

f those willing to work cannot find employment. Private ownership of land—which by all the laws of God and right should belong to all—is alone the reason why innumerable people live in want and misery. Our “culture,” which stands so high in the branches of physical science and technical knowledge, but in regard to economics is still in the infant school, is leading us towards an ugly state of chaos.

But the Edinburgh Conference will probably express itself very emphatically in regard to another point of the utmost importance, viz.: The fact that the origin of the horrible war of our time was closely allied to the land question. Land monopoly led to unemployment and to the present misery of the masses, and this to a desperate economic struggle which, in its turn, resulted in higher protective tariffs. In this way a poisonous atmosphere was created between the nations; the one regarding with envy the rich storehouses of the other—its mineral and coal fields, its petroleum wells, its potash deposits, and so on—and simply waiting for an opportunity to obtain possession of them for itself. These tendencies were increased by the short-sighted and false egoism of the countries that think of themselves only, and believe that if they segregate themselves by high tariffs they will enrich themselves at the cost of other countries. If the sources of supply were not in private hands, but belonged to the community, it would be much easier for countries to come to an agreement as to the quantity of raw material needed by them, and the present inflammatory conditions would be eliminated from the world. *Videant consules*

New York's Prize Essay Contest

THE Prize Essay Contest in the New York City high schools on the subject of “Economic Law as Expounded by Henry George” conducted this Spring under the auspices of the Board of Education resulted in the submission of more than fifteen hundred essays from the pupils of twenty-three high schools. On Graduation Day representatives of Dr. Mary D. Hussey Prize Fund distributed the prizes to sixteen students. Details of this contest will be given in our next issue.

IN the ancient city of Nuzi in Mesopotamia, 1500 B. C. we are told it was against the law to sell land. This law was intended to prevent the ownership of large areas of land by single individuals. It is curious to read that some Nuzian attorney figured out a way to get around the statutes. Land could be transferred from one relative to another, but it could not change hands, so people who wanted to own land had themselves legally adopted by people who had it!

FARM relief already includes the creation of eight new Federal jobs.—*Dallas News*.

Henry George and Adam Smith

ELBERT HUBBARD, in his “Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Reformers,” tells how Henry George, at the age of twenty-one, then a compositor in San Francisco, lodged at the best hotel there, owned by a man named Woodward, who was considered eccentric. No woman was allowed to stop there or work in it; the hotel was run on absolutely temperance principles; and the third thing was, and it was for this George consented to pay the high charges, there was a fine library of a thousand volumes—the only public library at that time in San Francisco.

While Henry George was staying at the “What Cheer House,” an English traveler added a volume to the little library—“Buckle’s History of Civilization.” Woodward tried to read the book, but failing to become interested in it, handed it to a waiter, saying, “Here, give it to that red-hair printer; he can get something out of it, if anybody can.”

Henry George took the book to his room, and that night sat reading it until two o’clock in the morning. That statement of Buckle’s, “Adam Smith’s ‘Wealth of Nations’ has influenced civilization more profoundly than any book ever written, save none,” caught the young printer’s attention.

The next day he looked in the library for the “Wealth of Nations,” and sure enough, it was there! He began to read. He read and re-read. And whether Buckle’s statement is correct or not, this holds: Adam Smith’s “Wealth of Nations” influenced Henry George more profoundly than any book he ever read.

This is the 50th year of the publication of “Progress and Poverty.” George had submitted the MS. to Appleton’s, who consented to publish it if he would supply the money for the typesetting and making of the electro-plates therefrom. George could not afford this, so he diligently started to do his own type-setting, working an hour in the morning and two hours at night. On account of his eloquence, he was often asked to speak at public functions. On the occasion of the funeral of a certain tramp printer, Henry George officiated, and preached a sermon which rang through San Francisco like a trumpet call, extolling not what the man was, but what he might have been. This may explain why a genial electro-typer offered to help with the electro-plates for “Progress and Poverty,” on the condition that Henry George would give a funeral oration over his grave at the proper time and place. George agreed to this cheerful arrangement, so the work went merrily on, and the plates were shipped to New York early in 1880.

—*Progress*, Melbourne, Aus.

IN the seventeenth century no one in Rome was permitted to hold vacant land if not improved within a reasonable time. This was by papal decree.