

prise suffered in the eyes of the Irish as well as many sympathetic English? Possibly George Bernard Shaw's acceptance of socialism stems from his knowledge of how his people suffered under this mistaken application of laissez faire. It is difficult to convince anyone that when both land and labor are free, such occurrences are impossible. Shaw read *Progress and Poverty* and owed much of his philosophy to Henry George but did not think George went far enough. He felt the government had to protect the people from exploitation like that which occurred in the potato famine.

Have we learned anything since then? It is doubtful. The reviews of this book indicate little understanding of the fact that the entire system of tenure was at fault. Instead the reviewers seem to attribute it to stupidity and too rigorous an application

of the concepts of laissez faire. Paradoxically, therefore, this book instead of helping focus attention on the land may result in helping to implement socialist doctrine.

This points up the fact that it is not easy for people to grasp the subtleties of the philosophy of Henry George. Either they go too far and become socialists, or they don't go far enough, and become the libertarians of today who can't seem to make up their minds as to just where the government should step in and where it should stay out.

The Georgist walks a tightrope between these two opposing forces. It is exhilarating if he stays on the rope. He can only do this by constantly studying and re-studying his basic concepts, for Georgism is freedom—and freedom is difficult to define.

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*The Georgist*, April, 1963

## *A Student's Mandate to Georgists At Recent New York Commencement*

Religion teaches us that we are all brothers under the Fatherhood of God. The Christopher Movement gives us a mandate to do something active for our brothers. The Moral Rearmament Movement underscored that mandate to put spiritual ideas to work in social action. The trade unions can become vehicles for such action, and Georgism gives you an economic philosophy that will solve the basic problem of the worker and boss—the problem of a fair wage. Once this problem is solved the distrust and mutual antagonism will be removed, and labor and management can with harmony solve their remaining problems.

The need is great—the laborers are few. Do not be discouraged by the

enormity of the task before you. The light of truth given to you in this school must be shielded by you—must grow within you—must burst forth and enlighten others. Taxes that stifle man's initiative—that encourage a man not to improve his home—that encourage citizens to be liars and cheaters—must indeed be done away with.

Take *Progress and Poverty* home. Read it and re-read it. Argue it and discuss it. Explain it and expand it. Talk about it. Sell it and push it. You have the right to do it—the responsibility to do it—the need to do it. With determination and perseverance you will not fail. Henry George is not a failure. We Georgists have not yet begun to fight.

—John Kennedy