

The Eleventh Henry George Congress

November 12, 13 and 14

THE Henry George Congress held at the Netherlands Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati, on November 12 to 14 is now history. It was fairly well attended and was really representative.

These gatherings are still vulnerable to certain criticism. Again the programme was too greatly crowded. Perhaps the most salient objections to these Congresses were voiced by A. Laurence Smith of Detroit. He pointed out that instead of formulating plans for action we talk Single Tax to one another. He voiced the feeling of many that we ought rather to discuss plans of action. Instead of putting these first and going over them carefully, it was not until the last day that a small group got together and retired to consider what might be done.

The suggestion that found most favor was the introduction of constitutional amendments in the various states, either by initiative petition or by direct appeal to the legislature. A committee from this group was appointed with Col. Rule as chairman. In this way the Single Taxers of every state would find a rallying point which would serve the purposes of education and publicity.

It may be said of this Conference that the speakers really did deal with fundamentals, and to that degree was an improvement over some that have preceded it. It was also signalized by two public meetings which were largely attended. It was also conspicuous by reason of the admirable addresses of Rev. Herbert Bigelow, Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown, Col. Victor A. Rule and David Gibson. The papers read were superior, if anything, to those submitted on previous occasions. And the meeting of old friends was worth while if nothing else was accomplished.

The elders in attendance must have been gratified by the presence of many of the younger group who are coming to the front. Among these may be mentioned Nathan Hillman of Chicago, Robert C. Bowers and Richard Howe of Pittsburgh. There are a few of the old timers who have a wider and more accurate knowledge of the history of the movement than Mr. Hillman, and the thoughtful and scholarly address of Mr. Bowers will not soon be forgotten. Our thanks, therefore, are again due to Messrs. Evans and Williams for their indefatigable labors in bringing us together and in making this eleventh annual Congress a success.

But new occasions bring new duties. It is felt that a new type of organization is needed—one that will function every day in the year. And these annual gatherings must be more and more for the discussion of practical work and not meetings for ironing out doctrinal differ-

ences, or for telling one another what the Single Tax is all about.

We have before this had occasion to make similar criticism of the Henry George Congresses. Henry George men have a message for the world, and our object must be to reach the unconverted. These gatherings have been pleasant, but they do not do that. Outside of the two meetings attended by the public of Cincinnati we do not believe that a single convert was made. In the caustic criticism made by A. Laurence Smith we are therefore forced to concur.

THURSDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 12

Rabbi Aaronsohn, chairman of the Congress, opened the meeting. He commended Cincinnati as the best governed city in America. His address will be found on another page. He praised the city for its commission form of government, but said that whatever improvement had been made in the political government of the city we had still to deplore the conditions everywhere visible of the misery and degradation of a great city, which only the adoption of the Henry George system could remedy. George E. Evans, president of the Henry George Foundation, followed with an address on the evils of land speculation. He devoted a large portion of his speech to public housing.

Mayor Wilson of Cincinnati made the address of welcome for the city. It was a scholarly talk. He said he had long been a student of economics and he paid a tribute to Adam Smith and Henry George and reviewed the career of the latter. He confessed to being very much of a free trader. He said that those who advocate other methods of revenue can not be Single Taxers. He closed with a hearty welcome to the Convention.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Joseph Dana Miller was chairman of this session which he called the "school hour." Mr. Miller said in part: "The spirit of Oscar Geiger is abroad. The School will grow and will yet triumph in the thought of the world. Oscar saw in the days of his supreme sacrifice what the School meant. He did not see the full realization of his dream even as it has developed today. But he could say, as Henry George said, 'I know,' and a great faith stirred within him."

Richard Howe, Frank Chodorov, J. B. Ellert and others also spoke, and John Lawrence Monroe gave a detailed account of the School and Extension classes, to the success of which he has so signally contributed.

THURSDAY EVENING

A large and attentive audience greeted this meeting over which Charles G. Merrell, of Cincinnati, presided.

David Gibson said he would not talk long because many years ago he had heard a preacher say that no souls were saved after the first ten minutes.

He told how one of the du Ponts when asked to help the construction of a road in Wilmington responded: "No, the landlords will get all the benefit." Mr. Gibson said that nearly all our troubles were the cause of the failure to discriminate between what is socially created ground rent and private property created by labor.

W. D. Alper spoke on the California situation. He told how his visits to tradesmen in that state revealed the possession of a wide-spread knowledge of our principles. We can only create interest in our cause by action. California has the largest per capita sales tax of any state. Mr. Alper announced that the campaign will be continued. For years we have talked of concentrating our strength in one state. The friends of the movement are confident that the field is a promising one. This address of Mr. Alper was a strong plea for the Ralston amendment.

Mr. Walter R. Demmler, member of the City Council of Pittsburgh, answered a few questions from the audience.

FRIDAY MORNING

This session was presided over by Chairman Strachan of Chicago. He made an admirable demonstration of the law of rent. A discussion followed in which Mr. Foster, Mr. A. Laurence Smith and others took part. Mr. Bowers, of Pittsburgh, discussed pedagogy and commented on what he called "the sacrifice of pedagogy to pedantry."

Mr. Chodorov described the methods pursued at the School by the Teachers' Training Class and announced that the revised manual of the School would be ready in January.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

At this session J. Edward Jones, of Chicago, presided, and introduced Mr. Emil O. Jorgensen as speaker. Mr. Jorgensen outlined his reasons for rejecting the Ricardian Law of Rent. There were a number of questions put to Mr. Jorgensen which he answered good naturedly.

Mr. P. R. Williams, Secretary of the Henry George Foundation, was one of the speakers at this session and talked about the graded tax plan of Pittsburgh.

FRIDAY EVENING

Mr. Carl D. Groat, editor of the *Cincinnati Post*, presided at this session and the speakers were Anna George deMille, Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown and Victor A. Rule. Mrs. deMille spoke entertainingly of her visit to England. She told how one of the most enthusiastic of the Henry George School workers was the son of Andrew MacLaren, M. P.

SATURDAY MORNING

At this session A. Laurence Smith, of Detroit, presided and read a letter from Bolton Hall, after which Mr. Nathan Hillman, of Chicago, gave an interesting resume of the history of the Henry George movement from the campaign of '86. Mr. Hillman thought our mistake had been that in every campaign waged for our cause we had emphasized the fiscal rather than the economic and social aspect of this reform.

Mr. Gilbert M. Tucker offered a list of Single Tax books to be recommended to inquirers. Mrs. McAvoy thought that the women leaders in the movement had been overlooked.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Edward E. Hardcastle was chairman of this session. Tributes to the departed were made by many of those present. Dr. Milliken spoke and Mr. Alper read a letter from Jackson H. Ralston. Mr. C. J. Ewing, of Chicago, spoke, and discussed the different methods of action suggested. In this discussion Mr. Farabough, of Carrolltown, Pa., participated, and Mr. A. Laurence Smith read an unpublished letter of Henry George.

Mr. David Gibson paid a high compliment to LAND AND FREEDOM and spoke in praise of the work of the Schalkenbach Foundation. Mr. Miller added to this by a brief resume of what the Foundation had accomplished and made complimentary reference to the many years in which Miss Kaufmann, now Mrs. Wambough, had directed the office work and had made many interesting and valuable contacts with professors, editors, columnists like Louis Eichel, and file leaders of public opinion everywhere.

THE BANQUET ON NOVEMBER 14

On Saturday evening a largely attended banquet was held in the Hotel Netherland. Edward F. Alexander, of Cincinnati, was the efficient toastmaster and the diners listened to a very interesting programme. Rabbi Aaronsohn was the first speaker and was followed by Anna George deMille, Marvin C. Harrison, state senator, and Herbert Bigelow.

Senator Harrison voiced what many of those present considered an economic heresy. He hinted at what he called "the unearned income of owned capital." Toastmaster Alexander after a vote from the diners, called upon Professor Harry Gunnison Brown and J. B. Ellert, of Milk River, Canada, for five-minute speeches in reply to Senator Harrison.

Mr. Ellert has the faculty of driving home the illustrations with which in his homely fashion he is so familiar. Senator Harrison was manifestly shaken by the speech in reply from the keen thinking, sturdy farmer of Alberta, and as he is an honest inquirer who is convinced of the

truth of our philosophy may himself be depended upon to find the answer.

It was Rev. Herbert Bigelow, recently elected to Congress from Cincinnati, who aroused the greatest interest and enthusiasm. He sees forty years of his agitation for the cause nearing its realization. He believes the next session of the Ohio legislature will sponsor a home-rule amendment in taxation and that Cincinnati will be the first Single Tax city in America. We were glad to hear him condemn regimentation even though he qualified his statement.

Mrs. Anna George deMille was entertaining and charming as usual. Any Single Tax gathering would be incomplete without the inspirational touch which the daughter of the Prophet contributes to these occasions.

Resolution on Services Rendered by the Hon. Wm. N. McNair, ex-Mayor of Pittsburgh, Pa.

INTRODUCED BY JOSEPH DANA MILLER

THE Eleventh Congress of the Henry George Foundation assembled in Cincinnati, Ohio, this thirteenth day of November, 1936, takes the opportunity of expressing the gratitude of all followers of Henry George for the valiant work done by the Hon. William N. McNair, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in spreading the knowledge of the philosophy we are all interested in, and in assuring him that we recognize that his resignation from public office was brought about by the very forces which benefit by the iniquitous system we hope to abolish. We are sure that he will continue to work for the abolition of the private collection of economic rent and will not allow any consideration, private or public, to dissuade him from the truth.

Resolution on the Death of Charles O'Connor Hennessy

INTRODUCED BY JOSEPH DANA MILLER

WE note with profound sorrow the passing of Charles O'Connor Hennessy.

For over fifty years in the intervals of an active life as editor, banker, and member of the New Jersey legislature he found time to devote to the cause he had espoused in the early eighties.

In the departure of this devoted spirit we recognize how great is our loss. To the very last his inspiring voice rang with a message to the world from the London International Conference for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade.

To his surviving son, Frank Hancock Hennessy, and the more distant relatives of the family, the Henry George Congress offers its most sincere condolence.

Manifesto of The Henry George Foundation

INTRODUCED BY DR. MARK MILLIKEN OF HAMILTON, OHIO

THE members of The Henry George Foundation wish to announce to the public their views on some basic questions now confronting the whole world.

1. We believe in democracy in contradistinction to communism, fascism and dictatorship under any form of government.

2. We believe in capitalism under conditions of freedom. We are opposed to all forms of private monopoly.

3. We believe that unemployment will cease when men have access to land suitable for use.

4. We believe that untaxing buildings and an increased tax on urban land will cure the slum evil.

5. We believe in voluntary cooperation by people living under conditions of individual freedom.

6. We believe that the sales tax is a most pernicious form of taxation because it falls especially on the poor.

7. We believe that business men should favor the Single Tax because it would increase the purchasing power of their customers; that tenant farmers should favor it because agricultural land owners will then not hold more land than they can use profitably, and thus tenant farmers will be able to obtain land at a low price; that all artisans should favor it because it will make jobs and increase wages.

8. In general we believe that the application of the Single Tax promotes the maximum happiness, efficiency and exaltation of the individual; and is the only way by which liberty may be preserved and by which idleness may be averted.

Address of Welcome

RABBI MICHAEL AARONSOHN AT HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS

ABOUT two years ago a well-known educator carried on an experiment with high school students all over the country. He was curious to know the attitude of American high school students toward the occupation of the farmer, the clergyman, and the politician. To his great astonishment he found that the majority of the students regarded the work of the farmer, the clergyman, and the politician pretty much with derision.

Some philosophers tell us that we laugh when that which is normally sedate and dignified and respectable suddenly becomes grotesquely undignified and commonplace. The farmer in classic literature was a rugged individualist. But the general idea of a farmer today is that of an over-worked and luckless fellow who is always clamoring for relief, the victim not only of drought, floods grass hoppers, but also of every business racket.