

Henry George Memorial Dinner in New York City

A DISTINGUISHED group of Single Taxers convened at the Fifth Avenue Hotel on the evening of September 5th, 1928, to enjoy the addresses of two honored guests, Dr. Frederick W. Roman, and the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy.

Mr. James R. Brown, president of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, under whose auspices the dinner was given, introduced the chairman, Mr. Otto K. Dorn, who, after a few words of greeting, presented the speaker of the evening, Dr. Frederick W. Roman.

Dr. Roman after some preliminary remarks concerning the acute poverty in Scotland and England, the stability and apparent security of the German Republic, and the generally progressive situation of Europe at this time, announced that his topic would be "Fascism," as scarcely two weeks had passed since his return from Italian shores.

Fascism, he said, presents a difficult question for adherents of democracy to answer. We believe it to be a wrong system, but we are in a tight place when the Fascist, calling attention to Chicago, the Teapot Dome, Philadelphia and Tammany, insists that democracy is failing everywhere. Fascism challenges Democracy, for its essentials are opposed to everything democracy holds dear.

Let us see whether we can find a definition of Fascism. We must admit a certain sullen admiration for it, since it boldly declares its doctrine, and leaves us in no doubt as to its position and intentions. Il Duce voices tenets of this doctrine in his preface to a book "The Universal Aspects of Fascism" written by James Strachey Barnes, an Englishman, Catholic, and erstwhile officer of the Italian Army, and in this four-page preface are to be found several arresting statements which may be worth our while to examine.

"A destroying movement will arouse hostility." This is a flat admission of the destroying intent of the Fascist movement. Reading further, it develops that Fascism is out to destroy (1) The doctrine of Liberalism; (2) Democracy; (3) International Socialism; (4) Liberal Views; (5) Democratic Doctrines; (6) Masonic Doctrines; (7) Bolshevism.

"Italy is inaugurating a new form of political government and political doctrine, *for the third time in its history.*" Significant words, pointing to the glories of the Ancient Roman State, to the Michael-Angelo atmosphere of the Middle Age Hierarchies, and, finally, to the new movement, Fascism, which, we are asked to believe, shall spread its power and influence throughout the world, just as did the other two political forms. Note where each was bred—in the heart of Rome! Mussolini explains that Fascism is the answer to the needs of the Italian Nation and of the world, for a modern government, abreast of the times, and prophesies that by the year 2000, Fascism will be as popular throughout the world as democracy and liberalism were in the 19th century, for it will come to fill the twentieth century as did liberalism in the last century.

The ideals of democracy, especially as found in the writings of Henry George, can now be seen to be in con-

flict with the ideals of Fascism. Contrast such statements as "The sovereignty of the people is a myth."

"Man is not born to any rights whatever; he is only born with duty. He can therefore fit only into a hierarchy. The highest authority is the State," with the emphasis placed by Henry George upon the ideal factors of life, remarked by Professor Dewey in his "Appreciation of Henry George" in the first pages of "Significant Paragraphs from Progress and Poverty." The strong, motivating thought in the philosophy of George was that the ills of society would be cured if individuals were liberalized and freed. Ideal factors would release the individual economically and intellectually, and thus the salvation of society would be mined out of its own depths.

Turning to the practical effects of Fascism, we must look for an answer among the people of Italy and we must ask questions of the various classes. Also, we can read the book of Gaetano Salvemini, former Professor of History at the University of Florence, who has written a book "The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy," which maintains opposite views to those held by Mr. Barnes. The Salvemini book is under ban, and exceedingly difficult to procure.

In speaking with the people themselves in various cities of Italy, it is evident that the owners, managers and business people are strong for Fascism. The laborers and workers, on the other hand, if spoken to alone and secretly, complain, saying the work is hard, the hours long, the slavery dreadful and the compulsion of belonging to a Fascist organization unpleasant.

The Fascist element, if confronted with these complaints admit that there is not much liberty but a great deal of order. In their opinion, the Italians have misused liberty and therefore do not deserve it. They will tell you the system is so successful that it is spreading its glory around the world and they prophesy that Japan will be the next nation to adopt it.

Always remembering that the Fascists were a minority party and that they wrested the power from a weak government by force of arms, the work accomplished by the movement and its Dictator is astounding. Apartment houses have been built everywhere; rent laws enforced; homes and industrial buildings exempted from taxation for twenty-five years; twenty million acres of marsh land reclaimed; eighty-thousand poor children sent to summer camps; the lawless secret societies of southern Italy abolished. Everywhere there is work, order, houses, and less taxes.

Fascism, with its many admirable aspects, is nevertheless dangerous and uncivilizing in its essence, so that it behooves the people of the United States to uphold the ideals of democracy to the limit of their abilities. This they can best do by striving to solve the problem of liberating the individual, economically, and intellectually. The manner of this release was clearly indicated by Henry George.

Professor Roman was asked to acquaint his audience with the work accomplished by him through the "Parliament of Man" conducted in Los Angeles, and explained that some two years ago he started a Public Forum with a small group of people in a Public Library auditorium in Los Angeles. The work progressed and the attendance grew, but the D. A. R. complained to the authorities about these lectures. The Unitarian Church auditorium was next obtained and many splendid meet-

ings were held, including a notable one where Will Durant was the speaker. Again D. A. R. pressure was brought to bear, and the church was threatened with \$5,000 a year taxes if these meetings continued.

The doors of that auditorium being closed, Prof. Roman originated "The Parliament of Man," and through the efforts of Mr. Swinney, conducted lectures throughout the year, continuing to draw a huge attendance. Eighty study groups have been formed, and many young people have enthusiastically enlisted in the work. Since a larger meeting place is needed, financial help is greatly needed.

Toastmaster Dorn then introduced the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy, president of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

Mr. Hennessy called attention to the writings of Patrick Edward Dove, the great Scottish philosopher, and to his insistence upon credence as a great power which was responsible for the progress and enlightenment of nations. Henry George has said that education is the greatest work that can be done to achieve a reform. Reforms cannot be forced upon the consciousness of a community. The people must learn out of their experiences. And so, the finest, most patriotic and most humane work that can be done by the disciples of Henry George, is the work of spreading knowledge wherever possible.

THE cables credit Sir Alf. Mond with saying that the cause of our economic trouble is 15 per cent. over production. We don't believe that he did because he takes *The Standard*, and therefore knows better. Fancy telling starving people that abundance is the cause of their misery. Besides, the Tory Government tell us that the industry will not stand one hour per day less, which is less than 15 per cent. Of course Royalties and unjust distribution have nothing to do with it.

—*Standard*, Sydney, Australia.

Rights of the Community

"THE value of land rises as population grows and national necessities increase, not in proportion to the application of capital and labor, but through the development of the community itself. You have a form of value, therefore, which is conveniently called 'site value' entirely independent of buildings and improvements and of other things which non-owners and occupiers have done to increase its value—a source of value created by the community, which the community is entitled to appropriate to itself. . . . In almost every aspect of our social and industrial problem you are brought back sooner or later to that fundamental fact."

(The late Herbert Asquith).

THE man who begs Congress to levy a protective tariff for his benefit may not be a bootlegger but is certainly a loot beggar.—*Commonwealth*, Ardmore, Pa.

Address of Francis W. Maguire, Pittsburgh

ASSISTANT SECRETARY, HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS, SEPT. 10.

HAVING spent many years of my life in this city of Chicago up until my return to my native town of Pittsburgh some years ago, it is a special pleasure to attend the Henry George Congress this year and meet so many of my old comrades. Well do I recall how keenly we enjoyed the meetings of the old Chicago Single Tax Club, which for almost twenty years held regular weekly meetings.

I have been an humble follower of Henry George for almost forty years and to me there is nothing that compares with the Single Tax in importance. I know of no other way by which it would be possible to bring such great blessings to all mankind.

Every Single Taxer knows that the Single Tax will eliminate unemployment, raise wages, make better business, replace the slums with good homes, and abolish poverty. How then can we get the Single Tax? How can we bring this knowledge to all the people? To my mind, this is the great question that ranks above all others. Why should we allow ourselves to be sidetracked to the consideration of matters relatively unimportant, when we have such a mission?

There are many good methods of propaganda, but none appeal to me more than does the distribution to the people of Single Tax literature. Let us get people to read the great works of Henry George, such as "Progress and Poverty." Are not the real men in the movement today those who were converted by reading "Progress and Poverty?"

Since the organization of the Henry George Foundation at Philadelphia two years ago, I have been busily engaged in promoting the distribution of books and pamphlet literature, both by personal contact and through the mails. I am glad to say that many thousands of pamphlets have been distributed in various ways, first at the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, later through the Henry George Club meetings in Pittsburgh and particularly through the mails to all parts of this country and considerable to other lands.

The eloquence and logic of Henry George was such that it seems to me we can find no printed propaganda equal to his writings, which have made such a strong appeal to so many eminent thinkers. As Tolstoy has well said:

"People do not argue with the teaching of Henry George. They simply do not know it. Those who become acquainted with it cannot but agree. The teaching of George is irresistibly convincing in its simplicity and clearness."

This is my own conviction, and so I say to all disciples of the great philosopher assembled here today: