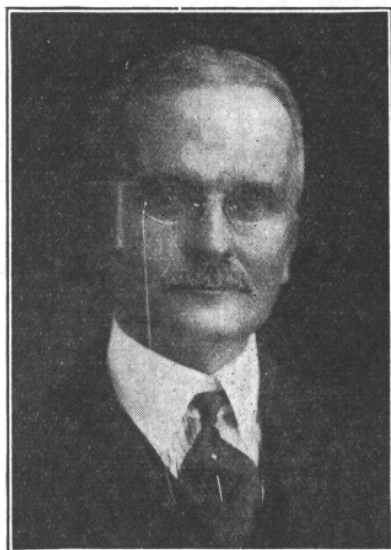


A VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE MOVEMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN



CHARLES O'CONNOR HENNESSY

The Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessey (New Jersey), as we reported in last month's issue, has been on a visit to this country. On the eve of his return home he was entertained in company with his brother, Mr. Doyle Hennessey, to dinner by a number of London friends. The reception was held under the auspices of the United Committee.

Almost everyone present took part in the speaking, and many aspects of the movement came under review, telling of work accomplished and pointing to much new hope and enterprise in the immediate future.

Mr. John Paul, who presided, said they welcomed this opportunity of having a night with their friend and colleague, and to wish him *bon voyage*. Their guest was a man they were all delighted to honour, for his own sake; they could recall with gratitude and affection the long years of faithful service he had rendered the cause in his own influential sphere across the water. From 1911 to 1917, Mr. Hennessey served with honourable distinction in the New Jersey Legislature, both in the House and the Senate, and in 1917 was one of those highly (but unsuccessfully) commended by the late President Woodrow Wilson to the people of New Jersey as his party's candidate for a seat in the United States Senate. When the Franklin Society was brought into existence in March, 1888, by the editors, reporters and printers of the old DAILY NEWS and their friends, it was Mr. Hennessey who was chosen Chairman of the meeting, and afterwards unanimously elected the first President of the institution. He was now first Vice-President of the International Benjamin Franklin Society. Widely known throughout the United States as a writer and speaker on co-operative financing and home-building, he had also been President of the State League of Savings and Loan Associations and of the United States League, the great national organization that represents the building and loan societies and co-operative banks of thirty states. Mr. Hennessey was especially dear to them as a close personal friend of Henry George, for whom he presided as Chairman of the Executive in the last campaign and at the funeral he was one of the pall-bearers. Held in high esteem by our co-workers in the United States, he was one of the Trustees named by the late Robert Schalkenbach to administer the funds that good man had bequeathed

for teaching, expounding and propagating the ideas of Henry George, and he was one of the Directors of the Schalkenbach Foundation now established. Mr. Hennessey would take with him the fraternal greetings of all present to their friends and co-workers in the United States.

MR. HENNESSY'S ADDRESS

In the course of his speech in response, Mr. Hennessey said:—

"Very great is the indebtedness of the Georgeites of America to their brethren and co-workers of this country, both for inspiration, and for practical aid in the advancement of the ideals that are now common to the enlightened lovers of liberty in all lands. I wish I had the power adequately to acknowledge it. I recall that, in days gone by, I heard more than once from the lips of our great teacher himself, and from that great American, Louis F. Post, expressions of affectionate regard for the Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen who on this side of the Atlantic helped him to raise the standard of 'Land and Liberty' for the uplift of men everywhere. I recall too, that those brave and noble spirits, Tom L. Johnson, Joseph Fels and my dear friend the younger Henry George, more than once uttered warm and feeling tributes of admiration for the fine and unselfish men with whom they came into contact here. Some of these men have now, like George and Johnson and Fels, passed to the Life Beyond, but some are still among the living and the faithful, and are doing me the honour to be in this gathering.

"In the truth that Henry George revealed, there was contained not merely an abstraction acceptable to the *intellects* of men but an appeal to the sense of justice and of love of humanity which is always latent in the *hearts* of men.

"It is well known, I believe, that Henry George more than once expressed the thought that economic justice according to the principles advocated by him, would sooner find expression in the laws of this country than in his own land or elsewhere in the world. This, for the reason that he believed that the effect of the operation of the system of private ownership of land was perhaps more obviously unjust here than anywhere else; that its incidence must grow more grievous and intolerable with the years, and that history had well established the fact that the people of these islands were a dogged and persistent race, who, once aroused to the need of a great moral reform in government, never stopped until that reform was written into the law of the land.

"And I do not doubt that to-day our people in America who are at all informed of the progress of the Henry George movement throughout the world, would gladly concede that the palm for leadership in the struggle for justice and economic freedom in all lands, belongs of right to Englishmen at home and their kinsmen in British lands beyond the sea. If your United Committee did nothing more than publish LAND & LIBERTY, its existence and its title to the support of Henry Georgeites everywhere would be justified. As a purveyor of the world-wide news of the movement, and an exponent of correct economic principles, LAND & LIBERTY is invaluable; but I find it most interesting when it is exposing the shams, stupidities and futilities of the statesmen who have been set to rule over a great nation at a critical period of the world's history.

"I see no essential difference in the outlook of statesmanship here and in the United States in so far as it professes to deal with the fundamentals of economic life. A few months ago we were told what is the trouble with Europe, by Elihu Root, leader of the American Bar, who although now retired from public office, is

nevertheless a powerful influence in the party now dominant in the United States. Mr. Root says in effect that Europe will never be prosperous until Europe is peaceful, and then he concludes that: 'The indispensable pre-requisite of any lasting peace is the creation of an international mind.' The same sort of high-sounding but really empty rhetoric was dispensed recently by Professor Robert McElroy, formerly of our Princeton University and now, I believe, professor of American History at Oxford. He said: 'To strive for a sympathetic understanding between nations and races is but a part of the day's work of every man of vision.'

"The first of these eminent Americans, if not the other, has always been a strong supporter of the protective tariff system, the maintenance of which between nations seems to me to be the greatest barrier against the creation of that international mind which Mr. Root declares to be 'an indispensable prerequisite' of world peace. Let us hope that some student in Professor McElroy's classes at Oxford may rise some day to ask what good it will do the Professor to strive for his 'sympathetic understanding between nations and races' so long as the fiscal policy of nations is conceived in the spirit of unenlightened national selfishness, with the design of reducing other nations to poverty? The statesmen in this country and in my own country who insist upon the payment of international debts, while obstructing the freedom of international commerce through which the income to pay the debts may be derived, seem to me to be feeding anew the spirit of international jealousies, distrusts and resentments that lead not to peace but to new wars.

"I have been an ardent supporter of the Covenant of the League of Nations, because it seems to me that the step that precedes understanding among men must be counsel among them. But men of true vision, I believe, must see that Europe's unhappiness and disorder may not be cured by discussions that deal merely with reduction of the size of national armaments, which are but the symptoms of a disease caused by economic maladjustments. When there is no longer need for nations or their citizens driven by greed or by necessity to struggle for advantage over one another in seeking opportunities to produce wealth, wars will be remembered only as the cruel and horrible nightmares that afflicted the dark ages of the past.

"And when we turn our eyes from international affairs to the politics of our homelands we find the incapacity of current statesmanship to deal with domestic problems except with blindness, weakness or timidity. While I believe that the material condition of the common man is undoubtedly better in the United States than in this country at the present time, there is a tendency there even now to ameliorate the hardships that certain classes of producers complain of by the adoption of paternalistic expedients that accustom men to look to government for support instead of aiming at the destruction of the barriers that might assure men of the opportunities to support themselves.

"I must confess that I can perceive no evidence that there exists among the important statesmen of my own country any consciousness of the fact that land speculation and monopoly, and the economic dislocations incident thereto, have any relation to the constantly recurrent industrial difficulties which disturb our country's internal peace. The vital truths taught by Henry George are seemingly unknown to the men in high and mighty place in his native land. This, I must hasten to add, is not due to the fact that all the old followers of Henry George are dead or sleeping, or that new ones are not being enrolled. But it must be admitted that the organized effort to promote the acceptance of his views is undoubtedly less effective

there than here in its influence upon practical politics and politicians. One promising development that we have recently noticed is that many college professors and teachers of economics have not only come to see the light, but to declare publicly their adherence to the Georgeite philosophy, a fact that will tend to give it the sanctions that invite the attention of thinking men.

"I am sure that American Single Taxers would heartily join me in the wish that we might be able to compel the men who rule us to give the attention to the land question that you have secured for it among the public men of your country. You have forced it into public discussion in Parliament and in the Press, until it seems certain to become the storm centre of British politics in the not too distant future. When your politicians are forced to abandon palliatives for the relief of vast poverty and unemployment; when they come to realize the certain relationship between idle lands and idle hands; when the inexorable operation of economic laws demonstrates the futility of tariffs, subsidies and doles as substitutes for justice, and shows them to be devices for robbing some classes for the support of others; when the vociferous advocates of communism are recognized as only aiming in another way to accomplish the same sort of robbery, then will your day of victory have arrived.

"Kindly reference has been made by your Chairman to the possible activities of the Schalkenbach Foundation of New York, of which I have the honour to be a trustee, in association with a group of some of the most noted Single Taxers in our country. The trustees, in accepting the generous bequest made by the will of the late Robert Schalkenbach, have conceived it to be their first duty to use the funds placed at their disposal to promote a greater knowledge of the economic principles of Henry George, especially through stimulating the widest possible circulation of 'Progress and Poverty,' and George's other writings. In this endeavour I believe that the trustees may well recognize the wisdom of placing no geographical limitation upon their work, since the generous and devoted follower of Henry George who created the trust left them free to exercise their discretion in this regard. While I have no right to speak for my associates among the trustees, I am quite convinced from my examination of the valuable work of public education that is being accomplished by your United Committee here, and the extraordinary fertility of the fields they are cultivating, that some appropriation from the funds of the Foundation might well be employed on this side of the ocean. I shall not fail to present this point of view to my fellow trustees at the first available opportunity after my return to New York.

"It must seem plain to even a casual observer of social and political conditions in your country that a great ferment is at work in the minds of men, and, quoting Henry George, that 'the great work of the present for every man and every organization of men who would improve social conditions is the work of education—the propagation of ideas.'

"That work you are doing here, I believe, better than it is being done elsewhere in the world. God speed you in the work, for you are fighting in a Cause whose triumph must ultimately, as Henry George declared in one of the last speeches of his life, 'revivify and regenerate the civilization not only of your own land but of the whole world.'"

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