

# Let George Do It

IT is an unusual thing for a man to plan his own funeral service.

It is even more unusual for such a service to be held in a public hall at 7 o'clock in the evening without a clergyman to conduct it.

What kind of faith does a man live by in his lifetime that will lead him to such a thing? Or does this mean he has lived a long full life without any faith whatsoever?

It is ridiculous for anyone who knew George Duncan, who knew his day-to-day concern for people, to suggest that he lived without faith.

The fact that his faith was not associated with a church is not a challenge to formal religion, and not a threat to formal religion either. It is instead mute tribute to a belief upon which this nation is founded: the dignity and equal worth of an individual.

The big problem facing any of us who believe, as George Duncan did, in the land equity principle is how to express that faith and how to work for it.

Henry George, who was the spokesman for the deep conviction "Duncan the Druggist" shared, was called a single-taxer. The nation stuck that name on him more than 50 years ago and it has stayed.

It misses the point entirely. Henry George was a humanitarian who believed in God. He thought that all of us stand equal before God, and thus that when a child is born he or she inherits a share in God's earth and the fullness thereof. He believed, further, that each person is unique, that some people make more of their lives than others, and thus that any man is entitled to the fruits of his labor.

Henry George believed in private enterprise, in the justice of personal property, and saw evil in any law or

tax structure which robbed the individual of his rightful share in the earth and its fullness or of the fruits of his labor.

Henry George's philosophy is particularly important right now because it is the only answer to Marx and the hateful canker we know as communism.

The book he wrote is called *Progress and Poverty* and those are the things—not taxes—with which he was concerned.

What does a man who believes all this do about it?

Does he preach? Does he break down any opposition that stands in his way? Does he spite those who fail to understand the deep significance of it all? Does he lose his balance simply because his neighbors fail to understand him? Does he incite a riot and go down in history a madman?

No, he is patient about it, he has faith that if this naturally just society is God's law, then God will eventually give him a hand with it.

He simply does what he can in his own small way to contribute to the ultimate understanding of it.

All of mankind's big ideas have taken time. Freedom and equality are still on the anvil, after all. And the land equity principle is another step.

George Duncan was patient about it. He kept busy all his life helping people, helping to make jobs in Jaffrey, helping people to have their own homes, and providing electric power where it was not available.

He planned his own funeral as a way of telling us that above everything else he did in his life stood this faith in God, God's laws and our inherent right to a share in the earth on which we were born.

—Richard A. Noyes