

The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation Report

AUGUST, usually a dull spot on the business calendar, proved a lively one for us. Important library work was done, including a donation of books to a new special collection at the University of Pennsylvania.

The laurel wreath goes to our friend Professor Harry Gunnison Brown. He is assigning certain chapters of "Protection or Free Trade" to his class in General Economics this semester, and with his assistance we sold forty-five books to the University of Missouri Library.

New upon our shelves is "A Perplexed Philosopher" by Henry George, being the author's famous examination of Herbert Spencer's recantation of his earlier declarations on the land question. This is the 1937 edition just published by the Henry George Foundation of Great Britain. It is 241 pages, carefully indexed, bound in the familiar bright red cloth of the English publications. Not having convinced the customs house officials on the tariff question, duty proved quite an item in figuring the price of this book, but we have fixed it at seventy-five cents a copy postpaid.

By special arrangement with the Macmillan Company, we have taken over a large consignment of "The Theory of the Land Question" by George Raymond Geiger, author of "The Philosophy of Henry George." In the year since its publication the book has found a ready sale at two dollars, but we shall pass on the advantages of our bargain with the publisher by offering it from now on at one dollar a copy postpaid. It is beautifully bound, printed on a fine grade of paper. It has chapters on "The Meaning of the Land Question," "Land and Capital," "Historical Aspects of the Land Question," and "Socialization of Land Through Taxation."

It is a year now since we mourned the passing of Charles O'Connor Hennessy. In that time we have bent our efforts toward the accomplishment of his last request of a Georgeist organization. At the International Conference in London, Mr. Hennessy was impressed by two representatives of the Kingdom of Holland who told him of their ambition to start classes in their country similar to those studying "Progress and Poverty" so successfully here. Their great handicap, they said, was that the Dutch translation of "Progress and Poverty" was not only a poor translation of George's message, but had practically passed out of print. They wanted to employ a competent translator to produce the text of the book in their language and make it available at a low price. To this end they sought financial aid. Upon his return, Mr. Hennessy expressed the hope that this Foundation might sponsor a new translation of "Progress and Poverty" into the Dutch tongue. Now the book is actually in the process of being printed. It was made

possible by the generosity of Mrs. deMille and others, with the help of the Henry George School of Social Science, and a substantial donation from our own treasury.

Aware of the difficulties of the Henry George School of Social Science in obtaining adequate locations for their extension classes this autumn, our trustees have volunteered one of our offices for a class commencing October 5. It will be known as "The Downtown Class," and we are recruiting our students from among the business people in the district who might otherwise find it impossible to fit a ten-week course into their busy schedules. The enrollments already received promise an interesting group of students. We shall have more to tell about this in the next issue of LAND AND FREEDOM.

V. G. PETERSON, Acting Secretary.

The California Campaign

THE California campaign is opening. After many months of study, consultation and communication with good friends in and out of the state, plus earnest consideration by the State Legislative Counsel, we have about finished the preparation of the new measure which will be submitted to the people a year from the present time.

In brief we may say, discarding many important provisions not fundamental in their nature, that the proposition will involve the repeal of the sales tax to date from the end of the then current fiscal year, and with the new year there will be the immediate wiping out of \$1,000.00 of the assessed improvement values of homes, plus a 10 per cent reduction in the rate of taxation on improvements and tangible personal property below that charged upon land values. Yearly thereafter, and at the rate of 10 per cent per annum, the remaining taxation on improvements and tangible personal property will be eliminated. The result will be, that immediately not less than \$50,000,000 now collected through the sales tax will be transferred to a property tax, while the exemption of home improvements will affect between 5 and 10 per cent additional of the entire state taxation. Therefore, probably between 40 and 50 per cent of the entire reform contemplated by the measure will be accomplished in the first year. At the end of the ninth year,—for the tenth year will commence with no tax upon them—improvements and tangible personal property will pay no charge to the government.

The result in a general way may be said to be this: At the present time in the neighborhood of 20 to 25 per cent of the rental values are paid in taxes. When the reform goes into full effect we may anticipate, broadly speaking, 60 to 65 per cent will be so paid. This, of course, will represent a tremendous advance, one which has not been made up to the present time in any jurisdiction in this country or abroad.

The present amendment is a notable improvement over the one which was ruled off the ballot by the Supreme Court of the state. Our campaign, up to the time of such exclusion, developed very fully many details of the misrepresentations which will be made by the opposition. We have availed ourselves of this knowledge at many points and have so worded the amendment as to make clear their want of foundation.

During the past week the State Federation of Labor has been meeting in convention at Long Beach. This body had before it a resolution reading as follows:

"Whereas, For the past four years the State has suffered from the imposition of a sales tax falling with particular severity upon the less fortunate members of society; and

Whereas, For many years Labor has been hampered in its progress, men thrown and kept out of work, monopoly fostered, privilege ex-

alted by a tax upon improvements and tangible personal property; and

Whereas, Through the imposition of the sales tax and tax upon improvements and tangible property prices of necessities have been advanced and rents are advancing; and

Whereas, the last four sessions of the California State Federation of Labor have denounced these conditions and unanimously pledged all proper efforts towards their elimination through the adoption of an appropriate constitutional amendment; and

Whereas, Such an amendment was improperly struck off the ballot by the Supreme Court last year, and such act was condemned by this convention a year ago in Sacramento at the same time reaffirming the intention of the Convention to keep the issue before the people of the State at the earliest possible moment; and

Whereas, A like amendment will be submitted to the voters of the State at the coming general election; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we reiterate our position heretofore taken on the subject and pledge our support to the abolition of the sales tax and of the taxation on improvements and tangible personal property and transfer of taxation now resting upon them to land values as contemplated by the amendment, and we further request and direct the Executive Council to do all in its power to bring about the success of the pending constitutional amendment."

The resolution was introduced by Mr. Buzzell, Secretary of the Los Angeles Labor Council, reported favorably by the Resolutions Committee and adopted by the convention of more than 900 delegates unanimously. This action was taken understandingly by every man and woman for the printed proceeding showing the introduction of the resolution and its tenor was in the hands of every member for nearly three days before the final action of the body.

The importance of the resolution may be measured in large degree by the fact that the State Federation has increased in numbers over 100,000 within the past twelve months and now includes about 250,000 of the voters of the state. Of course, in addition to this number we have heretofore secured the indorsement of the Railroad Brotherhoods with their many thousands of members, and have no reason to doubt that the C.I.O. organization will fail to take the same general course.

We note with pleasure the fact the the new State Federation president is Cornelius J. Haggerty of Los Angeles, whose name has been upon our letterheads from the beginning, and of whose activity and earnest support we are assured. The same is true as to the State Secretary, Edward Vandeleur, while the remaining members of the State Executive Board are pronouncedly friends of the undertaking.

Having arrived, as stated above, about to the end of the work on the new proposition, we shall, within a few days, submit it to the attorney-general of the state for the summary which he is required to make of every measure submitted under the initiative, and which summary appears at the top of all petitions. Upon the completion of this work by him, we will begin the circulation of the petitions.

I have heretofore noted in your columns the change which was made by the legislature as to the sub-title in twenty words, which formerly was a requisite. Under the new law, at the top of every page bearing signatures will appear a repetition of the attorney-general's summary. We will no longer be subjected to the construction or misconstruction of a twenty word statement of the measure, the exercise of which power threw us off the ballot a year ago. This operation cannot be repeated.

Immediate important work will be the procurement of 187,000 valid signatures to the new petition. This work is gigantic, but there is no reason to anticipate any failure on our part, in securing the needed signatures. This is something we can set down as settled.

That we are entering upon a bitter campaign may not be doubted. The forces opposing us are thoroughly aware of their danger, the question being once presented, as we are presenting it, before the entire voting population of the state. Only a couple of days ago in Los Angeles a friend was called up and asked to contribute \$250 to a fund being raised by the Chamber of Commerce to prevent the ruin which the sponsor represented would come to the state if our proposition were to prevail. His appeal failed of its purpose in this instance,

but the money to be raised against us may well run into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

A week or two ago, without definite knowledge of what our proposition would be, the Real Estate Boards of the state declared opposition to any such measure as anticipated would be proposed at the next general election. So the opposition is awake, and so, on the other hand, should all our friends throughout the United States be awakened to the situation; they should recognize the fact that this contest may well represent the turning point in the progress of our movement.

Our friends believed and opponents manifestly feared that had our measure gone to the poles a year ago we would have met success. There are reasons to believe that our position today is stronger than then and that we are justified in anticipating success despite the tremendous forces opposing us.—JACKSON H. RALSTON.

The Henry George Congress in Detroit

THE Twelfth Henry George Congress will be held at the Hotel Statler in Detroit on October 14, 15 and 16. It will be memorable in that, for the first time, an attempt will be made to form a permanent organization that shall be nation-wide. Mr. A. Laurence Smith, 2460 East Grand Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan, will be the chairman. He is giving his time and earnest effort to make this gathering worthy of the occasion and has ideas of his own which he will present to the Congress for far-reaching plans for the future.

We are unable to announce at this time the probable attendance from this city and adjacent points, but quite a number are preparing to attend.

We append the tentative programme which is as follows:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 9:00 A. M. Registration.
- 10:00 A. M. Address of Welcome.
Response: Hon. George E. Evans, Pittsburgh, Pa.
President, Henry George Foundation of America.
Address: Aim of this Convention, Henry C. L. Forler, Detroit, Mich.
- 12:30 Luncheon.
- 2:00 P. M. Chairman: Mrs. Anna George deMille, New York, N. Y.
Progress Report—The Henry George School of Social Science.
Speakers: Frank Chodorov, New York, N. Y., Business Manager, H. G. S. S. S.
Discussion: Plans to Promote the School Activities.
- 8:00 P. M. Chairman: Dr. A. G. Studer, Detroit, Mich., General Secretary, Detroit Y. M. C. A.
Subject: Slums, Housing and the Single Tax.
Subject: Unemployment and the Single Tax. David Gibson, Cleveland, Ohio.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 10:00 A. M. Chairman: Edward White, Kansas City, Missouri.
Subject: Declaration of Principles.
Subject: The Aim of Single Taxers. Warren S. Blauvelt, Troy, New York.
Subject: Coordination of Ideas. Gilbert M. Tucker, Albany, N. Y.