

were holding it for higher prices. In San Francisco there were large areas in the heart of the city assessed at a low figure which could not be bought.

Henry George thought that if this land could be taxed at the rate fixed for the adjoining land on which buildings had been erected, not only would the revenues of the city be increased but the development of the land would be forced upon the owners. And so he evolved his theory that all taxes should be levied on land and that the State should absorb what is known as the unearned increment, that is, the increase in value due to the growth of population.

Without going into the merits of his theory, it must be admitted that some, if not all, of the evils which he sought to cure could have been cured by raising the assessment on the vacant land. This is what happens nowadays in most communities. And it is not at all uncommon to see a lot in an advantageous location in a city covered by a one or two story building of cheap construction known as a "tax carrier." The owners are not ready to put up a large building, and they carry the property from the rentals of the small one. And the city gets its revenue.

And in practice, too, the city gets the unearned increment. It does not get it in a lump sum, but it gets dividends on it every year. A Chestnut street corner that sold for \$50,000 twenty-five years ago may be sold today for \$5,000,000 and a building worth a similar amount put up on it. The city, instead of collecting a tax on \$50,000, collects a tax on \$5,000,000 plus the cost of the building, so that the unearned increment is in the nature of an investment on which a permanent dividend is paid into the City Treasury.

The greatest evil in land taxation lies in the inequality of assessments. Where ignorance or indifference does not cause this inequity, it is due to political favoritism. There is altogether too much of this sort of favoritism in Philadelphia. If it could be done away with, the provocation to advocate some different system of taxation would not be so great.

"THE people they left the land, the land,
But they went on working hard;
And the village green that had got mislaid
Turned up in the squire's back-yard:
But twenty men of us all got work
On a bit of his motor car;
And we all became, with the world's acclaim,
The marvelous mugs we are."

From G. K. CHESTERTON'S
"Ballad of St. Barbara and other Verses."

THE Secretariat of the International Union for Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade has by special request forwarded to the Danish Section of the League of Nations at Geneva, copies of the Union's publications, *The Certain Pathway to World Peace* and *Free Trade and World Peace*, with issues of *Land and Liberty* reporting the Copenhagen Conference and containing special articles on Free Trade.

A Son of Philadelphia Who Won the Attention of Many Nations

(From the *Philadelphia Bulletin*)

HENRY GEORGE, though born on South Tenth street near Lombard, spent only ten years of his boyhood and early youth in Philadelphia. The Single Tax Congress, which observed his eighty-seventh anniversary on Thursday by opening their sessions here, served as a reminder that the author of "Progress and Poverty" was a native son, and the acquisition of his childhood home in this city to become a permanent headquarters for propagating his ideas has just been announced.

When scarcely beyond boyhood he went to sea and made several voyages before he settled in California at eighteen. His family remained in this city, and his brother "Tom" was for many years associated with the United Gas Improvement Company in an important executive position.

But in the middle eighties and during the ten years preceding his sudden death at the crisis of his second campaign for Mayor of New York in 1897, Henry George was a frequent visitor here. Outside the range of his economic agitation, he had several warm friendships in Philadelphia. One of the most intimate was with John Russell Young, who had been Minister to China and accompanied General Grant in his tour around the world, but had now returned to his dearest love, journalism, as editor of the *Evening Star*. Many a time was "Henry" within the sacred portals of the Union League as the guest of "John."

Some of the older members would have been greatly perturbed if they had identified the quiet mannered man sitting on the terrace of a Sunday evening in friendly converse with an ex-diplomatist as the terrible agitator who had come there from addressing a meeting of the Anti-Poverty Society in the Broad Street Theatre, on the opposite side of the street. But had such a member been invited to join the little group, he would speedily have decided that Henry George, the man, was far different from the Radical he had imagined. He would probably have capitulated to the simple, unpretentious charm of one who was philosopher and economist more than an agitator.

A PERSONALITY TO COMMAND RESPECT

There was a decided contrast between Henry George in person and the grotesque misconception of him by people who had formed hasty opinions concerning his doctrines. He was under rather than over middle height. His head was well formed. His face, mobile, with its high forehead merging into the bald crown, was that of a thinker. His neatly trimmed beard was auburn, in which light silver streaks were beginning to show. His figure was somewhat stocky, yet full of action on the platform.

Henry George's voice was a baritone of exceedingly agreeable quality, and it carried through a large auditorium without effort. But once in talking with "John" about his oratorical experience, he confessed that he had felt the greatest strain in filling Ulster Hall, Belfast, which seated some 10,000 persons on one floor. He was a fluent speaker, never at a loss for a word, a phrase, an epigram. He was able to impart unlimited variety to his expositions of his main theme, the nationalization of the land by the incidence of all taxation on land values, irrespective of improvements.

He wanted the land to yield all the revenue required for every purpose of Government, national and local, and he visioned many of the broader institutions of today, not only hospitals and other charities, but parks, playgrounds, art galleries, libraries, and orchestras, as exclusively financed from this source. His readiness was demonstrated in his answers to the questions which he invited from the audience at the conclusion of every address. He took the heckler seriously, and if his answer sometimes carried a hard knock to the interlocutor, Henry George's grave courtesy was unflinching.

In those days the author of "Progress and Poverty" gathered around him a group of earnest young disciples in Philadelphia. Prominent among them was Frank Stephens, who is oftenest heard of nowadays in connection with the thriving Single Tax colony which he founded at Arden. Delaware was chosen for the experiment, because it was hoped that a small State might become the proving ground for Henry George's theories. But the deeply ingrained conservatism of the Diamond State stood in the way of this plan's being realized. After a generation, the settlement at Arden stands a model self-governing community, which is free from the queerness or extravagances that people mistakenly associated with it in its early years.

JOSEPH FELS PROVED A LOYAL BACKER

But the most important of his Philadelphia disciples was the late Joseph Fels, the manufacturer who was not only ardent in spreading the doctrines of the Single Tax but gave liberally of his time and energy and money for the cause, both in this country and overseas. He made many addresses in its advocacy in England and spent much money in settling the unemployed on land. For this purpose he purchased 1,300 acres at Hollesley Bay and 600 acres at Mayland, Essex. He had a London residence and was a member of the Taxation of Land Values Commission of London. He was active also in the promotion of his favorite cause in Germany, France, Denmark and Spain. Just before his death in this city in February, 1914, he was planning a trip to Argentina, where he hoped to establish a co-operative colony. He was one of the main supporters of Arden and established a Single Tax colony at Fairhope on Mobile Bay, Alabama. He founded a fund for the promotion of his ideas to which he annually made a \$25,000 contribution. The

Vacant Lots Association of this city knew him as a liberal supporter.

More obscure, but equally ardent, Single Taxers for years did propaganda work in this city. At the period before the war, when soap boxers used to be permitted to harangue such knots of listeners as they could collect on Sunday nights, the advocates of the Georgian theory were never wanting.

In the political movement in which some of the advocates of the cause have gone in recent years, Philadelphians have been prominent. Robert Macauley, of this city, was their candidate for President in 1920.

HENRY GEORGE WAS NEVER A SOCIALIST

Henry George insistently contradicted the impression which some of his opponents endeavored to broadcast, that he was a Socialist. His doctrines, he maintained, were the most individualistic that had ever been promulgated. To the question, "Then what do you want?" he replied. "We want the earth," meaning that the land on the earth's surface should be restored to the people for the benefit of mankind.

A small anecdote illustrates the economist's simple kindness in his domestic relations. One Sunday night, following a meeting of the Anti-Poverty Society at the Broad Street Theatre, he sauntered north, accompanied by one or two young friends. Just below Sansom street he stopped short and turned to his wife and daughter, who were following a few paces behind. "Jenny," he said in a voice of almost boyish eagerness, addressing Miss George, "do you remember where we are?" "Why, papa, of course; we are in Philadelphia." "Yes," pursued her father, "and what is Philadelphia famous for?" There was a touch of girlish roguishness in her tone as she replied, "I suppose it's famous because you were born here." "Now, now," he admonished, "don't flatter. Don't you remember something good to eat that comes from Philadelphia?" Miss George thought a moment and then ventured, "Ice Cream." Her father almost chortled. "That's it," he said, "Let's go and get some real Philadelphia ice cream now when we have a chance." And off they went to a nearby restaurant, where they feasted on the confection of a far better grade than was ordinarily procurable in those days in New York.

Henry George was not direct and matter of fact only in the family circle when it was a question of gratifying his simple tastes in edibles. In his autobiography, the late Henry M. Hyndman, for many years leader of the British orthodox or Marxian Socialist, tells of the embarrassment this trait of the American radical caused him.

Hyndman was a Cambridge University man of considerable means and large financial experience whose identification with the cause of the proletariat had made no difference in his habits, mode of life, or garb in which he affected distinctively the fashionable English gentleman. He even insisted on wearing top hat and frock coat on the soap box. When George came to England in 1882 in the full flush of

the fame which "Progress and Poverty" had brought him, Hyndman entertained him at his house for a month.

"His indifference to some of our English prejudices was at times rather annoying," writes his host. "On one occasion we were passing the top of Great Portland street, going home to lunch when George espied a barrow load of whelks at the corner being sold by the costermonger who owned them. 'I say, Hyndman' quoted George, 'I like the looks of those whelks.' 'All right,' said I, 'if you like them I'll have some sent in for you.' 'No,' was the answer, 'I like them here and now.' Expostulation was useless. So George consumed the whelks from the barrow while I, got up in the high hat and frock coat of non-whelk-eating-at-the-corner civilization, stood by and saw him do it. I never see a whelk stall at a street corner to this day but I feel inclined to bolt off in another direction."

NOTABLE CAREER IN ENGLAND

Hyndman's interest in George, as he admits himself, lay in the belief that he would prove an easy convert to Socialism, but he was soon disillusioned. "It was useless," he writes, "to be angry with him or to press him too hard, for then he only went off to some of his devoted Single Tax worshippers, from whom he returned more single tax than ever. However, I believe I may take some of the credit of inducing him to write his 'Social Problems,' a book which, though it never attained anything approaching the popularity of his early work, showed that he was beginning to understand that in our complicated modern society man cannot live by land alone."

In the end Hyndman sat George down as "in his way a sort of intellectual Anarchist" and denied him possession of a first rate intellect, although admitting he was honest, sympathetic, well-meaning, humorous, good natured, in short, a good fellow and a delightful personality. George's religious feeling astonished the Briton.

"The religious turn of his thought I never fully comprehended," he says, "until I was debating with him, with Mr. Henry Labouchere as chairman, at the old St. James' Club Hall. Then his arched bald head rose up like an apse at the other side of the table and I saw that the bump of reverence was of cathedral proportions."

The furore made over George in England proved very disturbing to conservative minds who visioned an approaching end of the British land system. How seriously the menace was taken can be seen by the long article in the *Quarterly Review* in which the late W. H. Mallock, then at the beginning of his career as a staunch defender of the established social order, sought to refute the reasoning of "Progress and Poverty."

But George's ideas have made some progress abroad, although he himself did not live to see London adopting his ideas in a modified form by taxing land values without regard to improvements; New Zealand and parts of Australia applying the Single Tax; nationalization of the coal

mines recommended to Parliament by two Royal Commissions in Great Britain, and David Lloyd George promulgating a land policy which can scarcely be distinguished in principle from that set forth by his American namesake.

What Proportional Representation Offers For the Single Tax Movement

(Address of George H. Hallett, Jr., Secretary Proportional Representation League, at the Henry George Congress, Sept. 3.)

I AM speaking this afternoon as a member of the Henry George Foundation. There are many believers in proportional representation who are not believers in Single Tax, but I personally am working for "P. R." because of what it can do for this and other fundamental reforms.

We have listened to cheering evidence of the spread of Henry George's ideals and heard many suggestions for spreading them more effectively in the future. That brings us to the very practical question, How shall we make those ideals take form in actual legislation? How shall we get full representation for the Single Tax sentiment that has been created, so that it may have its full weight whenever our law-making bodies consider the raising of revenues?

Most of our law-making bodies are controlled by political machines. Can we hope to persuade those machines to espouse our programme? If our programme were less fundamental, perhaps we could. The machines are on the lookout for ways to win the favor of even small groups, and many an idea with less following than Single Tax they have enacted into law. But Single Tax strikes at the root of the special privilege whose political instruments they are. Whatever else they may surrender, they will not surrender that.

We must beat the machines. How? Suppose first that we organize a new party. Our difficulties begin with the platform. If we confine it to the Single Tax, we lose those who want a platform more inclusive. If we make it more inclusive, we divide our ranks by the other things we put in.

Suppose that we do get a platform on which all Single Taxers agree. Still we cannot get all Single Taxers to vote for it. For many who would favor the taking of the full rental value of land give their first allegiance to one of the established parties, say the Democratic or the Socialist. And many, many others think a vote for a new party would be just thrown away.

You all remember the campaign of 1912, when the Progressives overwhelmed the G. O. P. so that you had to look for its presidential electors with a microscope. The Progressives didn't elect Progressives, they elected Democrats, whom many of them wanted least of all. A new party may have its educational value, but our prospects of electing members by it are not bright.