

to break the tie that binds Georgests throughout America and the world in devotion to a great common cause. Firm in this belief, in view of many expressions of approval for the undertaking, the Henry George Foundation has sought to develop one great brotherhood that shall strive manfully for the abolition of poverty and the attainment of true freedom.

But ours is a great social reform, a far-reaching economic programme. How can we expect it to be regarded seriously as such unless we offer the people large enough "doses" to reach close to the root of our economic ills, unless we can go far enough toward the Single Tax to have some real effect on the production and distribution of wealth. Otherwise, the people can hardly be blamed for turning to other social "remedies", for they could not regard the Single Tax as much more than an academic question, something that might be of interest to some future generation in a rather distant day, but of no avail for those who would help their fellow men today.

I think it is safe to say that all of us would welcome a "half a loaf" but we cannot be content with mere crumbs while the great evils of poverty and injustice persist and inequalities in the distribution of wealth are, if anything, more pronounced than ever before. How can we make the Single Tax of Henry George mean something to the present generation—to ourselves and our children?

## The Vision

ADDRESS OF JOSEPH DANA MILLER  
HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS, SEPT. 10

**I**N the great imaginative literature of the ancient Hebrews which we call the Holy Scriptures it is said: "Where there is no vision the people perish." Is the American nation so lacking? Are we so busy running after the things we call wealth, are we so engrossed in the pursuit of self-indulgences that we have left the vision behind us? It would seem so. Our age is the apotheosis of material achievement. In the chorus of ephemeral overtones the still small voice of the spirit is unheard. There does not seem in all the volume of sound from press and pulpit and politics a single authentic voice. No wonder Chesterton is provoked into saying that it is unfortunate that the invention of the radio enabling us to talk to millions with enormously increased facility comes at a time when nobody has anything to say!

I think this audience would be puzzled to name a single writer of popular eminence, a single man in public life, a single group movement outside our own, that glimpses any real vision even in broken lights. We are to remember that even in our own life time it was not always so. The vision was with us in fitful gleams. The Populist movement, the Non-Partisan League, the Committee of 48, we all remember. But every vestige of these movements embodying some vague aspiration has departed. Most people seem content to drift along with the two old time-

serving parties, Republican and Democratic, both now wedded to the economic Bedlamite policy of protection. It is a time when the self-respecting citizen may serve best the cause of the Republic by staying away from the polls, or voting the Socialist ticket, a refuge always open to us. There never was a time when in politics the citizen's vote was less important.

A few years ago I sat in a great hall in this city as a delegate to the convention of the Committee of 48. It was an inspiring spectacle, those 1500 delegates from nearly every state in the Union, with banners flying and a great hush of expectancy over all. Here was not a gathering of office seekers—not a man or woman among them but was animated by a hope of something better for the nation. It was good to be here—for a few hours at least one could feel the exaltation and share the hopes that throbbed in the breasts of so many. But how soon it was to melt away.

Perhaps it needed no political prophet to foretell its failure. In the absence of a harmony of purpose this great convention broke up into confused and bewildered groups and drifted apart. Only for a few minutes when our friend Oscar Geiger held the Convention in the spell of his eloquent appeal—and never had he spoken so well—did it seem that this great Convention might declare for the Georgean principle, find something that would hold it together and start a real movement for its accomplishment. But it was not to be.

A part of the Convention melted away and marched to another hall where the Labor Party was formed. The band played as they marched along and this led the late Mr. William Wallace to remark that it was the only instance on record of a funeral procession where the corpse provided its own music.

Such vision as this convention had failed because it lacked the necessary apprehension of how to attain it. And it was but a partial vision after all. Henry George gave us a practical vision, for he linked it with the natural processes; he showed us how it could be attained; he accommodated it to methods approved by custom, in ways grown familiar to civilization and communities. He seized upon the machinery of taxation to effect this great change in the social order.

It is easy perhaps because of this to make two great mistakes. We may magnify these fiscal changes we propose as something important in themselves. We have indeed talked of natural or scientific taxation; there is no such thing. This is to concern ourselves with the body rather than with the soul of our movement.

One of the greatest misfortunes that can happen to a Henry George man is for him to become a student of taxation; the next is for him to become a tax expert. He is then in danger of becoming atrophied, impervious to principle. He may even become like our good friend, Prof. Seligman, and there are worse than Seligman, I can tell you. I do not need to tell you; you know.



Sometime in 1975 another Isaac Disraeli will write a new chapter for his "Curiosities of Literature" in which he will make an examination of books and treatises dealing with the subject of taxation. He will find here doctrines confirmatory of the theory that the infallible way to make a country rich is to keep things out of it; that if you lend money to a neighbor in straits across a body of water you must clamor like a Shylock that he pay to the last penny, principal and interest, and then proceed to adopt measures that will make it difficult if not impossible for him to pay at all; on the subject of local taxation he will find taught in these books the strange theory that you can get more out of a hogshead by tapping it a number of times, which is analogous to the story of the man who built a dog house and made one hole for the big dog to get in and another smaller hole for the little puppies!

The other mistake we make and with which we are sometimes charged, is to talk too much of the realization while ignoring the method, so enamoured of the vision, so drunken with its beauty, that we are blinded by the sheer apprehension of a world of men and women made really free, a vision too dazzling for eyes yet unaccustomed to the light.

I do not know how you define the term a "religious man," though I know how I define it for myself. Henry George was in the sense I understand it a deeply religious man. It has always seemed to me that the men who have wrought the profoundest influence on the human race were the men who were possessed of the vision—Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, and perhaps in no less degree but differently—Savonarola, Mazzini, yes, and Tom Paine, and the man we honor this day.

We may differ as we will on the meaning of the word "inspiration," but certainly George was genuinely inspired. He was a visionary, but a very practical visionary. He saw the vision, and all his life he made it his, from the time it broke upon him as it did to Saul of Tarsus, as it did to the Hebrew Lawgiver in the thunders of the Mount; it never left him; he lived for it—in a very real sense he died for it. And that vision he put into Progress and Poverty, and there it is, ineradicable for generation after generation as the tablets of Moses!

**I**NDIRECT taxes, while deceptive, are really the most costly of all and, both for the deceptiveness and the costliness, should be avoided in legislation for the frankness and economy of direct taxation. Hardly anybody appears to agree with us, though, and if the gasoline tax is ultimately wiped out all over the country what may be called an almost popular method of raising public money will go by the boards and our legislators will begin to hunt frantically for some new patch to add to our taxation crazy quilt.—*Ohio State Journal*, Columbus.

## Buncombe About Peace and War

CHARLES O'CONNOR HENNESSY, HENRY  
GEORGE CONGRESS, SEPTEMBER 10.

**M**R. HENNESSY said in part: Philosophy has been defined as critical and reflective thinking, and I submit that the promulgation of this Treaty as "a great step towards universal peace" sufficiently demonstrates the absence of critical and reflective thinking.

To me the dawn of the era of permanent world peace seems to be a long distance off, and the impressive event that came off in Paris the other day I would rate at best only as a gesture. At best it may be cited as a significant evidence that the political leaders of the nations have been moved by a rising tide of world opinion to at least a qualified pledge to put an end to the horrors of war and to the burdens which the wars of the past and preparations for wars of the future have laid upon the backs of the workers of the world. We may even believe that even unaccompanied as it is by a single act that would give it the spirit of reality, the Briand-Kellogg Treaty is still to be commended for the good it may do in strengthening the popular psychology that is everywhere tending away from war.

Behind all the noise and rhetoric and self-deception in which the world may indulge itself over this Treaty, the fact remains that War and the preparations for War still remain the greatest industry of the largest of the so-called civilized nations. In Europe alone, nine years after the war to end war, the countries that signed this Pact are raising, by taxation, and spending about two and a quarter billion dollars annually to maintain the organization of wholesale human destruction.

To say or think that we can banish war from the world by mere denunciation or renunciation without an understanding of and a disposition to remove the fundamental *causes* of war, is foolishness and futility. While I do not say or believe that there was hypocrisy or insincerity in the spirit moving those who signed the Anti-War Pact in Paris the other day, I find it hard to believe that some, at least, of the statesmen who negotiated this Treaty, are not aware of the fact that the causes of war are economic in their character, and that until nations are ready to face the realities and deal with the economic dislocations and iniquities which are at the bottom of the wars between nations, there will never be assurance of permanent world peace. Not even disarmament, which so many good people are striving for, will bring peace to the world, so long as we leave untouched the causes of poverty among peoples and those encouragements and rewards to greed and selfishness which breed the fears, the hatreds, and the jealousies between peoples, that keep alive the spirit of War.