million people have moved to congested cities to compete for starvation wages. All

the farm aid is futile as long as we maintain our archaic tax system, he said. Untax the farmers and leave them alone, they will take care of themselves.

"The Best Yet"

The final "evaluation" on Sunday morning, always a popular session, was carefully controlled by John T. Tetley of Newark. There were many joyous and deeply felt "thank you's" to Mr. Bowers and Mr. Williams and the others who helped to make the conference such a delight. "The best yet," many said, with definite high points to be remembered, like the ELTA group, the report from Australia by Miss Peterson, Senator Roebuck's address, Mr. Weaver's Roundtable, etc.

Extension directors present were: Noah D. Alper, St. Louis; Robert D. Benton, Detroit; Robert C. Bowers, Pittsburgh; Robert Clancy, New York; Russel Conklin, Great Falls, Montana; Mitchell S. Lurio, Boston; John Monroe, Chicago; Harry E. Pollard, San Diego; John Ramsay, Toronto; Joseph A. Stockman, Philadelphia; John T. Tetley, Newark; and Robert Tideman, San Francisco.

Others who represented their extensions were: Stretzel Walton, retired director of Montreal; Elizabeth S. Breese, Executive Secretary, Syracuse; Ivan Dailey, Assistant Director, representing Verlin Gordon of Ohio; Laurence Kobak, Assistant Director, New York; and Lucian Wilcox who represented director Bruce Evans, Jr. of Fairhope, Alabama.

Harry Pollard, former director at Toronto, will direct the class program in Los Angeles while William B. Truehart is on sabbatical leave, and will act as director in San Diego succeeding Dr. Robert V. Andelson who resigned to teach philosophy at a college in Northland, Wisconsin.

Several Georgists in Chicago have formed a volunteer branch of the Henry George School which will offer com-

PITTSBURGH HOSTS AT OPENING CONFERENCE SESSION



L. to R.: Robert C. Bowers, Director of Pittsburgh Henry George School; Reinald McCrum, Secretary of Chatham College; Mayor Joseph M. Barr of Pittsburgh; and Percy R. Williams, Executive Secretary of the Henry George Foundation.

munity classes, and new fall classes have already been planned. George Menninger was named secretary of the new branch. Both Mr. and Mrs. Menninger were present at the conference, and both have long been active in Chicago school activities.

John Lawrence Monroe of Chicago came for the weekend bringing news of the Institute for Economic Inquiry at 236 Clark Street, successor to the Henry George School of which he has long been the director.

Mr. Monroe explained that the scope of the educational program today is the same as it has been for 29 years, despite the change of name. The only difference in the present teaching method is that no textbook is required. The subject matter of *Progress and Poverty*, in outline form, is part of every invitation to prospective students. Material used in Henry George School manuals, with much more, makes up the ten-week course, along with every example given by Henry George that led him to his conclusions—but IEI students have to make the leap and reach their conclusions by themselves. Annual memberships are \$12.50 a year, and \$200 buys a life membership. Corporate memberships are \$2,000 and this entitles a firm

to one study group.

Study groups were reported in cities near Chicago and farther away in Springfield, Decatur, Danville and Champaign; also in Indianapolis, Indiana and Travers City, Michigan. A number of large firms sent invitations to their employees and the average response leading to enrollment was 10 per cent. Of this number an average of 80 per cent finished the course. Enrollments and prospects for the coming year have tripled.

Russel Conklin, former Mayor of South Falls, who addressed the final luncheon meeting on Sunday, has served in the Montana Legislature where he spoke on every possible occasion about such evils as the income tax. Believing that the time is riper for the "land tax" than it has ever been, he focused attention on the plight of the politician in this movement and urged, "let's train those who are going to help us." Animated discussion followed on the respective roles of education and politics in the Henry George movement (see page 13).

As conferees bade their final farewells many were already looking forward to July, 1963 when the conference will be held in Toronto.