

published, one the "Single Tax Year Book," and the other a volume of his poems.

His shabby little office—about the size of a large closet—in a shabby old building was the mecca of Georgians from all parts of the world. Nor was the Single Tax the sole topic of conversation. He discussed politics and literature, of both of which he had an unusual grasp. And many a joke would he crack. It is not generally known that he also wrote for a number of humorous papers.

When Henry George's pen dropped from his life-less hand in 1897, Joseph Dana Miller picked it up and worthily wielded it until 1939. That some one half as worthy will use it is the fervent hope of the few remaining 1886-ers as well as of the numerous 1939-ers.

FREDERIC CYRUS LEUBUSCHER.

From Benjamin W. Burger

FIRST came within the ken of Joseph Dana Miller a quarter of a century ago. A few years later, we offered ourselves to the voters of New York City under the Georgeist banner. Joe was almost the last of that devoted group whose high privilege it was to know "The Prophet" in the flesh.

Our friend breathed serenity and charm. In his presence one felt lifted. To him the things of this world were of small moment. Paradoxically, he devoted his life to elucidating the laws which govern the distribution of wealth. He was gifted of tongue; he wrote with vigor and clarity.

Tragedy struck him at life's high tide. Of the beautiful English girl who won his love, he wrote:

"I never met a spirit more serene, nor one whose graces of person were matched by graces of character, and an undefinable flower-like essence which gave to her presence a subtle charm."

Alas, she was not destined long for this life. He penned these tender lines of her:

"Hersê, dear heart, to meet you once again,
Where comes not death nor pain,
And you the same sweet self, with frank brave eye,
That could not look a lie;
The laugh that rang its note of perfect mirth,
And now is done with earth;
Oh, but to meet you—once again to stand
And take your outstretched hand.
May I then hope—oh, light and radiance passed—
To greet you at the last?"

For himself, our friend sought neither fame nor fortune. Ever, he radiated sweetness and light. In high degree, he possessed the instinct and feeling of a poet.

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the World, 'This was a Man.'"

Little Known Phases and Facts in the Life and Work of Joseph Dana Miller

By JOS. HIRAM NEWMAN

TO record appreciation of a long, personal friendship with Joseph Dana Miller, is a complex task. Simply to refer to him as a gifted writer, thinker and philosopher, is most inadequate. He was the personification of intellectual honesty. In order to characterize him completely, it becomes requisite to consider his personal traits and habits. It has been said, and perhaps with truth, that one must eat, drink, sleep and play cards with a person before testimony of character can be offered. Application of this test with respect to Joseph Dana Miller, must conclude in evidence of true greatness. In a measure, this narration will offer some memories from my long association with him in order to enable others to know him, who were not similarly privileged.

THE SENSITIVE SIDE

His disposition in fortune and adversity was calm enough to be phlegmatic, with a temperament so even that few thought it possible for him ever to show the signs of wrath. Yet, he could readily be wrought up if anyone seriously attacked his sincerity. He was never known to press an idea as the one and only solution to a controversial question; therein lay a force which compelled an admiration for his opinions. He was, perhaps, one of the easiest of persons to get along with in gatherings. Whether at work or at play, he exuberated charm. On personal questions he was apt to be sensitive; his age was one such point. When the publishers of "Who's Who in America" decided that Mr. Miller was sufficiently important to have his name included, they requested him to furnish a biographical sketch, which he did. Because he was peculiarly sensitive about his age, he made no effort to correct the date of birth which they erroneously published as July 1, 1864. In reality that important event occurred in 1861. He died at the age of seventy-seven years.

As is so often the case in the lives of men and women who never married, Mr. Miller remained a bachelor because of an unfortunate occurrence in his youth. The lady of his affections whom he was to marry died before that event could take place. It is quite evident that no one else seemed to him qualified to fill the void; he never thereafter showed any serious interest in any other woman.

He was most fortunate, after the passing of his forebears, in the selection of people with whom to reside. He lived for many years with the Whites in Brooklyn, where he was regarded as a member of the family. Mrs. White, several years his senior, looked after his wants as would a mother. In her husband, Harry White, Joe had a real friend. To the children, Harry, Jr. and Grace,

Joe became an adopted uncle. When, because of the removal of the Whites from Brooklyn, Joe decided to return to the lair of his early boyhood in Jersey City, he again had a happy home with his old friends the Randalls.

The acclaim with which he was received by the old home town may be attested to by the appearance of a four-column, full-page spread in *The Jersey Journal* of July 7, 1936. It was in the form of a special article and interview by Mr. Edward H. Weidemann of that newspaper, reciting Joe's activities and affiliations. It was entitled, "Home from the Wars." The sub-title stated, "Joseph Dana Miller, Associate of Henry George and Life Long Battler for Tax Reform, Returns Here to Live." His likeness and his poem "Henry George, Prophet, Farewell," etc., were included. It was a noteworthy tribute to the man, in life to be thus accorded the pleasures of recognition, so often delayed until one's passing.

Thinking of Joe's sensitiveness, brings to mind an amusing incident. About thirty-five years ago the writer, accompanied by the late Jim McGregor and Wesley Barker, went with Joe to a revival meeting in Jersey City. We sat in the very last row and none of us were known. The evangelist, without apparent reason said, "You can't get into Heaven with a gold headed cane and gold-rimmed spectacles." These happened to be an essential part of Joe's attire. He turned to us and said, "Come on, let's get out of here." He told us afterward that he suspected one of us of playing a trick on him by tipping off the evangelist about the cane and spectacles, since we were all in the habit of playing innocent pranks on one another. Fortunately, our group was blessed with a sense of humor; each of us could "take it."

Joe's sense of humor was keen, his repartee was often delicious. Years ago he wrote an article on "Cats," which after numerous rejections was finally accepted by the old *Arena* magazine and rather liberally paid for, considering how greatly underpaid writers were in those days. A woman reader of the magazine wrote to Joe, as much as the space on a postcard would permit, that he knew nothing whatever about cats and did not know what he was talking about. When Joe displayed what he termed "a lot of diatribe and dribble on a postal," we suggested that he forget it and toss it in the waste basket. He disagreed with the advice, telling us he had already answered the lady. This is a copy of what he wrote her: "Dear Madam: Your postal was received. You are quite right. I do not know anything about cats, I merely write about them. Yours . . . etc."

Joe never pretended to be industrious, nor did he wish anyone to think that he loved work. He was a practitioner par-excellence of the theory which propounds the gain of an objective with the minimum of exertion. He was not in the least dynamic. No one ever succeeded in rushing Joe into the doing of anything. He would not permit himself to be hurried in eating, walking or even writing. He very much disliked to be called upon to

speak in public. Yet, whenever he was compelled to respond, his address was forceful and to the point. There have been occasions on which he delivered eloquent speeches, especially when his remarks dealt with the divinely inspired philosophy of Henry George.

OF HIS VISITORS

Solo meditations evolved the finest thoughts for his writing. He was, however, greatly disturbed by an almost constant stream of visitors. Like all radical movements, the Single Tax manages to attract a "lunatic fringe"; probably no more than our share, but, we shall likely always have them with us. Joe's office seemed to be the mecca to which they would flock with all their queer opinions and ideas to disturb his natural tranquillity. How he loved peace! But Joe, a good listener, rarely attempted to dissuade them from their delusions. A sound thinker, such as Joseph Dana Miller truly was is apt to lose patience with the emissions of the "hare-brained." But not so with Joe. His courtesy made it impossible for him to suggest their dismissal by an appearance of being busy. He rather felt that if he added no coals to their fires either by encouragement or discouragement, they would soon exhaust all their steam and so be on their way. This, fortunately, is what usually happened.

Upon their departure, Joe would sit and muse, and often was found with a broad smile on his face by one or more of his comrades-in-arms who would enter just in time to take him out of his new reverie. In might come John J. Murphy, whom Joe regarded most highly as an intellect and as a diplomat of the first water. Or Arthur C. Pleydell, worthy sire of Albert, now a director of the Schalkenbach Foundation. Arthur Pleydell, a clear and level-headed thinker, spent a great deal of his spare time in Joe's company. Gus Weymann, who was deservedly referred to as "The Philosopher," and Wesley Barker, most appropriately nick-named "Bunker Bean," were among the regulars, and wholly dependable as logical thinkers. Joe Fink and William Ryan must also be listed among the "steadys." With all of them, Joe could freely discuss any subject. Whenever sanctimonious-looking Jim McGregor would drift in, it would not be long before the fur would fly. Jim had a true understanding of our philosophy and was recognized as one of the most resourceful debaters in the movement at that time. His public encounters were always thoroughly relished. In private, just for the fun of it, Jim would be ready to take "the other side" of almost any question; even those who knew him well found it difficult to decide when Jim McGregor was entirely serious. However, this manner of discussion had the effect of sharpening the wits of participants and auditors alike. And let it be said, that to have been present was a pleasure and a privilege to be cherished by any seeker of the truth.

Another of Joe's comrades was the late Oscar H. Geige

oe Miller must be recorded as the very first person to truly encourage Oscar in his idea of founding a school to teach the philosophy of Henry George. And strangely enough, Joe was the only Single Taxer to immediately recognize the idea as an inspiration and a vision. Others referred to it as Oscar's brainstorm. However, there can be no one today, after the short span of only seven years, who would say that Oscar, and Joe, were wrong.

Joseph Dana Miller's sacrifices for the espousal of the Single Tax cause were of his own design. Not that he had anything of the martyr spirit within him; it was the work that he enjoyed most. Much the same was it with Oscar Geiger, in whose mind the idea of the school had been in formation for many years. The friendship between Joe Miller and Oscar Geiger was almost on a spiritual plane. They had a tremendously high regard for each other's opinions. Yet, both being thoroughly human, they could also readily descend to terra-firma.

AWAY FROM ECONOMICS

Before the years and their onerous duties bore down so heavily upon them, they often enjoyed recreational activities. Among these was a friendly game of cards. For years, one night a week, we rotated at one another's homes, to decide which of us had the greatest ability in the determination of the relative value of five cards. The "meetings" were held on Thursdays at the homes of the Whites, the Leppards, the Geigers, the VanVeens, and the narrator. August Weymann, now residing in California, was also a regular member of this "Thursday Night Club." We nearly always had a "guest," since even participants made it more interesting. Our guest generally became the chief contributor of the evening; it was the customary form of invitation. We never permitted the playing to become too serious; all cards were laid aside whenever one of the group had either a good story or words of wisdom to impart. The sessions ended, of course, with food and more talk. We had great respect for Joe's card sense and enjoyed his sagacity. It seems that he and "Mr. Bogardus" (just a character out of a book) were cronies. Bogardus maintained that the ability to correctly estimate the value of one's hand in a game of cards was of considerable aid in learning to form an appraisal of persons we meet in the course of our business and social contacts. Stuff such as this Joe would emit in one long breath.

But a game of cards was not his exclusive recreation. Joe delighted in playing pocket billiards with an amiable group. He and his three steadiest pals had an unusually wide range in ages. Jim McGregor, about ten years Joe's senior, had a wonderful eye for shots across the length of the table. The narrator, about twenty years Joe's senior, could boast of only one dependability, short draw shots. Gus Weymann, a fairly reliable player if he didn't scratch," was still younger and the baby of the group.

Joe was, by far, the best player of the lot, and because of that we teased him for every poor shot that he made. But Joe, undaunted, would say, "Don't forget that Herbert Spencer said 'one's ability to play an exceptionally good game of billiards is the unmistakable sign of a mis-spent youth'." Then he might add, "but I'm better than Spencer was."

It was an amiable foursome. The first question of the evening—always was "Where do we eat?" The answer invariably was, "I don't care, but I'm hungry." Whenever Joe suggested sea food or welsh rarebit, no one seriously objected, for they were his favorites. Especially the welsh rarebit, which he took great delight in preparing himself. He hotly defended his ability to make this dish, but never denied that he could be surpassed in it by Mrs. White.

The mention of welsh rarebit recalls an occasion on which our group entered an eating place which we had never patronized before. Joe's query, "How about a good welsh rarebit?" brought a nod of disapproval from our nice elderly waiter. The manager near by, noticing this, came over to our table. On learning what was wanted he said, "Yes sir, of course. I'll take your order." And off he went to the kitchen. When the dish was laid before Joe, the first taste told all. Just then the nice old waiter came over to our table, and Joe looked up dolefully and said, "truly a benefactor."

Though not an epicure, Joe ate heartily, until Vance Thompson brought out his book "Eat and Grow Thin." This book advocated a diet and Thompson's experiences therewith induced Joe to reduce his corpulence. After the prescribed period, with thirty odd pounds cast off, Joe's friends insisted that his changed appearance was unbecoming. Thus ended that experiment and he soon returned to his normal enjoyment of food.

His intimate friends always referred to him among themselves as "the poet." However, unlike most poets, he had no ear for music. There have been occasions, nevertheless, when in jovial mood, Joe would actually sing, but without much of a recognizable tune. In his own inimitable way he would sing, "Remember that many can always help one, where one cannot always help many." Even his singing was not without its philosophy.

Mr. Miller's political prognostications were uncanny in their accuracy. He was a keen observer of public affairs and was able to obtain an excellent cross-section of opinions through conversation. He was unusually well informed on current news, except in the last few years when he found it necessary to conserve his sight. To this may be attributed several of his recent inaccurate forecasts. He also delighted in picking the winners of important prize-fights, but advised all so inclined, to bet against his choice, since his selections were always wrong. He also obtained much pleasure in handicapping horses. On paper, the productivity of "one dollar properly

parlayed," would amass a small fortune. But in actual practice, the results were much different. So he gave preference to his "on paper" playing, deriving much the same satisfaction without the attendant hazards.

LITERARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A perusal of Mr. Miller's writings will show his appreciation of nature. However, in the last twenty-five years his outdoor pleasures were largely confined to annual summer vacations. These were regularly spent at Malden-on-Hudson, New York, at a rather modest hotel where most of the guests returned yearly. There, he made a number of friends that he looked forward to meeting each succeeding year. Poultney Bigelow, a permanent resident of the village, was one of his frequent companions. Much of the vacation period was devoted to reading. For a person whose scholastic education was limited, Mr. Miller's knowledge of the classics was astounding. He was a prodigious reader of all the philosophers and economists and had a vast amount of information on many unrelated subjects.

A word picture of Joseph Dana Miller, no matter how extensive, would be vague and incomplete without reference to his literary work. His versatility as a writer will very likely astonish even those who thought they knew him well. His range of subjects was extraordinary. Before going into that phase of his career, special mention should be made of two books which he looked upon as his most important works.

First and foremost, stood the "Single Tax Year Book" (466 pages) which was brought out in 1917. It was intended to be the first of a quinquennial issue, but no subsequent number was ever published. It is, however, today regarded as an important contribution to the extensive bibliography of the movement. Its purpose was to provide a handy source of information as to the progress of the Single Tax movement throughout the world. It is worthy to note that Mr. Miller stated in the preface that "controversial matter has been excluded," and goes on to say that, "while controversy is essential in order to arrive at correct conclusions, it is along the line of our agreements that we advance." Included in the work are special articles by leaders of the movement in foreign countries all over the globe. Mr. Miller was the author of more than twenty important articles and edited the entire contents. The fly-leaf, usually reserved for the copyright notice, bears the imprint "No rights reserved." This alone may be accepted, as positive proof, should it be required, of the sincerity of the Editor for the welfare of the movement. It is unquestionably a monumental work.

The second book of which Mr. Miller had just reason to be proud, was his "Thirty Years of Verse Making," a 220 page book, published in 1926, which was affectionately dedicated to his niece, Dorothy Elizabeth Miller

(Griffin). The entire issue was quickly taken up and is now out of print. It represents only a small part of his labor, at what he insisted, was only verse making; yet he was obliged to admit that, "here and there, it may be are lines which deserve to be remembered for a genuine poetic content" as he stated in his preface. Many of these verses were called forth by a passionate resentment against monopoly, the cries of discontent, and the uneasy striving of the masses. Others were inspired by personal regard for people, some by an appreciation of the bounties of nature, and again others by topical events. Practically all of them appeared in current magazines, and those which were still functioning gave permission to reprint them in the collection.

It is quite impossible, in a short article, to do justice to Mr. Miller's efforts in the field of authorship. The files of the *Standard* and *The Public* are replete with many able articles on economics. These will be left for future analysis by others more familiar with them than the present narrator. Rather, here, a listing will be presented to give the reader some idea of Mr. Miller's aforementioned versatility.

"THE DEVELOPMENT AND OFFICE OF THE NOVEL"—*Donahoe's Magazine*, April, 1896.

Tracing the successive stages of the novel from the legend, epic, biblical narratives and Miracle Plays, on to Sydney "Arcadia" and the satire of "Don Quixote" till we reach the novel as we know it today.

"THE DANA FAMILY"—*Munsey's Magazine*, Nov., 1896.

Included in a series entitled "Prominent American Families." The Dana family was noted for its prominence in almost every branch of political and intellectual life since early in the 17th century. A long list of Danas won fame as soldiers, statesmen, authors, scientists, journalists, jurists, and divine.

"THE SINGERS OF CANADA"—*Munsey's Magazine*, May, 1899.

Reciting the achievements and prospects of vocal artists which included Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, Charles G. D. Roberts and others.

"WOMEN AS ARCHITECTS"—*Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, June, 1900.

One of a series of "The American Woman in Action." Showing the accomplishments of the relatively few women practicing architecture and the obstacles to be overcome to remove the prejudice of their engagement in this profession.

"THE CELTIC RENAISSANCE"—*The Era Magazine*, Nov., 1900.

The movement in modern literature to which Renan was the first to call attention and which Matthew Arnold so luminously expounded.

"BUTTERFLIES"—*Outdoors Magazine*, June, 1902.

Some interesting and little known facts surrounding the study of the butterfly.

"THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE"—*The Era Magazine*, July, 1902.

An unprejudiced investigation of the progress of a new faith and how it has reached such a highly recognized standing throughout the world.

"MRS. ELLIS ROWAN"—*The Book World*, Nov., 1901.
The story of a distinguished English woman, who, aided by her adventurous travels in Queensland, Burmah, New Zealand, West Indies and the South Sea Islands, became the world's greatest painter of wild flowers.

"SILK CULTURE"—*The Book World*, Feb., 1901.
The traditional and historic story of silk as it was woven in China nearly 3,000 years before Christ.

"LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS"—*The Bookman, A Literary Journal*, Jan., 1898.
A history of the founding of many famous book institutions and those who headed them. Covers copiously the story of the beginning of the free public circulating libraries throughout the United States.

"THE SWISS ARMY"—*Metropolitan Magazine*, May, 1901.
Some startling facts about the remarkable military forces of the Swiss republic, which, by order of King Edward VII, was to be used as a model for the army of Great Britain.

"THE 'RIGHT HAND' OF CAPT. SEMMES"—*The Book World*, Aug., 1900.
On the passing of John McIntosh Kell, executive officer of the good ship Alabama, and a picturesque figure on the Southern side during the great American conflict.

"WOMEN ELOCUTIONISTS"—*National Magazine*, Nov., 1900.
Indicating the far greater progression of women in this field because they are better adapted to this work than men. Cites examples of the high attainments reached by Jennie Manheimer, Marion Short, May Perin, and many others.

"THE NEW WOMAN IN OFFICE"—*Goday's Magazine*, Jan., 1896.
Defending the woman who entertains unconventional ideas of womanly independence. The advance of women into the domain of politics and government.

"HANDWRITING AND HANDWRITING EXPERTS"—*National Magazine*, Jan., 1900.
An investigation of the many theories for the detection of forged documents. David M. Carvalho, Daniel T. Ames, Henry L. Tolman and many others, all experts, with their methods outlined.

"SOME FRATERNAL ORDERS OF THE U. S."—*The Peterson Magazine*, Jan., 1898.
The history and status of the greater and lesser organizations. Includes a discussion of the ingenious but baseless speculations which trace the origin of Freemasonry to Solomon and Noah.

"LAST SURVIVOR OF A GREAT CONGRESS"—*National Magazine*, March, 1902.
Andrew J. Harlan, member of the House of Representatives of the 31st Congress (1849) serving with such stalwarts as Alexander Stephens and Howell Cobb in the House, and Webster, Calhoun, Douglas and Houston in the Senate. A remarkable old man at the age of 87 years.

"FORGOTTEN BOOKS"—*Era Magazine*, Oct., 1901.
Names of books, which at the time of their appearance were on everybody's lips. Sylvester Judd's "Margaret," considered in the forties to be the best American novel. Melville's "Typee" and "Omoo," works which delighted Hawthorne and a host of others, brought to light from their obscurity and discussed for their merits.

"THE FAILURE OF POPULAR EDUCATION"—*Mind Magazine*, Sept, 1900.
Of education which fails to realize Matthew Arnold's ideal, of "sobriety and proportion" and turns out the kind of man who has no moral fixity, is deficient in his powers of observation and is limited in his intellectual purview.

"STYLE IS THE THOUGHT ITSELF"—*Mind Magazine*, Jan., 1899.
Writers who do not succeed in making themselves understood because they do not understand themselves. Spencer's shortcoming being an absence of imagination to guide him in his paths of investigation. The careless style in Allison's History deplored and the clearness of Douglas Stewart, Carlyle, Coleridge, Bunyan and Stevenson highly praised.

"APOSTLES OF AUTOLATRY"—*The Arena Magazine*, Dec., 1900.
The false conception of life and civilization as epitomized in the "Success" and "Thrift" stories set up by Samuel Smile and his American contemporary, Dr. O. S. Marden. Both exaggerating the importance attached to money. Deriding the preachments which must result in the negation of sacrifice and the denial of humanity. Such writers do not themselves suspect the infamy of inculcating self-worship.

There were a great many more articles which were published in the *Journal of American Politics* and in the magazines already named. Some also appeared in *Belford's* as far back as 1892. However, those left unidentified relate mainly to the dissemination of the Georgeist philosophy, as would be expected from the pen of Joseph Dana Miller. Nevertheless, specific mention should be made of one such article which provoked considerable discussion at the time of its publication. It was entitled "The Money Question" (*Donahoe's Magazine*, Nov., 1895) and dealt with the demand for the free and unlimited coinage of silver. Mr. Miller was opposed to the idea. He advanced arguments, to the great discomfiture of the pros, which were much more fundamentally sound than those of the cons of the free silver era. He laid greatest stress on the oft ignored point that the money question, per se, was a minor one in the adjustment of our economic enigma. Another angle of attack was the persistence of the fiat money heresy. Mr. R. W. Kane of Abilene, Kansas, who was one of the leading pros of the time and considered an authority, took exception to Mr. Miller's contentions. He addressed a long answer (about 3,000 words) to the editor of *Donahoe's Magazine*, who published it in the February issue, 1896. Then in the April number appeared a rejoinder from Mr. Miller, who, with less than one thousand words, veritably slew his antagonist. There was, however, appended to this last communication the following: "N. B. This correspondence will now cease.—Ed." Rather blunt, but likely necessary, to stem the volubility of the contenders.

These glimpses from a long friendship with Joseph Dana Miller will, I hope, enable others to better appreciate the alert mind and beloved, remarkable personality which will remain forever in the hearts of those who knew him well.