

## A Visit To Philip Snowden

A FEW months ago I wrote to the Rt. Hon. Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain, and told him how glad I was for his preface to the "Abridgement of Protection or Free Trade." Almost by return mail I received his reply:

11 Downing St., Whitehall, S. W.  
22nd July, 1929

DEAR MRS. DEMILLE:

It would have been a pleasure and an honor to meet the daughter of a man for whose work and memory I cherish such high regard. I heard him speak in this country over forty years ago.

You need not feel discouraged, for the great truths he reached so eloquently *do* make progress.

Yours very sincerely,

PHILIP SNOWDEN.

In answer I explained that I still had two days before leaving London for Edinburgh and promptly came an appointment.

In my excitement to keep that appointment I reached the neighborhood of Westminster too early and waited for the slow-moving hands of Big Ben to creep toward the designated hour. I loitered along Downing Street and having recently saturated myself with tales from the prolific pen of Edgar Wallace, rather hoped the Bobby on guard would take me for a suspicious character and, trotting me across Whitehall, would give me the privilege of seeing the inside of Scotland Yard. But no such thing happened. I was allowed to loiter unmolested and as the big clock boomed the hour—I walked to number 11 and knocked at the door.

A serious looking man, with one disabled arm, opened the door. He looked politely incredulous when I announced that I had an appointment with the Cabinet Minister. But the letter I produced acted as "open sesame" and inviting me to be seated in the marble flagged foyer, he disappeared. Presently returning, he conducted me to a large, rather sombre, back room, where a gentleman was seated at a big desk drawn at right angles to the window.

Mr. Snowden rose as I entered his study: he did not touch the two canes beside him but stood waiting, smiling gently. I crossed the room to him and we shook hands. He gestured me into the chair close to his and placed facing the light, much as the patient's chair in a doctor's consulting room is placed.

During the second of silence, before real conversation began, I had a chance to observe his pale, sensitive, deeply thoughtful face. There was a sadness back of it—Weltschmerz it seemed to me. The man looked fragile, as one weighted with many worries. It seemed more a weariness of the spirit than of the body.

We talked of the disappointment caused by his inability, now that he was a member of the Cabinet, to attend the

Edinburgh Conference. He told of the deep and lasting impression Henry George had made upon him some forty years back. Then he went on to say that he believed the Taxation of Land Values would be a live issue in Great Britain soon. Although he spoke conservatively and couched his statements in diplomatic phrases that made neither promises nor guarantees, I hold the firm conviction that we Single Taxers are going to see our beliefs fought for in the open political field in England, this coming winter, and that Philip Snowden will be in the front line trenches, directing the campaign.

"Are you interested in your Father's cause?" he suddenly asked.

Vigorously I acquiesced.

"Do you make many speeches on the subject?"

"Never if I can avoid it" I said.

"Yes, of course." He spoke sympathetically. "One never makes a speech if one can avoid it."

"Do *you* feel so—you who have had to make so many hundred speeches?"

"Yes, of course," he replied gently; "always."

(This, from the man who has since stood against the combined powers of France, Belgium, Italy and Japan!)

"It is not easy," I said, "to serve the people!"

"No," he answered, "it is not easy." He seemed not to be counting his own heartaches for he added ruminatively: "So many stumbling blocks are put in the way."

I looked at his sensitive, weary face. "We have not ceased to crucify, even yet!" I thought.

My gaze fell to the unfinished work on his desk and remembering "better too little than too much," I rose to go.

"Have you met my wife?" he asked.

He called a short number into the house phone. "Ethel," he said, "I'd like you to meet the daughter of Henry George. Can you come down?"

Presently Mrs. Snowden entered the room. Moderately tall, finely built, commanding, she was. Wearing a simple brown satin dress, her lightish hair parted and coiled in two soft buns at the back of her head, her blue eyes alert, her cheeks glowing, she was the very embodiment of vigor, physical, mental, spiritual. She spoke in the musically modulated voice and with the cultured diction one associates with the English lady.

Here was the woman whose power and help Mr. Snowden had with gallantry, rare in a husband, publicly acknowledged!

I sent up a prayer that these two people may be saved long to continue their life of dedication and service.

And as I walked away from No. 11 Downing Street, my heart sang with hope, for with a man like Philip Snowden in power, his country may yet be spared from the worst enemy she has ever had to face—the enemy within her own gates—unemployment. As I hurried along toward Tothill Street I was conscious of a renewed conviction that Henry George, the Seer, was again going to be proved

right, that his prophesy about England will come true—it will be there sooner than in the United States that we shall see installed the Taxation of Land Values.

But that will happen only if those of us who believe in it work tooth and nail to help spread through Great Britain an understanding of our philosophy. Surely there was never so opportune a time for us to make headway as now when millions of unemployed are groping for help, when the Premier's indebtedness to Henry George and to "Progress and Poverty" is iterated and reiterated in his biography, and above all, when the hero of the hour—who happens also to be Chancellor of the Exchequer—is leading the fight for advancement toward our goal. It will be unforgivable stupidity if, at this time, we Single Taxers, all over the world, do not give mental and financial help for a great educational propaganda in Great Britain, so that when he launches his campaign there may be a vast army that will get an impetus from Philip Snowden and will carry on!

—ANNA GEORGE DEMILLE.

## How Progress and Poverty was Received on its Appearance

IT is interesting to recall what the reviewers said of this great work when it was first published, not the reviewers of radical newspapers, but of the highly conservative journals of the time.

The *New York Tribune* greeted it as follows:

"The received principles of political economy are here submitted to a fresh examination by a courageous thinker who though familiar with the learning of the books, follows the conclusions of his own reasoning rather than the instructions of eminent teachers."

The *New York Herald*: "Progress and Poverty is not merely the most original, the most striking and important contribution which political economy has yet received from America, but it is not too much to say that in these respects it has had no equal since the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, a century ago \* \* \* A more aggressive, not to say audacious, book was never written."

The *New York Sun*: "Let us say, at the outset, that this is not a work to be brushed aside with lofty indifference or cool disdain. It is not the production of a visionary or a sciolist, of a meagrely equipped or ill-regulated mind. The writer has brought to his undertaking a comprehensive knowledge of the data and principles of science, and his skill in exposition and illustration attests a broad acquaintance with history and literature. His book must be accounted the first adequate presentation in the English language of the new economy which has found powerful champions in the German universities, and which aims at a radical transformation of the science formulated by Adam Smith, Ricardo and J. S. Mill. Few books have in recent years, proceeded from any American pen which have so plainly borne the marks of wide learning and strenuous thought, or which have brought to the expounding of a serious theme a happier faculty of elucidation."

The *New York Evening Mail*: "A book that can

neither be ignored, sneered down nor laughed down."

The *New York Era*: "We announce clearly and distinctly that, to our view, no book has appeared in the century which has exerted so marked an influence as will Progress and Poverty."

The *Albany Journal*: "A discussion of wide range and of great vigor and power which closes with a suggestion of the future life couched in language like that of a rapt and inspired seer."

The *Philadelphia Evening Star*: "Mr. George has written a book which is not only a bold and exhaustive examination of our modern civilization, but which charms us as from a style which rivals the genius of Newman and Macaulay."

The *Louisville Courier-Journal*: "Mr. George is earnest, honest and forcible; radical to the root, bold, sweeping, and dogmatic. He writes earnestly, clearly, nervously, and states his theories and arguments in a way to make them worthy the attention of the most dignified political economist, against whom he makes some spirited tilts. Whatever may be the ultimate effect of the book, it will not fail to excite discussion."

The *Brooklyn Times*: "A very remarkable book—its style always clear, often eloquent, never dull. The time-honored doctrines of political economy have never received a severer assault, and whatever we may think of its conclusions Progress and Poverty, beyond any book of our time, deserves careful study."

The *Sacramento Bee*: "We believe this book marks an epoch in the discussion of political and social questions. We hail it as the skirmishers on an advanced line might hail the coming up of the heavy battalions. For here is the philosophy of the great reform movement which is now beginning to agitate men's minds. We cannot too strongly commend this book. It ought to be read by every workingman in the land, and, if it were, it would work a revolution."

The *San Francisco Examiner*: "A work of wonderful interest and power. Startling as its conclusions may seem, they are urged with such logic, force and earnestness that they cannot fail to impress every reader. Progress and Poverty must in time produce deep effects, and give to the most important discussion a new turn. I cannot long be ignored by those who regard its doctrine as dangerous."

The *Sacramento Record-Union*: "A book which will make converts, and which is, in fact, a really splendid series of logical triumphs. In the sweep of the argument nothing seems to have been forgotten."

The *Brooklyn Eagle*: "The most solid literary success of the year is undoubtedly Progress and Poverty."

The *Stockton (Calif.) Independent*: "A book to be studied not merely to be read—a book which grapples with questions so great, and announces doctrines so novel, that the reader is surprised on every page. No one can finish it without receiving light on some of the most interesting problems of human existence, and being convinced that Mr. George is one of the most profound and advanced thinkers of the day."

AN English writer says that indirect taxation is a legacy of the corrupt times of Charles II. It marked the dawn of our system of indirect taxation and the emancipation from special burdens on lands thus accomplished helped to alter the whole current of our late fiscal history—RICHARD T. ELY, in "Problems of Today," an early work