

was among them. So among us, poverty and unemployment prevailed, not through any fatality beyond our control but because of an elemental injustice for which the people themselves were responsible in their laws. Instead of bewailing the circumstances, rending our garments and trying now to make clothes of our tatters (which is what present day Governments are doing) we must fight the wrong and in our hearts assert the right whereby there shall be opportunity in abundance, wealth and happiness in abundance, for all the sons of men.

Mayor MacNair of Pittsburgh gave a light touch to the proceedings with some amusing reminiscences of incidents that do fall to the lot of a public man, who in the midst of serious affairs has the saving grace of a sense of humour. (He faced an audience that laughingly took his sally asking if there was any one present who didn't want to make a speech.)

AN AMERICAN DIARY

It has been a privilege to be no stranger in a strange land but a traveller to whom the hand of companionship was extended in most generous measure. The sojourn, brief as it was, brought experiences that would require a long account to do them justice. It is not a case of jotting down impressions of the scenes and sights described in the guide books or the events of an ordinary journey. There was so much else to absorb attention in the concerns and activities of mutual interest from the moment of arrival in New York on the 24th September. With Mr F. Folke of Denmark and his daughter, Inge, I had crossed the Atlantic to attend the Henry George Congress, they proceeding shortly after it to make a tour of the States as far West as California. My acquaintance with the American Continent was confined to New York City where two weeks were spent, with excursions to Atlantic City, Washington and Boston, and stops at Niagara, Toronto and Ottawa on the way home.

The personal contacts with friends of long standing, some intimately known by their visits to Great Britain, and others hardly less so in the correspondence on the affairs of a common cause extending over the years, acquaintance made with a host of new friends and the discussions with them, for all of which so much opportunity was given, were the pleasant and profitable features of a memorable visit. There was hardly a day but held one or more engagements, some meeting, interview or conversation, so that it was a case of being "in Conference," as the Americans say, during a large part of the time. We had held the Henry George Congress, the prelude to other active days; and a lasting impression of the Congress was the zeal and ability of the large band of young men and women who have come out of the Henry George School of Social Science as a splendid new strength for the movement.

The new session of the School had just started, and I had the opportunity to see it in action. Two classes were being held, one for beginners conducted by Mr Otto K. Dorn and the other a teachers' class where leadership is by turns and the training is mutual in the handling of classes and the answering of questions. For each evening members require to read beforehand given pages from *Progress and Poverty* but I, not having "learned my lessons," was put to it to answer when the turn came. Classes of the kind, for pupils and teachers, are now being held and projected all over the country under the auspices of the School.

On 30th September a dinner was given by the Snag Club in the premises of the City Club, Mr H. S. Buttenheim, editor of *The American City*, presiding. It was a company of men interested in Housing and Town Planning wanting to know about British law and practice, with special reference to the system of local taxation. Among those present were Messrs C. O'C. Hennessy, Lawson Purdy, H. C. Maguire, Philip Cornick and Walter Kruesi. Perhaps what most astonishes even well-informed American people is that by our practice and definitions of "rateable value" valuable vacant land is entered as of "no value" in the rolls and is completely exempt from annual taxation. For

Mrs Anna George de Mille said the parting words well suited to the occasion. It was not goodbye but *au revoir*, *auf Wiedersehen*, or, as the Danes say, *paá Gensyn*: "in the hope to meet," as the rare Ben Jonson puts it, "shortly again and make our absence sweet." "Most of us," she said, "who have been in the Henry George movement have found it difficult at times to keep our light burning in this darkened world. To know that now it burns more brightly than for many a long year is indeed encouraging. It is not merely our common desire to bring about an economic reform that binds us so strongly; it is a spiritual bond, a fraternity, a fellowship that must carry our cause to victory."

The final meeting was over, but that the conference had not ended and that there was still business to do was testified by the large number who remained for conversations, continuing till well after midnight.

exploring further ground and giving or getting information two afternoons were spent respectively with Mr Cornick and Mr Kruesi, who are occupied on researches in this field. There were many such "lunch hour" meetings for business to be transacted or for interviews with interested parties, and sometimes whole days (as with Mr Spencer Heath and Mr Robert Scott) were given up to conversations, although the landmarks on what was undertaken as a sight-seeing tour were not altogether ignored. In town, of course, the offices of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation (11, Park Place) and of *Land and Freedom* (150, Nassau Street) were visited, and at the latter with some sympathy for Mr J. Dana Miller, as he strove with urgent proof-reading in a buzz of conversation. Two runs into the countryside of New Jersey visiting the homes of Mr Frank Hennessy and Mr Fred Leubuscher dispelled any likely notions that New York City and America were synonymous terms. And on the railway journeys as to Atlantic City (with Mr Charles O'C. Hennessy to have the happiness of meeting Mr John B. Sharpe) the impression was rather of a vast empty space holding scope and chance for a myriad population, all profitably occupied and not living on top of one another. Both problem and solution were inescapable.

The two days, 5th and 6th October, were spent in Washington under the hospitable roof of Mr W. I. Swanton. Two meetings were held, one of the Women's Single Tax Association at the home of Mrs Phillips in Clarendon and the other of the Federation of Civic Associations of Washington. At the latter, taking the place of Congressman Eckert who was unavoidably absent, my duty was to explain the measure of land value taxation adopted in Pittsburgh for approval by the Federation and in support of the resolution that Mr Swanton's Association (Columbia Heights) had already passed. Next morning a useful newspaper report appeared. It was a joy to call upon Mrs Louis F. Post to see her so vigorous, who is in her 83rd year, to exchange news and convey greetings from and to her many friends on this side. Washington will also be remembered for the sight of the City, the Capitol (with Congressman Lewis as genial guide), the Congress Library, Mount Vernon and the surrounding country, made possible by the kindness of Mr and Misses Swanton.

A special invitation was sent to readers and friends of *Land & Liberty* in New York and vicinity, and in Boston, for a chance to speak together again before departure from the States. For the New York meetings Mrs Anna George de Mille kindly placed her home at disposal. It was thought well to provide two dates (10th and 12th October) so that as many as possible might be suited. Gratefully I think of those meetings for the generous response accorded in the attendance of 65 friends and the many letters from those unable to come. So in Boston on 11th October (after history had been learned again on the ground of Bunker Hill, Concord and Lexington in company with John Lawrence Monroe) the gathering called at short notice and well attended gave opportunity to speak of the work in Great Britain, and the place of the movement in both municipal and national spheres. A unanimous resolution

adopted conveyed greetings to their former colleague and co-worker, Mr Alexander Mackendrick.

The only day spent in solitary company was that at Niagara Falls and perhaps the grandeur of nature is best admired where, even if companions are present, silence is ordained.

Toronto was reached on 15th October, Mr Alan C. Thompson bidding welcome and acting as guide so that in the few hours available something was seen of this city of homes. A lunch-hour meeting with the Progress Club of business men (conducted on Rotary lines) was followed in the evening by the Annual Banquet of the Canadian Single Tax Association, attended by 51 members and friends. This was well reported, the two Toronto papers giving considerable space to what was said about tariffs and monopoly of natural resources; that these were causes of war and that the Ottawa Agreements were not unconnected with Italy's or Germany's or Japan's alleged need for expansion. The headlines in one paper made the bold statement "Single Taxer Blames Ottawa Trade Pacts for War in Ethiopia."

The scenery on the railway journey next day to Ottawa, for a large part by the shore of Lake Ontario, spoke outwardly at any rate of a prosperous countryside with its many farms on fertile soil, the sun of an Indian summer brilliantly picturing the glorious russet, red and gold of the mellowing foliage. No one could censure nature if the seeming prosperity was a mirage, the cultivator unable to embrace it however hard he strives. Nature yields her fruits to the cultivator. It is not she who intercepts them. So might one muse out of a carriage window travelling no matter where, bewildered at the conflict between appearances and facts, between the possibilities of a care-free life for all and mankind's amazing failure to realise them.

Mr A. C. Campbell, my host in Ottawa, would place the Gospel of Plenty in the forefront of all endeavour to rectify that failure, denying that scarcity ever need be and affirming that freedom to the uttermost from tolls and tribute and restriction is the highest function of governments. Plenty only waits to shower its blessings on a free society, scorning the laws, regulations, officials and departments that would attempt to arbitrate it. We had much talk on that topic as we jealously regarded the fleeting time and saw what could be seen of the beautiful city that Ottawa is. But a sketch of sundry events may not stop to dwell upon these pleasant excursions over the solid ground and into the region of inviting meditation. There

were introductions to a number of people for talks with them including Messrs H. S. and W. M. Southam, proprietors of *The Citizen*, and on the evening of 16th October by engagement an address was given at the weekly study circle of the Brotherhood of Canadian Railway Employees. On the following day Mr Campbell was the host at a lunch-hour gathering at the University Club where discussion turned on the justice of land value taxation with some talk too on Social Credit, Mr Bowman, the editor of *The Citizen*, admitting that the theory attracted him. Indeed it has an undoubted hold on Canadian thought as is proved not only by the capture of the Provincial Legislature in Alberta but also by the return of 17 Social Credit Members to the Dominion Parliament. But the majority was against Mr Bowman's view and all present desired to get "by earliest post" the answer Mr Lester has given in his *Poverty and Plenty*.

At a later hour, after the tour of the City, it was a pleasure to have a talk and consultation with Mr H. L. Seymour, the Town Planning Adviser to the Ontario Government, who had closely studied the British Acts and British precedent like Letchworth, and found them sadly wanting because they made no provision for dealing with the private appropriation of land values or the penalizing effects of the present tax system.

The Citizen favoured with an interview published next day (the sailing date from Montreal, 18th October) which, while reporting what was said about the popular support for land value taxation in Great Britain and the fate of Mr Snowden's Finance Act of 1931 at the hands of the National Government, emphasized the criticism of the Empire trade agreements. "The Ottawa trade pacts had created the impression that the British Empire has sought to put at a disadvantage other nations. They had done as much injury to world trade as anything else and he hoped that the election of a Liberal Government in Canada would see the promised reduction in tariffs or their complete elimination as they were the obstacles to international goodwill . . . and that Canada would establish a precedent other nations would be induced to follow."

So ended a journey in gratitude for the exceptional opportunity given to meet so many friends and join hands with them in their activities. Kindness and consideration knew no bounds. It is a reception awaiting anyone travelling the same road on the same mission who is the fortunate deputy within the ranks that make up the fellowship of Henry George.

A. W. MADSEN.

MR A. H. PEAKE AT CAMBRIDGE

At a recent public meeting in Cambridge under the auspices of the Cambridge Borough Liberal Association, Mr A. H. Peake gave an address on the land question which was well reported in the local Press.

The Chairman, in giving a hearty welcome to the speaker, referred to his well-known advocacy of far-reaching reforms of taxation based on the philosophy which will always be linked with the name of Henry George.

Mr. Peake said that such problems as the maintenance of peace, the remedy for the evils of unemployment, the burden of huge national debts, just methods of taxation, etc., were not separate and disconnected subjects, but were all interrelated, so that it was impossible to deal adequately with any one of them without reference to others.

While civilization had to its credit magnificent achievements, it had also serious failures. The continuance of the evils of unemployment for year after year in this and other countries was not only a blot upon our boasted progress, but a menace to civilization itself. To give men the vote and turn them into tramps, to give young people university education and then throw them on the scrap heap, in this lay danger to democracy and liberty.

In America it was becoming the fashion to refer to the young men and women of to-day as the "lost generation," because of their continued inability to

obtain anything like a reasonable place in society, and because, too, it was realized that even with a revival of business prosperity, the long period of hopeless waiting had caused despair to pass into apathy and listlessness, unfitting them for any manner of employment.

"Is it to be wondered at that people are beginning to jump at all sorts of quack remedies for this state of things?" asked the speaker. "Tariffs, subsidies, quotas, 'soak-the-rich' policies, and all and every scheme to give advantage or privilege to some sections of the community at the expense of others, are all corrupting influences in political life. The best that can be said for them is that they attempt to remedy the maldistribution of wealth by balancing one injustice against another."

To obtain and secure one's just rights, the only method was to have strict regard for the rights of others. Justice was the only safe foundation for a healthy civilization.

Cardiff City Council, having called together a conference of the rating authorities of Wales, was taking the lead in a movement for a more just method of raising local revenue. People of other countries simply could not believe that the British system of raising the funds necessary for local government could be so stupid as to excuse altogether the owner of a plot of land so long as the land produced nothing but weeds, while penalizing, by assessing to full value of both house and land, the person who built and occupied a house.