

hand they are trying to reduce crime by making a more humane approach to the problem of punishment; on the other hand they institute a controlled economy which, with its many restrictions, must inevitably increase the indictable offences, since government departments have almost unlimited power to issue regulations, and government orders must, to be effective, carry a penalty if disobeyed. In fact, in these "do as you're told" days we can never be sure that we are not committing a crime of some sort, and with all hopes of free trade rapidly receding in the face of bulk buying and bi-lateral trading, customs and currency offences will naturally not disappear, but are more likely to increase.

Much public indignation has been aroused at the increasing number of cases of parents neglecting their children, but surely to punish people for not maintaining conditions which are quite impossible to them economically, is irresponsible, to say the least. It is simply making the victims of poverty pay for their own sorry plight, without giving them an opportunity to raise themselves above it.

Lack of housing accommodation is a primary cause of bad living conditions through overcrowding, and the tribunals which are set up to prevent exploitation are merely aggravating the position, as rents have risen through the housing shortage, under the natural laws of supply and demand.

The reconstruction of large houses into flats is frustrated by the Development Charge which would be imposed on the owner for a change of use from a private dwelling. So here again, we have the government on the one hand forcibly restricting rents, while on the other preventing a natural tendency for rents to fall as more accommodation becomes available.

This interference of government in order to ameliorate these seeming injustices as they arise is tampering with natural laws; the result is that for every problem that they think they have solved another will appear elsewhere.

No basic injustice can ever be cured by dealing with effects. Not until we have a free and just society with full individual freedom, and the rent of land shared equally by the community will crime and punishment cease to be a major problem.

## From Student to Tutor

By Peter Stubbings

The moment the simple relationship between rent, wages and interest is recognised, says Henry George early in *Progress and Poverty*, "a flood of light streams in upon what was before inexplicable, and seemingly discordant facts range themselves under an obvious law." Certainly that was my experience. George's proposals to restore to the community that value which the community alone created was readily accepted as just, practical and desirable once the hurdle of the Law of Rent had been safely left behind. When the ten-week Basic Course was finished and *Progress and Poverty* had been read from cover to cover, I went away from the School convinced that Henry George had hit the nail fairly and squarely on the head, and believing it to be necessary to tax land values.

During the weeks that followed, George more and more claimed my attention; I tested his assertions in my mind, seeking without success some flaw in his argument, and tried to visualise conditions in a society which took the full value of land into its Exchequer. One by one

I relinquished long held political beliefs; increasingly I found myself able to detect the false assumptions upon which political actions and promises were based, and I watched with interest others fall into the very same pitfalls from which Henry George had rescued me so recently. Suddenly, I realised that I was irrevocably and unalterably a Georgeist and that I had found a faith to live and to work for.

It was at very short notice that I took my first class. I had not had the benefit of attending one of the Tutors' Classes held from time to time and I had little experience of the art of giving instruction. Honesty, I decided, was the best policy and so I told my class that I am neither a schoolmaster nor an economist. For these deficiencies I apologised, but explained that my job was more that of a Chairman than a tutor. The policy of the Henry George School is to help people to find out for themselves the really simple laws which govern the production and distribution of wealth. As far as possible the thinking and talking should be done by the students. A point which may puzzle one student can often be explained by another in the class. Occasionally, undue attention to some minor point, or the introduction of a fallacy or irrelevancy necessitates intervention by the tutor. Questions do not have to be answered exactly in George's phraseology or in strict accordance with the answers in the Teachers' Manual and occasional disagreement, provided it is not fundamental, may be safely ignored.

The series of questions entitled "What do they mean to you?" which are used as an introduction at the first meeting are invaluable. They afford everybody an opportunity to speak, for no prior knowledge of economics is necessary to express an opinion on whether a wild duck flying in the sky is or is not wealth. The questions act as an aperitif which whets the appetite for what is to follow and demonstrate that economics is concerned with everyday things which affect everyone of us. If the tutor addresses each member of the class by name in turn and asks him or her whether a particular object is or is not wealth or capital, whether a coal miner and a small retailer are both labourers, students soon learn each other's names and become better acquainted, the team-spirit is born and the class becomes familiar with the "question-discussion-answer" method of tuition employed throughout all the classes conducted by the School. Inevitably there is disagreement between students—the more the better from the tutor's point of view—and this serves to illustrate the need for clear cut and agreed definitions.

The introduction of the terms used is the tutor's first important duty. He must make it clear that they are merely "labels" used to differentiate between ideas. The idea precedes the definition. The definition exists merely to confine the idea and to avoid ambiguity and false reasoning. The tutor should illustrate on the blackboard the factors of production and the avenues of distribution and must satisfy himself that every member of the class is thoroughly conversant with the terms used.

The moment the Law of Rent is understood one is amazed that a law so simple and self-evident should have been unknown to, and unsuspected by one for so long, yet to many students this simple law is a very real stumbling block. The blackboard demonstration may require all the patience and skill the tutor can command, but once the law and its corollaries are understood by the class the tutor's task is "child's play." Interest is thoroughly aroused and enthusiasm grows. It is an

exciting and deeply satisfying moment for the tutor when he senses that in his class are people who are slowly but surely agreeing with George's teachings, people who a few weeks or months hence will be working in some way to spread the ideas to which he has dedicated himself.

Where the tutor has the misfortune to have a deliberately awkward student who tries to trip him up with catch questions he is able to pass the question back to the class and ask the other students what they think of it. This not only gives the tutor a breathing space in which to consider the question but affords the class the opportunity which it will not fail to take of putting the awkward customer in his place.

From every class first hand examples are quoted by students which support George's argument. While we were dealing with the effects of speculative rent a lady who came from Weybridge told how land there had recently rocketed up to from £200 to £800 per acre because it was to be used for factory sites. Another person spoke of the Digger movement and some other student told the class that during the last depression Lord Nuffield had given land in Northumberland for allotments from which unemployed miners were able to achieve a higher standard of living than that afforded by the "dole." One of the students who had been employed by an advertising agency before the war told how he had hired a site by a third-class road for an advertisement hoarding a rent of £5 per year. When the road was broadened and re-surfaced so that more traffic passed by, his firm had to pay £50 for the same site. The community had paid rates for road development and the private landowner reaped the benefit. As a tutor I have made a special point of reminding students of these examples which they have quoted. The student is thus made to feel that he is playing a useful part in the class's investigation and every example from the class is worth a half dozen from the tutor. To develop and illustrate the various points which from experience the tutor may expect to arise he should keep a file of cuttings from the newspapers and LAND & LIBERTY.

In conclusion, let me say this. There is no reason why any Georgeist should fail to make a good tutor. With thorough preparation before the class, patience and using the excellent Teachers' Manual, it is plain sailing. By presiding over a class the tutor becomes thoroughly acquainted with every detail of George's theories and learns far more than he teaches. The work is of vital importance to our movement and deeply satisfying and rewarding to those who undertake it. A great untapped reservoir of potential Georgeists is waiting—quite unconsciously—to receive the stimulating message of hope which George's philosophy and economic teachings offer. Clearly we cannot expect more than a handful of them to seek us out, neither is 4 Great Smith Street large enough to handle such great numbers. We must go out to them. Some of you may attract them by articles and letters to the Press or by public speaking, some may be able to influence friends during private conversation and by correspondence while others will work through their trade unions and other organisation. Above all, more tutors must go out from the School.

*(Pressure on space has required some abridgment of the foregoing paper. The two other ten-minute papers by E. I. Miller and by L. H. Hubbard, read on the same occasion, are held over for report in our next issue.)*

## REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

To the Editor, LAND & LIBERTY.

Sir,

Certainly the Labour Party is in power on a minority vote. So has been every single-party government since 1918, and so is the South African Government, in spite of party pacts which prevented the election of even one Member on a "split vote." There is a majority of votes against Socialism; there is a larger majority of votes against Conservatism; what there is a majority for is a matter for intelligent guessing.

Our elections do not show with any certainty what the voters want—let alone secure that they get it—because (a) the voters' choice is extremely limited; (b) even within that limited field they do not always vote for the candidate they really prefer; and (c) the resulting Parliament does not usually reflect at all accurately even the votes actually cast.

All this can be put right by proportional representation by the single transferable vote. All we need is to elect for example the three members for Oxfordshire or the six for Bristol all together, and to vote by numbering the candidates 1, 2, 3, and so on in the order of our choice—those numbers being an instruction to the Returning Officer that if our vote cannot be used to elect our "1" candidate (either because he already has so many votes that he is elected without it, or because he has so few that he has no hope of election) it is not to be wasted but is to be passed on to our "2" candidate, and further if necessary, until it reaches a candidate it can help to elect.

It would then become possible, for example, for a Henry Georgeist to vote "1" for a Liberal candidate who is an enthusiast in their cause, "2" for a Liberal whose response is satisfactory and (omitting another Liberal who is unfriendly) "3" for a Labour or Conservative candidate who shows signs of taking the right line in opposition to his party. We need have no fear of "wasting" our vote even if our favourite candidate gets no other vote at all; and, as the great majority of votes cast become effective, the result must reflect the wishes of the great majority of voters.

Opposition to this system comes from the vested interests of the two big-party machines.

It was reported that the Conservative Party's Executive at the April meeting of the Central Conservative Council secured the withdrawal of an anti-P.R. resolution, but that bears a very different interpretation when we remember that this withdrawal served to prevent discussion on an amendment backing up Mr. Churchill's demand for an enquiry. Even if that amendment had not been carried discussion on it would have exposed to the Conference the unscrupulous methods used by the party machine to preserve an indefensible system—for instance, the way it allows its speakers to base their arguments on French instability, concealing from them the fact that France never used any form of P.R. until 1945 and does not now use the single transferable vote.

Yours, etc., ENID LAKEMAN.

## LIBERAL REVIVAL ?

From a correspondent, "Physion," who was himself on the spot, we have the following report and comment:—

"The Council of the London Liberal Party at its meeting on June 5 passed a resolution demanding as 'primary policy' for the Party a system of Land Value Taxation, Free Trade and Co-partnership in Industry.

"The reference to Co-partnership in Industry was not in the original motion and it is unfortunate that the mover accepted the amendment to include it. He was swayed by the confusions and contradictions that possess the average political Liberal mind. Apart from the fact that the *compulsion* which is the feature of the official 'co-partnership' scheme is contrary to liberal principles, it should be obvious to any understanding person that the liberation which would come by Land Value Taxation and Free Trade would realise the spontaneous co-operation of labour and capital and their harmonious association. Each would have its full and therefore just reward without need for coercive legislation or political pressure.