

The Coming Henry George Congress

GREAT preparations are already under way, for it will be International in scope and great importance will be attached to it by reason of the fact that it is to be designated as a "Centenary Commemoration." The dates for the Congress will include September 2nd, which will be the 100th birthday of our beloved leader, Henry George.

Quite a number of European delegates are expected to be present. This portion of the preliminary arrangements is being very capably handled under the direction of Mr. A. W. Madsen, Secretary of the International Union For Land Value Taxation and Free Trade of London, England.

The International Conference is scheduled to be held in New York City from August 29 to September 4, 1939. The preparatory work is under the charge of Mr. Frank Chodorov, Director, and the Board of Trustees of the Henry George School of Social Science, 30 East 29th St., New York City.

This Conference will undoubtedly attract a great many out-of-the-country delegates, with a sizeable Canadian representation, as well as from all parts of the U. S. A., by reason of the great desire so many will have to visit the New York World's Fair, which will then be in progress.

For those who will be unable to come to New York, there will be local gatherings and conferences in furtherance of the Centenary Commemoration.

A suggestion which might materially assist those now engaged in arrangements would be for as many as can do so, to write letters to their local newspapers, apprising readers in general regarding this great gathering.

It has been suggested that state or local celebrations everywhere should be held on the actual date of the anniversary, Saturday, September 2, 1939. This would be effective as a combined demonstration throughout the world. Greetings from foreign countries will be sent, if the local groups in our country will advise the secretary of the International Union, Mr. A. W. Madsen, 34 Knight-rider St., St. Paul's, London E. C. 4, England, of the time and place such celebrations are scheduled to be held.

It is also suggested, should anyone have direct knowledge of incidents or episodes in the life and travels of Henry George, such as are not generally known, which would have publicity value, he should communicate them to the Henry George School of Social Science in New York City.

Another, and very excellent suggestion has reached us from a number of sources, regarding the possibility of interesting the Postmaster General of the United States (Hon. Jas. A. Farley), in the issuance of a commemorative postage stamp. All Georgeists, whether philatelists or not, should write to the Postmaster General and to individual congressmen, urging the adoption of this idea.

Georgeists *throughout the world* may confidently look forward to the next Annual Conference as the best and the most enlightening one yet held.

London Site Values Rating Bill

LAND AND LIBERTY of London, England, in its March, 1939, issue, has given us an account of the fate, in the House of Commons, of the London Site Values Rating Bill. Though its passage was throttled by the Conservatives (through the agency of an academic ruling by the Speaker of the House) our English friends have reason to be jubilant over the publicity connected with the attempted legislation. We have always believed that such programmes have real educational worth, and in this case the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values is deserving of much credit for its effective use of posters and literature during the campaign.

The bill lost not on its merits, but on a technicality peculiar to the English law in the matter of so called private, as distinguished from public legislation. Once before, in 1936, the London County Council had presented the measure to Parliament as a public bill, i.e., one to apply the principle of local option throughout the whole country on the issue of correcting abuses in taxation, but the government refused to listen to the representations of the Council. Then, in February of this year, the Council decided to have it introduced as a private bill, i.e., one to restrict the measure to the inhabitants of London alone. But the Tories, who trembled at the thought of land value taxation sweeping over England, had no intention of permitting its largest city to enjoy any such reform, despite the mandate the people of London had given their governing body to effect it.

To us, the most interesting aspect is the very small amount of rent the L. C. C. is asking the landed interests to surrender to the municipal treasury—2 shillings in the pound on the annual value of sites. This amounts to only 10 per cent of the annual rent. In the large cities of the United States the land owners are required to pay around 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of the annual rent, which is little enough.

It is worthy of note that the English bill avoided the cumbersome and tricky method of collecting rent (or rather 10 per cent of it, for a beginning) in the manner of the American system, which takes a percentage of the net rent capitalized into a selling value. Capitalized rent is an artificial value resulting from the vested-right-theory (a vested right being the right to get something for nothing) and the L. C. C. did well in not using it as a basis for raising revenue.

We marvel at the patience of our British Georgeists, and the determined manner in which they are attempting to scale the ramparts of the landed aristocracy. Their defeats, however, are but steps in the direction of victory. More and more of the local authorities are joining their ranks, and perhaps only a European war can wipe out their gains. Indeed nothing would be more welcome to the Tories than a Fascist government consequent upon a military course of action. We devoutly hope that such an event will not arise to undo the educational labors of our Georgeists across the sea.