

Public Meeting of the Henry George Congress

THE public meeting of the Congress was held on the evening of September 12. The *Times* stated the number present at 300, but there were probably more. This included quite a number of strangers and non-Single Taxers, whose presence was highly gratifying. They listened with interest through the entire programme.

Mr. Frederic C. Leubuscher, who presided, said:

"Were I not chairman I should indulge in some recollections of Henry George, because I have known him just 41 years ago this month, and I met him not only in the political campaign of that year and other campaigns that followed, but at his home, but perhaps there may be another occasion when I can make such a speech.

"The first speaker will be Mr. Jose Miguel Bejarano, Secretary of the Mexican Chamber of Commerce in the United States. That is a body of Mexicans resident in the United States, which has been instituted for the purpose of not only fostering trade relations but good feeling between the United States and Mexico. I think you will agree with me that never in the history of this country has there been so much use for such a body. Not only to foster good feeling between these two countries but between the United States and all of Latin America. One of the most heinous crimes of this century has been to my mind the attack of this great Uncle Sam of 120 million meters high on a little boy called Nicaragua.

Senor Bejarano, who has been a Single Taxer since he was 12 years of age, is secretary of this body and devotes all of his time to fostering good feeling between the two countries."

ADDRESS OF MR. BEJARANO

The following is an abstract of Mr. Bejarano's speech:

The year 1915 began a new life in the republic of Mexico and the most important achievement since 1910 was the educational campaign resulting in the establishment of 3700 rural schools throughout the country; where the percentage of illiteracy had been 85% it had now declined to 62%. The Mexican Federation of Labor was more powerful as an influence than the corresponding Federation in the United States, for it had an immense social as well as an educational and political significance.

The economic policy of the government was explained, and Mr. Bejarano stated that land banks had been established, but he deplored the still prevalent catch-as-catch-can forms of taxation and gave numerous statistics indicating the heavy burden which the income tax and others imposed upon the Mexican people.

There are three main classes of taxes in Mexico: 1, Federal, extracting 271 millions of dollars; 2, State governments, extracting 49 millions; 3, Municipalities, extracting 53 millions—a total sum of 373 millions of dollars.

It seems that the state taxes are the heaviest and most

unjust, but the speaker expressed the hope that time and education would improve the bad tax conditions.

Geographically and topographically there is great diversity in the land of Mexico. There are 500 million acres, but the cultivation amounts to about two acres per person and the most of the land remains waste.

There are four features of the land system:

1. Farms which had their origin in the Spanish grants received from the Spanish conquerors.
2. Small farms—same origin.
3. Collective holdings—held by Indians and pueblas under a system of land tenure prior to the arrival of the Spaniards.
4. Homesteads—which are of recent creation.

The irrigation system of the Indians, highly developed at the time the conquerors came upon the scene, is still of great value.

The Indian system of land tenure was more or less based on a community idea, and private ownership originated when the conqueror Cortez gave allotments of land to his followers.

Mr. Bejarano gave a summary of the way in which small land owners had been deprived of their land because they were too ignorant to know how to combat this, and how, in 1915, the first law for rehabilitation was passed and the land illegally taken away from villages was given back. One-fifth of the total population was given land by the government, and in addition farm implements, seed, new tools, etc., to supplant the antiquated implements and methods. The agricultural banks make loans on future crops (one year), on machinery and animals (three years), and upon implements (three years).

He concluded by reminding us that Mexico is only in a state of development and that we could only look for improvement in so young a republic when time and education have put in their leavening influence.

Mr. Leubuscher: When I was a young fellow I used to wait for the weekly arrival of Henry George's *Standard* as nowadays the young men wait for the *Saturday Evening Post*. In the pages of the *Standard* often appeared the name of a medical missionary in China, a man who has since translated Progress and Poverty into Chinese. Dr. Macklin, that missionary, will now address you.

ADDRESS OF W. E. MACKLIN

What China needs more than anything else is education and development. With 95% of illiterates, you are not likely to develop an ideal Single Tax republic in a few years.

The Chinese are very intelligent. They take the highest honors in our colleges and institutions. They are great philosophers and poets. But their civilization can only be compared with the civilization of ancient

Persia, Assyria and Egypt. The China of this day has shown no symptom of a republic. It has gone from Imperialism to Feudalism.

But we have many hopeful things. Mr. Garst, a missionary in Japan, Mr. Williams, missionary and professor of Chinese literature and language in Berkeley, California, have both spread the doctrines of "Progress and Poverty," with which I became familiar while in China.

When I came back to this country I met Henry George and had many conversations with him and kept up a correspondence with his followers, Dr. McGlynn, Tom Johnson and others, and I went back to China enthused.

That the missionaries are responsible for the revolution is not true—they are responsible for what we wanted but did not get. We wanted to bring about a better day—the Kingdom of God on earth, so a body of the older missionaries formed, to put into Chinese the best literature giving the political, moral and social advancement of the Christian world, the Society for the Propagation of Christian Literature. This society invited me to translate "Progress and Poverty," which I did, and they published it and circulated it without expense to me. I spent a long time at it as I wanted to have it correct and wanted to put the whole idea of the book into the translation. It went into a third edition, for which Mr. Fels paid.

Later I translated Protection or Free Trade, The Theory of Human Progression, Herbert Spencer's Social Statics, the same society publishing all the books. I translated Green's History of the English People to make them understand the development of political freedom.

In China we have a few things to encourage us. A gentleman, a musk expert in China, came to Nankin and lived in a temple. He was a great botanist. He had a mule which threw him and kicked him insensible. I took him into my home for a month to recuperate and gave him "Progress and Poverty" to read. This German friend of mine, Karl Smidt, taught Dr. Schrameyer, the first governor of Kiaochau, and Admiral Diedrichs how to prevent the new colony being ruined by land speculations. A tax of 6% on land values was adopted, displacing other taxes, the land being reassessed every three years. With German thoroughness, they tried to kill, bury, embalm and cremate land speculation and if a holder did not use the land they added 3% for every three years that the land was held idle. It worked so well that Dr. Schrameyer went home to Germany to devote his life to the propaganda for justice in land.

We have got an object lesson and it is still going.

When Sun Yat Sen came to China I had many visits with him. Prof. Bailie of Nankin University and I worked up a colonization association that was endorsed by all the leading men of both the revolutionary and reactionary parties. It is fashioned on the Single Tax method. It has been tried with success, but in the feudalism following the revolution it has been impossible to do much. I went

to call upon Dr. Sun when he was president in regard to this colonization, and he gave us letters to convert the parliament to Single Tax. We gave a copy of "Progress and Poverty" to all the members. They were quite willing to read it.

The Famine Relief found that no permanent good came from distributing food, or providing employment only, and then they adopted a Single Tax method. They planned to borrow money enough to put in dykes and drainage and permanently improve the famine area, and then charge up the expense to the increased land values, thus turning charity into business methods.

Dr. Sun started an English paper with Mau Su as editor and they have a platform for Single Tax, but are not very clear on it.

The platform of the Single Tax is now part of the nationalist programme and it is up to us to see that they get it.

My idea of working for the Single Tax is that it leads the way to the Kingdom of God on earth. The Sixth Chapter of Matthew looks foolish when you read "Take no thought for the morrow," but we can make a condition, and we can strive to bring about a state of affairs, where this would be possible.

And if there be Jews in this audience, the fifth chapter of Matthew states that when a cry was made about the taxes, the command was "Every man shall have his fields and vineyards; restore their lands; require nothing of them."

Rawlinson says that the landlords of Egypt were the worst kind of oppressive landlords, demanding six-tenths of the crops. Joseph, however, confiscated the land and rented it to the people at 20%. Looks like a great land reform, doesn't it?

We may fail on it, but still it is what we think and feel and it makes us enthusiastic, and if we don't succeed why the fellows that don't believe in it are the fools.

Mencius, the great philosopher, said in China there should be a site value tax, no tax on the building but just a site value tax. An early scheme was to divide the land into nine squares, the center square being the government square and the eight families had the outer squares. They had to cultivate the government land as a tax. In this way all men got the advantage of the land.

We are descendants of the ancient Danish and Saxon pirates and have not lost their piratical tendencies. We are loyal to our ancestors, but the Single Tax will stop us. There is a sort of evolution of depravity. When you have a state where a man kills and eats his neighbor, later he will reason, if I kill my neighbor I lose all; I will keep him and make him work. Then he reasons, keeping him as a slave I have to feed him. So he gets his land and makes him work.

I can see very hopeful signs in the Chinese. But we cannot think of them as a nation that will get a republic immediately. I have made tracts with Henry George ideas in them. I have circulated a great many.

There has been much Bolshevism in China and the government has had much trouble in keeping the mobs down, but lately they have been fighting among themselves. It is hard for them to unite. Supposing they did unite, 95% of absolute illiteracy is a problem requiring a process of education through generations, so we can not be too optimistic, but only hope that slow, Christianizing education will have its effect.

Mr. Leubuscher: It is refreshing to hear a missionary preaching this worldliness as well as other worldliness.

Today I received a cable as follows:

British United Committee and International Union for Land Values Taxation and Free Trade, send fraternal greetings to American brethren and ask Senator Hennessy to tell inspiring story of world progress.—JOHN PAUL.

Senator Hennessy stepped on the shore of America three hours ago. Will you, Senator Hennessy, answer this question?

ADDRESS OF CHARLES O'CONNOR HENNESSY

I am happy to be able to bring you good tidings of the progress of the ideas and ideals of Henry George in countries across the sea. On the night before I boarded the ship which landed me in New York today, I was privileged to address a fine gathering of the Liverpool League for Land Value Taxation, which was to me a most inspiring culmination of a series of meetings that I had participated in during the last month. The significant thing about this Liverpool meeting in particular, as about others, was the presence of so many *young* men, and the speeches that some of them made; speeches not only informed with the whole philosophy and economics of Henry George, but filled with zeal and determination to go forward with the work. This fine spirit was especially illustrated to me by my contacts with the talented young vice-president of the League, J. H. Eastwood, who is blessed with a beautiful, charming, and highly intelligent young wife, who is as keen a Georgist as her husband. Mr. and Mrs. Eastwood, on their holidays and at other times, make bicycle and tramping journeys through the surrounding countryside, putting up on roadside rocks or other exposed places attractive posters advising the passer-by to read "Progress and Poverty" by Henry George. As a result of a recent holiday trip through Wales by this young couple, many copies of a cheap edition of the book have been sold by the Liverpool League.

My journey to Europe this year was undertaken, as most of you may know, to consult at Copenhagen with members of the Advisory Committee of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade relative to our international work, and especially to determine the question of the time and place of the next international conference. I travelled from New York by a Scandinavian steamer that stopped for 18 hours at Oslo, the capital of Norway. There I was taken off the ship by a group of active Henry George men, some of whom

had attended the Copenhagen conference of last year. I found them keen for the work of our Union, and they showed me with pride a copy of our Memorandum to the League of Nations Economic Conference at Geneva, which is now circulating in the Norwegian language as well as in seven other European languages. Since last year they have formed a Norwegian League for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and have undertaken the publication of a quarterly journal. Incidentally, they showed me with pride a really beautiful monument to Abraham Lincoln, erected in one of the City Parks. These Norsemen are a liberty loving people, and we may hope that some day they will be able to point with pride to a public monument to that international democrat and lover of men, Henry George.

From Oslo I went to Copenhagen for the formal meeting of our committee, where were assembled the secretaries, Folke and Brink, with the leading men of the Danish movement, Madsen, of the British Secretariat, who is the linguist of our Union, Ashley Mitchell, the Treasurer, Dr. Otto Karutz, of Berlin, Dr. Paul Dane, of Melbourne, Australia, and representatives of Norway and Sweden. Two days were spent in discussions relative to the next International Conference. Letters of encouragement and advice were read from the French, Austrian, Spanish and Greek members of the committee, as well as from Louis F. Post, Mrs. deMille, Mr. Leubuscher, Dr. Milliken and Chester C. Platt of the Committee membership on this side of the ocean. After a full canvas of the views expressed, the decision as to the time for holding the next conference was all but unanimously settled. The Conference will be held during the last week in July, 1929. Great diversity of opinion developed as to the place for the Conference, finally ending in a sort of deadlock between Hamburg, Germany, and Edinburgh, in Scotland. The President was authorized, after consultation with prominent supporters of the Union in Germany, England and Scotland, to announce the place determined upon as soon as practicable after his return to America.

Well, I have talked with our friends in Germany and England and Scotland, since I left Denmark, and I have had talks with American members of the Committee and may now tell you that the next Conference of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade will be held in Edinburgh during the last week of July, 1929. Already I have reason to believe it will be, in point of numbers and of nationalities represented, the greatest gathering of the followers of Henry George ever assembled. I hope you all will determine here and now to be at that conference. Commence to plan for it tomorrow. I need hardly tell you that Edinburgh, which I visited only a few weeks ago, is one of the most beautiful and historically interesting cities in Europe. It is worth a visit for itself alone, aside from the happiness and inspiration you will get from four days of association with