

Ignatius Singer

A COPY of *The Yorkshire Observer* of June 8 has been received at *The Liberator* Office. It contains a portrait of the late Mr. Ignatius Singer. This is the first intimation that we have had that our old friend has passed away.

Mr. Singer's death removes one of the most remarkable men of our movement. He was a Hungarian Jew by birth but has spent most of his life in the British Empire.

Many years ago he was actively associated with the Single Taxers of South Australia, and in conjunction with the late Mr. Behrens produced that wonderful book "The Story of My Dictatorship." About the year 1898 he came to Wellington, New Zealand, with the late Mr. Michael Flurschein, and together they started the manufacture of soap at Petone. Mr. Singer was a highly skilled analytical chemist. The venture was mixed up with Mr. Flurschein's efforts to found a Peoples Bank and came to grief. Mr. Singer then tried fowl farming for a time, and put on the market some patent fowls' feed. While carrying on this work the Bradford Dyers' Association, with whom he had previously been connected before coming to New Zealand, sent for him to return to their employ, and he had been their analytical chemist up till the time of his death.

Mr. Singer was a very loveable personality with some of the angularities which often accompanies genius, and that Singer possessed genius nobody who knew him could deny. He had read and pondered widely and deeply, and has left behind writings which will influence human thought for all time. In conjunction with Behrens he published a very remarkable book entitled "Some Unrecognized Laws of Nature," which led flippant critics in Wellington to refer to him as the man who had upset the law of gravitation. In recent years he published some studies on the rival philosophies of Jesus and Paul, which revealed a deep and sympathetic study of New Testament literature.

When one thinks of the character and mental capacity of men like Singer, who have spent their lives in the advocacy of the teaching of Henry George, and compares them with the "Pigmies" who have from time to time tried to ridicule the Great Prophet of San Francisco, one gets more convinced than ever that George saw and proclaimed a mighty truth which must ultimately prevail.

—HON. GEORGE FOWLDS in *The Liberator*, Auckland, New Zealand.

A SPECIAL article in the *Manchester Guardian*, December 30th, is devoted to a translation of a digest of the late Dr. Sun Yat Sen's book, *Three Principles of the People*, issued by the China Christian Education Association. The digest explains that the doctor was for the taxation of land values, one way or another.

Wages Not Paid Out of Capital

LABOR can in no wise get more from industry than there is in it—no more than is produced. Capital is not a fund from which wages can be drawn. Wages are paid not out of the capital of a business but out of its earnings; not by the employer, but by the buyer of the goods produced—the working class itself. The extraordinary wages in some industries are paid by the workers in all industries, the whole being a maze of relativity in which the strongest get the largest shares.

Then rises the question of the equitable division of the earnings of a business. Are the earnings of the textile business equitably distributed? It is perfectly true that the industry generally is about as poorly paid as any of our great industries, probably the poorest. There may be something in the claim that this is due to its relative lack of organization, but this is at least debatable, for latterly the industry has paid its capital and its management as poorly as its workers. It is indisputable that to grant the demands of the workers would well-nigh bankrupt the industry under existing conditions.

But the task of answering the question—what is to be done about it?—falls definitely upon the captains of the industry. They are put upon the defensive because they enjoy the backing of governmental favors which are meant and claimed to give them fair profits and their workers fair wages. They owe to the American people an understandable explanation of how it happens that one of the most highly protected industries we have remains one of the poorest paid ones, far below the standard of industries that have little or no tariff protection. Unless they can give such an explanation—and the attempts that are made at it are uniformly futile—the tariff stands convicted as a swindle with respect both to wages and profits.

—*Commerce and Finance.*

Ethics and Morals of Taxation

TAXATION is more than a fiscal function. It has its ethical and moral aspects. Speculation in land is in reality speculation in sites or locations. It has for its object (as shown in numerous real estate advertisements) the forestalling of the rising generation and making the children of today, who will be the adults of tomorrow, pay an increased purchase price or rental for a site which necessarily they must have later for a home or business, in utter disregard of the biblical injunction "Woe unto him that offend against my little ones." There was never a practice so despicable, and the wonder is society has not awakened to it before this and put a stop to it, which can be done simply by taxing this speculative value to the utmost for the benefit of the public treasury. *And when this is done taxes on industry, farms and homes will be reduced.*

The ethical standards of the human race are constantly improving. Many things which were looked upon with approval half a century ago are condemned by society of today. Strenuous efforts have largely put a stop to gambling in, and on, various things, and now speculating and gambling in land, on and from which man has his whole existence, is coming under the ban, as speculating in a necessary of life, and making it more costly and difficult to use, is against public policy.

REVIEWING the recent publications of the Vanguard Press, Ben Ray Redman says in a recent issue of the book review section of the New York *Herald-Tribune*:

"George, Bellamy and Morris were all concerned with the same problem: the amelioration of the lot of man. The one wrote argumentative economics; the other two found expression in Utopias. What George proposed—the abolition of all taxes save that on land—was a simple operation compared to the vast social changes implicit in Bellamy's sweeping vision.

"George, Bellamy and Morris were men of faith and imagination. The more pessimistic of us must believe that their faith is doomed to disappointment, but that should not lessen our enjoyment of their imagination. And if any of them could have made mankind in his own image, as they fashioned their Utopias, then—well, then the history of the future might tell another story."

The Law of Progress

PROGRESS goes on just as society tends towards closer association and greater equality. Civilization is co-operation. Union and liberty are its factors. The great extension of association—not alone in the growth of larger and denser communities, but in the increase of commerce and the manifold exchanges which knit each community together and link them with other though widely separated communities; the growth of international and municipal law; the advances in security of property and of person, in individual liberty, and towards democratic government—advances in short towards the recognition of the equal rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—it is these that make our modern civilization so much greater, so much higher, than any that has gone before. It is these that have set free the mental power which has rolled back the veil of ignorance which hid all but a small portion of the globe from men's knowledge; which has measured the orbits of the circling spheres and bids us see moving, pulsing life in a drop of water; which has opened to us the ante-chamber of nature's mysteries and read the secrets of a long buried past; which has harnessed in our service physical forces beside which man's efforts are puny; and increased productive power by a thousand great inventions. * * *

To freedom alone is given the spell of power which sum-

mons the genii in whose keeping are the treasures of earth and the viewless forces of the air.

The law of human progress, what is it but the moral law? Just as social adjustments promote justice, just as they acknowledge the equality of right between man and man, just as they insure to each the perfect liberty which is bounded only by the equal liberty of every other, must civilization advance. Just as they fail in this, must advancing civilization come to a halt and recede.

—HENRY GEORGE in "Progress and Poverty".

Local Activity in Pittsburgh

THE Henry George Club of Pittsburgh which conducts weekly luncheons Friday at noon, at Club Room number 1, of the Chamber of Commerce, 7th Avenue and Smithfield, listened to an address on December 10 by Kenneth Lindsay, former member of the British Parliament, his subject being "The Land Problem in Great Britain" On January 21. Hon. Robert Garland, chairman of the Finance Committee of City Council and former President of the Chamber of Commerce of Pittsburgh, spoke on "Pittsburgh's Tax System and Its Advantages."

WHEN two persons desire the same plot of ground, land values arise. If three persons desire it, this value is increased. If scores of thousands cast longing eyes upon it, the value begins to run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars per acre.

An Interesting Letter

The following letter from H. B. Maurer, of Brooklyn to August Heckscher of this city, relative to the latter's proposed plan for housing, is an interesting communication.

"My dear Mr. Heckscher:

I am neither flattered by the promptitude with which you have replied to my letter nor piqued by the information that your letter was 'dictated but not signed' by you, nor by its thinly veiled, but uncalled for, sarcasms.

"Anent the statement 'we are not yet far enough along for the employment of co-operative experts,' I beg leave to say that when you are I shall not be then, as I am not now, interested in any scheme for unloading irksome wealth to ameliorate human ills, especially when it ignores causes; stresses symptoms and leaves the seat of the sore untouched, but serves, however, as an outlet in a fertile field for philanthropy.

"Sharing, as I wrote you, in the conviction expressed in the public prints, that the 'Heckscher Plan' will prove a palliative only, comes now *The Nation*, in its current issue, with an article which leads off thus: 'Henry Ford set sail with the magnificent assurance that he would get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas. Now comes