

NEW YORK'S PROBLEM OF POVERTY

NEW YORK papers in recent weeks have been acclaiming the activities of the State Charities Aid Association on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of that organization. Their praise is well deserved.

It was in 1871 that Miss Louisa Lee Schuyler discovered paupers, sixty children among them, prostitutes, the insane, the ill and the crippled, crowded together in a single poorhouse, with no care or nursing save that furnished by the kindlier inmates. Horrified, Miss Schuyler organized a committee to do what it could to alleviate such unspeakable conditions.

For more than seventy years this expanding organization has done such notable work among the ill and needy as to give it a place of national leadership in the field of public health and welfare. The accolades now being bestowed are abundantly merited.

But what of the other side of the picture? Even seventy years ago New York was the richest state in the union. Why, then, such deep poverty? And why, to this very day, though the intervening years have witnessed an amazing advance in man's knowledge of how to produce wealth, is there still pressing need for such an organization as the State Charities Aid Association?

Georgists, of course, know the answers. They know that insanity, prostitution, dis-

ease and crime spring largely from poverty, and that poverty arises when men are denied access to the land on which and from which all men must live. Georgists believe—nay, they know—that the good God made the earth for all of His children and not just a favored few.

They know that when men have free access to the land there can be no widespread unemployment, and that when there is no unemployment there is no poverty, and when there is no poverty, a large part of crime and disease will have disappeared. They are profoundly convinced that when the institution of absolute private property in land can be wiped out, and complete free trade established, the world will be a vastly better place to live in.

Georgists found these answers in Henry George's great work, "Progress and Poverty", given to the world in 1879. What a pity the State Charities Aid Association, then in its eighth year, could not have devoted a part of the activities now being so justly extolled to spreading the knowledge and understanding of Henry George's social philosophy of progress through freedom. Had it done so, it would have found its task of alleviating poverty, disease and crime, vastly speeded up.

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