

Observations and Reflections

MARK MILLIKEN AT THE HENRY GEORGE
CONGRESS

IT may be that other reforms have something that the George movement lacks: the economical appeal of old age pensions; the democratic appeal of proportional representation; the anti-monopolistic appeal of public ownership; the humanistic entreaty of pacifism; the invocation of free trade. These are very definite and can be comprehended by any man on the street. But the phrases "abolition of taxes," and "ground rent," and then to confuse the hearer or reader the more, the expression "Single Tax," are benumbing to the ordinary brain. Men know that they pay rent and taxes and sometimes a good many kinds of the latter. The vast majority look on land as a commodity which can be held without violation of ethical principles. As means of leading men to a comprehension of Henry George's ethical and economic principles these very plans which Georgists hold in poor repute are valuable. They are familiar, living, growing and unequivocal. Those who subscribe to them are put in the category of libertarians.

It is amusing the care that some Single Taxers take of their brains. They don't want to take up with any schemes that might, in their opinion, divert brain energy from the Georgan economics. Imagine a Professor of Greek saying that he did not care to delve into the Romance languages, for fear it might distract from his Athenian fantasies. And consider this sad statement: we only use about one tenth of our brains. It is a pretty good guess that a large part of this activity goes into thought rumination.

The recent definition of revolution as "accelerated evolution" has probably impressed and appeased the all-at-once group, for there was no clash between them and the Step-by-steppers. Progress would no doubt be made could we shoe both with seven league boots instead of their present day ground grippers. But the Henry George Foundation gave evidence by the large number of resolutions passed that it is moving. Resolutions are the crystallized sentiments of the meeting. Sent to the proper persons, namely, those with power or unusual endowments resolutions may do some good. A resolution and amendment with great potentialities was passed to the effect that a telegram be sent to the President urging him to proceed with the construction of public works as a means of lessening unemployment. The amendment, which I introduced, was that a committee be formed of those who could go to Washington to make personal appeal to the President for a land tax. This should be the method of approach whether the suggestion be made in the White House, the governor's office or federal, state or city legislatures. I have now the names of about twenty men and women who live in close proximity to Washington, who, as representatives of our cause, may be asked to make some such request of our President. They would make a

group of lobbyists averaging in annoyance about midway between the Anti-Saloon and the High Tariff gangs.

Relatively our plan seems less important than those socio-economic schemes formerly mentioned. But even they appear only in spots; and where they are absent, those communities in some instances seem to show a high degree of development and contentment of the hundred per cent. variety. After all, if we could or would abolish our stupid, criminal tax system the benefit to society would not be comparable to that derived from the banishment of fear sanctioned by religion. The free administration of justice as a state function, which it undoubtedly is, seems to me more important than a tax on land values as a source of all our revenues. Universal health insurance would compel the medical and dental professions to abandon the much criticized plan of charging according to ability to pay. This accomplished, there would not then be the precedent of paying taxes on the same plan.

But there, I must not strain my brain. The faults of the three professions, plus the five other schemes discussed make eight subjects, and that means as a Single Taxer I have given eight tenths of my intellectual activity to pagan ideas, leaving only two tenths to the Georgist philosophy. Such strenuous apostasy is not mitigated by expressing a belief that the latter philosophy is only a part of the humanistic movement with its increasing mass and momentum. But observe this: could any of these reforms be partly or completely accomplished that would be good in itself; and it would accelerate our movement.

If as economists we could get away from the tacit belief in heaven with its compensatory rewards for a bad social system, what a heavenly time we would demand for ourselves right here, right now, during our short stay. This would mean the adoption of some ameliorative methods in contradistinction to the radical one we propose. But amelioration thrives on radicalism. It functions before, during and after a surgical operation, the purchase of a fur coat, the going into battle, the payment of taxes, yes, even up to the time the noose is adjusted.

Frank H. Rice, President of The Liberal Church of Denver, was to have read a paper entitled "Why We Should Establish a Henry George University." What an excellent suggestion. If this is attempted I wish to direct attention to the early days of Johns Hopkins University. That institution stressed the idea of paying high salaries to professors who did their work in small, sometimes rented buildings. Dormitories and architectural dreams come true are no criterion of a college's excellence. Why could not our Foundation undertake to finance this?

Some predict a conflict between the rank socialism of Russia and the capitalism of occidental Europe and America. It appears that the profile look we give Russia is a good way to engender hate and ignorance of her people. It might require some awful conflict like this to show capitalism the wisdom of Henry George. What a travesty it would be to behold two mobs at war, when their patron

saints, Karl Marx and Henry George, would like nothing better than a chance to sit down and talk over the ills of their fellows.

Recent Activities of the Schalkenbach Foundation

THE activities of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation for the last few months have centered in the publication of the out-of-print books of Henry George, the promotion of a new book by Louis F. Post, the advertising of Henry George and his books in weeklies and newspapers, and the wide distribution of the pamphlet "Causes of Business Depression."

Finding the "Social Problems," "The Land Question, Etc." and "The Life of Henry George" by H. George, Jr., were the books most in demand at the present time, it was arranged with Doubleday, Doran & Company for a reprint edition of one thousand copies of each title. The edition, paid for by the Foundation, is now ready for distribution at the Foundation offices, 11 Park Place, New York. With attractive jackets, and uniform blue binding, these books should be especially interesting to both old friends of the movement, and those who, new to the teachings of Henry George, seek acquaintances with his ideas and philosophy.

It should be noted that the book "Land Question, Etc." contains besides the title work, the brilliant passage-at-arms between the Duke of Argyll and Henry George, entitled "Property in Land," and the letter of Henry George to Pope Leo XIII, entitled "Condition of Labor," wherein Henry George set out in masterly fashion the arguments previously developed in "Progress and Poverty."

The "Prophet of San Francisco," by Louis F. Post, published by Vanguard Press, has been marketed by the Foundation at a price somewhat less than that of the publisher, in accordance with a special arrangement between the publisher, the Foundation and Mrs. Post. Proceeds of purchases obtained by the Foundation through its direct-mail advertising of this book are returned to Mrs. Post. Some 2,500 professors and libraries were circularized, with the result that many libraries and schools purchased copies for their reference shelves. Some books remain unsold and those who have not had opportunity heretofore to purchase copies, may still obtain them by writing to the Foundation.

That timely essay, "Causes of Business Depression," first written by Henry George in 1894, and reprinted from time to time, was printed once again by this Foundation in August, 1930, and we are happy to announce that 61,000 copies have gone out into all sections of the country during the last few months. Indeed, friends in far off Australia have sent for copies; Congress has received a copy each; libraries, schools, colleges have used them, and we cannot tell in how many other advantageous places friends

of our cause have placed the words of Henry George.

It has long been the thought of members of the Foundation that persistent advertising, first in a small way and perhaps later, when funds are available, in larger ways and mediums, is the best means of obtaining the interest of new people in the philosophy of Henry George. To this end a small but persistent campaign has been kept up in the weeklies and liberal magazines, the reviews and certain more or less friendly newspapers. One advertisement tells about the pamphlet "Causes of Business Depression," and invites inquiries for the pamphlet. As a result some nine hundred persons have written into the Foundation for the essay by Henry George, and many of them have become seriously interested in George and his books. In another advertisement, we ask people to write in for information about Henry George and our booklist. This too bears fruit, as evidenced by the number of people who follow up the subject by asking for more material or for some of the Henry George books.

This kind of work is silent, steady and rather un spectacular, but we feel that the contacts that are being made, the horizons that are widening, are encouragement enough for us to go on in this endeavor to build up a group of newly interested and earnest students of Henry George.

—ANTOINETTE KAUFMANN.

Death Of George H. Sinton

GEORGE H. SINTON passed away September 15, 1930, at his home in Pasadena, California. He was born in Gowanda, N. Y., 1858 and went to Pasadena in 1917. Like his father, Jesse Sinton, he took up the cause when first advocated by Henry George.

George H. Sinton was what might be called a progressive conservative in his politico-economic views. Years of experience in the exacting retail milk business, both in developing the internal structure of the business and its relations to the public he served, had taught him that people are slow to change their views, because the pressure of present events must inevitably absorb the larger part of their intellectual capacity, and it is only what is left that can be devoted to the larger problems of governmental policies. Consequently he was firmly of the opinion that proposals to be placed before the public for its approval should be mild enough to avoid stirring up violent passions and unfounded fears of the unknown. During the struggle for the adoption of municipal Single Tax in Colorado Springs in 1912, he was opposed to the adoption of land value taxation for the city in but two steps to be completed in two years. Nevertheless, he acquiesced in the views of the majority, and supported the campaign to the best of his ability and purse, notwithstanding the fact that his business suffered the loss of many good customers among whom feeling ran high against what they considered our confiscatory proposition. The result is history. Wealthy people and others land-poor from over-speculation in lands