

My Father — Henry George

"MY father was my religion, my ideal of a man, the link which drew me nearer to God! My father was not a religious man, but I know he believed in God. There may have been a time when he did not—nearly all of us have to go through that some time in our lives—but toward his last years he did. He did not believe in doctrines. The fatherhood of God was his creed—man his prayers. It is hard to tell in a few words the beauty of his character. It seems almost too sacred to show to strangers, and still so few have any idea of it.

"He was a most indulgent father, tender and gentle. He never forbade one doing anything without explaining why he did so. He demanded obedience, but not blind obedience. He respected our individuality; he treated us like reasonable human beings, even though very small and very young beings, and showed us the reason we should do as he directed. If we disobeyed we were warned not to do so again. If we disregarded the warning we were punished.

"His memory was like a sensitive plate, it received a lasting impression of all he ever read or heard. He loved poetry, and could quote it as easily as though he was reading it, and still he never committed it to memory. It seemed photographed on his brain.

"A strange fancy, poetry, for one who studied the great, solemn problems of life, was it not? But so characteristic of the man who was broad

This is a portion of a letter published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, November 14, 1897, written by Anna after her father's death. Anna George de Mille was until her death in New York, president of the Henry George School. It was reprinted and distributed at the St. Louis conference.

enough to sympathize with every feeling, even though not always sharing it . . .

"They say my father was a self-educated man. I suppose that is true, inasmuch as he sought education, but he had as tutors Shakespeare and the older poets, John Stuart Mill, teachers of all things and all times.

"He read constantly. There was nothing upon which he could not converse intelligently. His mind was fairly kaleidoscopic—every subject showed a new side to it. And it was so well ordered. No matter what thought he wanted, he was always able to put his finger on it at once. His life was just as methodical, all work. He rose at 5 every morning and worked until 11 at night. Frequently he sat wrapped in thought at the dinner table, solving some problem.

"He was a delightful teaser. It was impossible to tell whether he was in jest or earnest without consulting his eyes for the answer. They had such a merry twinkle in them then, though his face showed no trace of a smile. In these moods he was fond of the fantastic and humorous in literature, the weird and imaginary. He delighted then in Stevenson."

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York, N.Y. 10021, supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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