

Tributes to Memory of Louis F. Post

Memorial Meeting to be Held in New York

A PUBLIC meeting to commemorate the services to humanity and democracy of the late Louis F. Post will be held on Tuesday evening, April 10th, 1928, at the Community Church, Park Avenue and Thirty-fourth Street, New York.

Among the speakers at the meeting will be Frank P. Walsh, Fred C. Howe, Frank Morrison, representing the American Federation of Labor, Lawson Purdy, Chas. O'Connor Hennessy, Fred C. Lebuscher, Mrs. Anna George de Mille and John J. Murphy.

The meeting will be under the auspices of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, the Civic Club, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Manhattan Single Tax Club, the Commonwealth Land Party, and the Brotherhood of the Commonwealth.

Henry George Foundation Pays Tribute to Louis F. Post

THE Henry George Foundation held a notable memorial dinner in the Congress of Women's Clubs rooms, Pittsburgh, on the evening of March 3d, in honor of the late Louis Freeland Post. Mr. Post had honored the Foundation by accepting a place on its National Advisory Commission when it was first organized and, while unable to attend either of the recent national conventions, had on various occasions expressed a keen interest in plans and activities and had sent messages to these gatherings conveying his greetings and counsel.

The memorial meeting was well attended and attracted, among others, several veteran disciples of George and Post who have not been seen so frequently in Pittsburgh gatherings of recent years. Charles R. Eckert, of Beaver, made a most admirable toastmaster for this occasion and voiced his deep appreciation of the very able and unselfish service to the cause rendered through the long years by Mr. Post, in whose writings he had always found both enlightenment and inspiration.

The speakers included Will Atkinson of New York, John M. Henry, former Assistant United States District Attorney, A. H. Swope, of Johnstown, James B. Ellery, of Erie, William N. McNair, Democratic candidate for United States Senate, George E. Evans, President of the Henry George Foundation, and Hyman Levine, of Milwaukee. Brief remarks were also made by F. W. Maguire, Assistant Secretary of the Foundation, formerly of Chicago, M. S. Robinson, President of the Henry George Club of Pittsburgh, former Magistrate Ralph E. Smith, and

Mark F. Roberts, who was Secretary of the pioneer Single Tax club of the early days in Pittsburgh.

Many fine tributes were paid to the memory of the departed leader, interesting incidents of his brilliant career recalled and his great service to the advancement of fundamental democracy cited as an example to those who would make this a better world in which to live.

Attorney John M. Henry spoke with eloquence of the ideals for which Louis F. Post stood and of his firm stand for civil liberties in the war days of the Wilson administration, while Will Atkinson in a very effective speech related personal incidents throwing interesting light upon the sterling character of Mr. Post, emphasized his loyalty to the preaching of Henry George's gospel in its fullness and made reference to that "master motive of human action" that characterized the life work of Post.

Mr. Atkinson spoke in part as follows:

I appreciate and am deeply grateful for the honor the Henry George Foundation have done me and for the privilege of saying a few words in memory of Louis Freeland Post, whom I met forty-two years ago during the first Henry George Mayoralty Campaign in New York City.

He was then Editor of the *Leader*, a campaign paper published in the interest of Henry George's candidacy for Mayor of New York City. It was started because every paper in New York without exception opposed Henry George. I did not really get acquainted with Louis F. Post until 1887 when I was a visitor to the State Convention of the United Labor Party at Syracuse, N. Y. Louis F. Post was Chairman and presided, under very difficult conditions with a tact, a fairness, a charm and an unvarying courtesy which compelled tributes even from his opponents.

In this 1886 Campaign, the Socialists had been tirelessly active and contributed largely to the tremendous vote polled in that short campaign made without organization and without a machine and which resulted (according to the testimony of Tammany Chiefs later) in Henry George's election although he was counted out.

In 1887 some of the Socialists believed that the United Labor Party would repeat in the State its success in the City of the year before and hoping further for a national success of the United Labor party in 1888, determined to capture the State Convention of the United Labor Party by methods which neither Tammany in New York nor the Vare machine in Philadelphia nor your own local Pittsburgh leaders have ever surpassed.

The Syracuse convention was, therefore, an exceedingly stormy one and was an acid test of the qualities of its presiding officer and I have never abated my affection and admiration for the effective way in which Mr. Post met every emergency. The Socialist delegates who were expelled after a red hot fight included some notable orators and they imported others from the outside, including Walter Vrooman, then called the "Boy Orator of the Socialist Party" who justified his title by a brilliant speech. Coming from another state I was accorded the honor of a seat on the platform and heard all the public discussions and some of the private ones.

After the expulsion of the Socialists Henry George was nominated for Secretary of State against his protest. He finally consented to accept the nomination at the urgent request of Father McGlynn and the other leaders of the convention. But the United Labor Party did not have the means to spread itself over the state. It was impossible to effectively reach the voters of the State with the few dollars they had and it was further handicapped by discredited politicians capturing nominations for minor offices in New York City.

It was always a joy to hear a speech by Louis F. Post, partly because he always had a good story to illustrate his point. In St. Louis he started in a speech by saying, "When I was young the test of every new thing which was proposed was, is it religious? But times have changed and now when anything new is suggested the inquiry is at once made, is it scientific? A Professor at one of our great universities, sometimes called the Standard Oil University, once evolved the theory that the sense of hearing in a grasshopper was in his legs. You know grasshoppers have no ears and it has been a moot point for many years as to how they hear. This professor decided that he would not promulgate his theory until he had scientifically demonstrated it. So he took a grasshopper and put it on a table and took a ruler and rapped on the table and the grasshopper jumped. Then he took the same grasshopper and broke off its legs and put it on the same table and rapped on the table with the same ruler and the grasshopper did not jump. He said, "Now it is scientifically demonstrated that the sense of hearing in a grasshopper is in its legs"; and, Mr. Post went on to say, "Many things were scientifically demonstrated nowadays in very much the same manner."

In 1896 it looked as if Grover Cleveland might be nominated for a third term. The Wall Street interests which he had so faithfully served wanted him and for a time it seemed as if they might control the Convention. Mr. Post said that if Cleveland was renominated and he was called on to make a speech in his favor he had already picked out a story which would fit the occasion.

A farmer was riding on a train and a clerical looking man sat down beside him. After a time the minister asked the farmer which Church he belonged to. The farmer said, "Me? I'm an Episcopalian." The Clergyman said, "Who is your rector?" The farmer said, "Rector, what is a rector?" The minister said, "What parish do you belong to?" The farmer said, "I don't know about any parish." The minister said, "What do you mean calling yourself an Episcopalian when you don't know what a parish is nor what a rector is?" The farmer said, "Oh, about being an Episcopalian; Betsy and I were in town over Sunday some time ago and we saw a nice looking church with the doors open and we went in and the congregation were saying "We have left undone those things we ought to have done and we have done those things we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us." I asked what kind of a Church that was and they said Episcopalian and we have been Episcopalians ever since."

When Louis F. Post was a young lawyer he went into partnership with another young lawyer who was also an active, fearless and tireless advocate of Single Tax and a personal friend of Henry George, Charles Frederick Adams. I heard Mr. Post once tell about his brief law partnership with Charles F. Adams. He said, "Charles F. Adams was a walking encyclopedia of law but he was not always practical. It was very hard to get him into court. He

preferred studying up some abstruse point of law which we had no direct interest in and probably never would have. We had a little reception room which we called the library and each of us had a private office opening out of the reception room. I had occasion to consult Charlie Adams several times the first day we opened our offices and each time I found his door locked. Finally I said to him, "What do you mean, Charlie, by keeping your door locked?" Adams said, "Well, you know, Post, I'm studying this case which has many interesting angles and I was afraid that some client would butt in and interrupt me." The idea that a young lawyer the first day his office was opened should be afraid a client would butt in and the further idea that it was more important to study the technicalities of a case with which we had nothing whatever to do, than to talk to a client (in case a miracle happened and one appeared) was too much for me."

"I always got Charlie Adams to go into Court with me when I could, but this was very seldom. One day I got him into Court and he sat quietly beside me and listened to my opening argument and then to the answer made by opposing counsel. When our opponent sat down, before I could get out of my chair, Adams who was as quick as a cat, was already on his feet and had started out into an eloquent and conclusive reply which left nothing of our opponent's arguments. Adams cited case after case and decision after decision while I sat back and thoroughly enjoyed myself. Presently the judge interrupted and said, "But I don't know about that last citation of yours, Mr. Adams." Adams pounded on the desk and said, "But it is your Honor's business to know." And we lost the case right there. You can't insult the judge and expect to win the case. I got Adams out into the hall and started him back to our office and came back and apologized, but it was too late; our case had been lost."

As the Chairman of the Single Tax Conference of 1890 in New York and of the Single Tax Conference at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 Post again won golden opinions from everyone who attended. While Henry George lived at 327 East 19th Street, New York, every Sunday evening many called, intent on seeing and hearing the great Apostle of Humanity. One Sunday evening, an old friend of the family was present and monopolized the time with a never-ending flow of talk while Henry George sat back silent in his chair and seemed to enjoy it. But Post did not. Lawrence Dunham, Post and I left the house together and we were hardly out of the door before Post broke out indignantly, "Have you ever noticed that the more of an infernal nuisance a man makes of himself, the kinder Henry George is to him?" I said, "I have often wondered why he was so kind to me."

Of Post's work in editing the *Standard* with Croasdale, when Henry George laid that work down; of his editorship of the *Cleveland Recorder* and afterward of the *Chicago Public*, of his numerous contributions to Single Tax Literature, of his tireless work as speaker and lecturer, of his courageous stand as Assistant Secretary of Labor in preventing the deportation of poor and penniless immigrants on trumped-up charges, you know. From the day when, as a young man, he first read "Progress and Poverty" till the day of his death, Louis F. Post preached tirelessly Henry George's Gospel in its fullness.

Even forty years ago we had men—able men, who thought it was a mistake to appeal to unselfishness as Henry George urged, and who believed the shortest road to the Single Tax lay in appealing to men's pockets, to their selfish

interests, rather than to their hearts and their unselfishness. It may be that they have gained a hearing we might not otherwise have had; it may be that they have advanced the Single Tax by advocating it merely as a reform in taxation; merely as the best method of taxation.

I do not know. But this I do know, that it is because Louis F. Post advocated the Single Tax in its fullness, without variableness or shadow of turning, because there was no taint of selfishness in the forty-five years of whole hearted devotion he gave to Henry George's Gospel; that we are here tonight to pay our tribute to his memory; that all over the world are men and women who sorrow because they have lost a loved and loving brother.

We used to call those who would minimize the Single Tax and preach it "sanely," as they said, as a reform in taxation solely, "Single Taxers limited." But since I read the little girl's school composition on her favorite bird, the better term would seem to be "Single Taxers, almost." The girl wrote, "What a wonderful bird is the frog. When he stands, he sits, almost. When he hops he flies, almost. He has no brains; hardly. He has no tail; hardly. When he sits, he sits on what he ain't got, almost."

Let me read a few of Henry George's own words on this.

"Shortsighted is the philosophy which counts on selfishness as the master motive of human action. It is blind to facts of which the world is full. It sees not the present, and reads not the past aright. If you would move men to action, to what shall you appeal? Not to their pockets, but to their patriotism; not to selfishness, but to sympathy. Self-interest, is as it were, a mechanical force—potent, it is true; capable of large and wide results. But there is in human nature what may be likened to a chemical force; which melts and fuses and overwhelms; to which nothing seems impossible. "All that a man hath will he give for his life"—that is self-interest. But in loyalty to higher impulses men will give even life.

It is not selfishness that enriches the annals of every people with heroes and saints. It is not selfishness that on every page of the world's history bursts out in sudden splendor of noble deeds or sheds the soft radiance of benignant lives. It was not selfishness that turned Gautama's back to his royal home or bade the Maid of Orleans lift the sword from the altar; that held the Three Hundred in the Pass of Thermopylae or gathered into Winkelried's bosom the sheaf of spears; that chained Vincent de Paul to the bench of the galley, or brought little starving children, during the Indian famine, tottering to the relief stations with yet weaker starvelings in their arms. Call it religion, patriotism, sympathy, the enthusiasm for humanity, or the love of God—give it what name you will; there is yet a force which overcomes and drives out selfishness; a force which is the electricity of the moral universe; a force beside which all others are weak. Everywhere that men have lived it has shown its power, and today, as ever, the world is full of it. To be pitied is the man who has never seen and felt it. Look around! among common men and women amid the care and struggle of daily life, in the jar of the noisy street and amid the squalor where want hides—every here and there is the darkness lighted with the tremulous play of its lambent flames. He who has not seen it has walked with shut eyes. He who looks may see, as says Plutarch, that "the soul has a principle of kindness in itself, and is born to love, as well as to perceive, think, or remember."

And this force of forces—that now goes to waste or assumes perverted forms—we may use for the strengthening, and building up, and ennobling of society, if we but will, just as we now use physical forces that once seemed but powers of destruction. All we have to do is but to give it freedom and scope. The wrong that produces inequality; the wrong that in the midst of abundance tortures men with want or harries them with the fear of want; that stunts them physically, degrades them intellectually, and distorts them morally, is what alone prevents harmonious social development. For "all that is from the gods is full of providence. We are made for co-operation—like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth."

Mr. Atkinson concluded by the reading of a very remarkable poem written sometime ago by Vorley Wright.

Another ardent admirer of Mr. Post who paid deserved tribute to "a great humanitarian," was Ambrose H. Swope, a Single Tax leader of Johnstown, who spoke in part as follows:

"Those who are responsible for this gathering are to be commended for their response to a duty, because it is the duty of those who are interested in a movement to mark the passing of a leader in that cause. Louis F. Post was a capable leader in the movement that has called this organization, The Henry George Foundation of America, into existence. I am glad of this opportunity to pay tribute, weak and faltering as it may be, to this David in the cause of justice and human freedom.

It was not given to many of us here to sit at the feet of the master, but the mantle of Henry George fell upon the shoulders of Louis F. Post, and most worthily did he wear it. I assume that many of you are familiar with the incident that led to his conversion to the Georgian philosophy. It suggests the conversion of a Paul. While trying to refute the theory, a light dawned upon him and he arose a changed man. Like others possessed of a heart and an intellect, life had a new meaning for Louis F. Post after he came in contact with Henry George. He saw a new truth—a social truth—and he devoted his life to the propagation of that truth. Judged by our standards, Louis F. Post was a great man because he wrought in the cause of freedom; he worked intelligently and unselfishly that his fellow men might inherit the promise; that others might reach higher and nobler lives. He was not only an economist who saw clearly the true and proper social relationship, but also he was a great humanitarian. And when the final annals of civilization are written, in the light of human service the name of Louis F. Post will appear in luminous letters on the horizon of the new day.

HIS CAREER AS EDITOR

The work that Louis F. Post did as editor of the *Public* will constitute a glorious chapter in the history of human freedom; it was truly "a journal of fundamental democracy." No wrong or injustice that came to his attention escaped challenge and censure. For years the *Public* was the clearing-house of all liberal thought in the United States.

THOUGHT POSITION TOO SMALL

I remember getting off a train in Johnstown one evening early in the summer of 1913. Mr. Bailey, who was then in congress, was at the station to board the same train and he told me that he was on his way to Chicago.

That visit of Mr. Bailey helped Mr. Post to consent to accept the position of assistant secretary of labor in President Wilson's cabinet. I must admit that, for one, I thought it was putting a big man in a rather small place. Then when the world war came on, it was hard for me, and possibly others, to become reconciled to Mr. Post being in a war cabinet. But in those horrible times following the war, when the fever of deportation ran high, when proscription and head-hunting were the order of the day, how fortunate we were to have a man of Mr. Post's sanity and sympathy in a place of power. It reminds me of an incident in the life of Henry George, with which you are all possibly familiar as I am. On election night in New York, when Henry George was a candidate for secretary of state, he and Mr. Post were watching the election returns. When it became apparent that Mr. George was rather badly defeated, Mr. Post asked him, perhaps humorously, if he saw the hand of God in the results. Henry George replied: "No, I don't, but it is there."

Those of us who were unable to see the hand of God take Louis F. Post from the editorial chair and the lecture platform, and make him an under secretary, must, in view of the great humanitarian service he rendered in his cabinet position, admit that, while we could not see that hand, it was there.

AN AGE-OLD CONFLICT

"He who will hear, to him the clarions of the battle call. How they call and call and call till the heart swells that hears them." Louis F. Post heard that call and valiantly did he answer. And what was the battle, the conflict? Ah! the age-old one with Truth on the scaffold and Wrong on the throne, the powerful oppressing the weak and disinherited ones, the monopolists grinding the faces of the poor in the dust. But with his keen, analytical mind, able to see the relation of cause to effect, Mr. Post soon saw that the power of the oppressors was legalized special privilege, and foremost among these was the privilege of making private property of the earth. He consecrated his life to the abolition of that monstrous wrong.

This meeting will have been in vain if forth from this hall go not men and women who will dedicate themselves to the cause for which Louis F. Post did so much and made such great sacrifices.

The fields are white and ready to harvest. Let us not be dismayed because the master gleaner has gone on: this is "my Father's business" and it must prosper. This meeting will not have been useless if one courageous soul embraces the "cross of the new crusade," determined that it shall be carried to newer heights.

HIS SPIRIT PRESENT

It takes but little imagination to feel the spirit of dear old Louis F. Post is here with us tonight. "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." How then shall we honor his presence? Surely not by fulsome praise which we all know would be displeasing to him in person. Let us honor Louis F. Post by renewing our pledge to the faith so dear to him and resolve to do what we may to make effective those ideals for which he lived and, as he says, "attach ourselves to the causes that harmonize with the great order of things."

Letters of regret were read from Warren Worth Bailey, of Johnstown, John M. Moore, of Lancaster, and Charles H. Ingersoll, as well as a recent communication from Mr. Post himself to Secretary Williams of the Foundation.

An Old Time "Radical"

LOUIS F. POST, who has just died at Washington, was a familiar figure in Philadelphia in the early nineties when he took a conspicuous part in the meetings which the local Anti-Poverty Society used to hold on Sunday evenings in the Broad Street Theatre. The society was the chief agency of the Single Tax propaganda which was actively carried on in Philadelphia in those days, Frank Stephens, founder of Arden, being one of its most energetic local advocates. Mr. Post and Henry George himself frequently came over from New York to speak at the Sunday evening meetings.

Mr. Post was a Jerseyman by birth. He went from the printer's case to the bar and was prominent enough politically in the second Grant administration to become an assistant United States Attorney in New York. Later he turned to political radicalism of the third party variety and ran for Congress and other offices on Labor and Greenback tickets. He was one of the earliest converts to the Single Tax and became a close friend and associate of Henry George, aiding him in the memorable campaign of 1886, when George threw a scare into Tammany and likewise into conservative business men, by polling 67,000 votes as a candidate for Mayor. Post himself ran for District Attorney as a Labor candidate the following year.

At this period he definitely abandoned law for journalism and the platform. He was one of the old-line radicals attracted by the Wilson variety of progressivism and was made Assistant Secretary of Labor in 1913, serving until 1921. He was unsympathetic with the immigration restriction ideas which have prevailed in recent years, and came under fire for what was alleged to be undue leniency to alien radicals whose deportation was sought. With his death at seventy-eight, almost the last of the Old Guard of Greenbackers, old-fashioned Laborites and pioneer Single Taxers passes from the scene.

—Philadelphia, (Pa.) *Bulletin*.

Liberals Mourn Post

ANOTHER link with the time of Henry George has gone with the passing of Louis F. Post, noted advocate of the Single Tax and long a fighter for ideals of American freedom and democracy that in many quarters seem to be considered old-fashioned and quite out of date. Mr. Post, who died at 78, was one of the leaders in the Henry George movement of the early 80's when George was backed by organized labor and other progressive forces for Mayor of New York and came near being elected. Few remember those stirring days now.

During his long and useful life, Mr. Post was the champion of the oppressed and fought many a battle in behalf