

Will of John B. Sharpe

UNDER the will of J. B. Sharpe of Pittsburgh, who died last December at Atlantic City, his half million dollar estate is left to the "United Committee for Taxation of Land Values, Ltd.," of London, England. The will provides that the interest from the estate and one twenty-fifth of the principal each year are to be expended using Henry George's book "Progress and Poverty" as a guide.

Mr. Sharpe will be remembered as the author of "The New Political Economy."

BOOK REVIEWS

THE HUDSON

BY CARL CARMER

Cloth. 434 pp. \$2.50. Farrar & Rinehart, N. Y.

Carl Carmer, after three years of browsing around in libraries, historical societies, and talking to people, up and down both sides of the Hudson River, has produced a book titled "The Hudson." The author has presented his material in so craftsman-like a manner as to hold the reader's attention from beginning to end.

To Georgeists, however, the most interesting part of the book consists of about fifty pages, mostly in a chapter headed "Without Indecorum of Behavior" and another chapter headed "Tin Horn Rebellion" containing much information that can be used in the Georgeist cause.

Carl Carmer's work, coupled with the "History of the Great American Fortunes" by Gustavus Myers, together with facts buried away in histories of Colonial America and of the early days of the United States, is the sort of mental dynamite by which the hardpan of the American mind may be broken up.

The realistic ideas contained in "The Hudson" provide a marked contrast with some of the notions appearing in the American press. The *New York Times*, for instance, in a Fourth of July editorial among other things goes on to state: "On Independence Day no one, except a traffic policeman, tells us what to do." The *Times*' writer was forgetting the cigarette tax and the sales tax. Continuing, the editorial states: "But no observer unfamiliar with our ways should be misled. It is still an American belief that 'all men are created equal'—not equally intelligent or equally tall but equal in their rights as citizens." For the benefit of this *New York Times*' editorial writer and others, Carl Carmer's book, Gustavus Myers' book referred to and Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" show conclusively that never since 1776 has there been in America any such condition where all citizens had equality of rights.

The chapter in Carl Carmer's book headed "Without Indecorum of Behavior" is a perfect gem of a plot for a Georgeist movie or play. Nine years before the Revolutionary War there occurred an episode in the vicinity of the Hudson River, which remained for Carl Carmer to give proper emphasis. The story is as follows:

A young Irishman by the name of William Prendergast married a Quaker girl by the name of Mehitabel. Prendergast was a tenant farmer on the land of Frederick Philipse "who owned not only the Prendergast farm but thousands of acres near by, tens of thousands in Westchester County, and a great manor house overlooking the Hudson at Yonkers."

When Prendergast's third child was about to be born he ran into hard luck. His crops were poor and he was behind in his rent. The general supposition among Americans is that in the era preceding the Revolutionary War there was plenty of land for all comers. There was plenty of land, but not for all comers, for all the usable land had been parcelled out by the royalty of England and their governors to a

handful of great landed aristocrats like Frederick Philipse. Prendergast therefore had one of two choices, either to be a tenant farmer or take a chance of being killed by the Indians by settling on Indian land.

Visiting Yonkers, Prendergast had occasion to observe his farm landlord holding manorial court as was his feudal right, sentencing tenants who were behind in their rent with corporal punishment and imprisonment. What aroused his ire and hatred was the information that all Frederick Philipse paid the British crown as an annual quitrent for his vast holdings was exactly the amount that he himself had to pay as annual rent for the land of his little farm.

When sheriffs in the vicinity of Prendergast's home jailed two farmers for not paying rent, Prendergast could contain himself no longer. He became busy as a leader in organizing the farmers to resist the landlords. He led a thousand farmers through the manors of the Hudson River valley and declared manor rents abolished. They almost invaded New York City. Finally a regiment of soldiers was sent after them. Prendergast was induced by his wife to surrender. He was indicted for high treason.

The trial was held at Poughkeepsie. Prendergast was found guilty and sentenced to be hung, but was saved by the action of his wife, who after a most remarkable horseback ride all the way to Fort George, New York City, obtained a reprieve from Governor Moore, then rode all the way back, just in time to save her husband's life. "In less than three days she had ridden a horse a hundred and sixty miles, won the governor's favor, written the petition, obtained the reprieve—all these after the trial ordeal of twenty-four sleepless hours."

Those who believe that the common people obtained equal rights after 1776 will be disillusioned on reading the chapter headed "Tin Horn Rebellion." In that chapter there is told of another uprising of farmers against the landed aristocracy of the Hudson River valley led by a young doctor. The date was 1844.

Wherever else the cradle of liberty may have rocked, it would be erroneous to think that the Hudson River valley estates had anything but contempt for the rights of man. That part of the country was ordained at an early date to be the seat of landed privilege, the arch foe of freedom throughout the centuries.—H. E.

THE Henry George School of Social Science has published a new edition of "Democracy vs. Socialism" by Max Hirsch. This book (492 pages) was first published in 1901 and is a critical examination of Socialism and an answer to Karl Marx. The school is preparing a syllabus for the use of teachers and will conduct special classes on the subject matter contained in the book, which it will use as a text.

Legal Note

On advice of counsel, please take notice that any bequests intended for this journal but made before May 8, 1939, may have lapsed by reason of the death of our predecessor, Joseph Dana Miller, on that date. LAND AND FREEDOM is a proprietary name, and in order to insure against the lapsing of any bequest or legacy, the testator's Will should be re-executed and the bequest drawn in the following form.

FORM OF BEQUEST

I bequeath to Clifford H. Kendal and Charles Joseph Smith (or the survivor), doing business under the name of LAND AND FREEDOM, the sum of \$..... (or other property).