

A Report of the Henry George School

PREPARED FOR THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE
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BRIEF HISTORY

ON September 15, 1932, the Board of Regents granted a provisional charter to the Henry George School of Social Science, incorporating it as an educational institution to maintain and conduct schools and lecture forums for the purpose of teaching fundamental economics and social philosophy.

For several years previous to this incorporation the work of the School had been conducted as an independent enterprise by the late Oscar H. Geiger. The value of his work was recognized by those who attended his lectures, and who felt the need of extending this educational venture through the names of an organized School. Among those who appreciated the need for this teaching was Dr. John Dewey, who therefore accepted the honorary presidency of the School.

The headquarters of the School was established in the building at 211 West 79th Street, New York. These consisted of an office and library, and a classroom. Three years later the entire building above the ground floor was taken over. The School premises now consist of four classrooms, a library, an office devoted to local classwork, an office for the correspondence division, and an office devoted to extension classwork.

In the first year eighty-four students were enrolled. Weekly public forums were conducted for the general public. In June, 1933, Dr. Oscar H. Geiger passed away. Mr. Norman C. B. Fowles was elected acting director the next month, and in September classes were resumed. The interest in the School's work evidenced by many friends and contributors throughout the country suggested the possibility of opening extension classes in other cities where qualified teachers could be secured. The School syllabus and classroom helps were printed for this purpose, and a field director, Mr. John Lawrence Monroe, was assigned to the work.

The growth of the School required also the services of a business director, and Mr. Otto K. Dorn, a retired business man of considerable experience, volunteered his services.

The following table of enrollments in the required course in fundamental economics and social philosophy, and the gross expenditures will give a graphic picture of the growth of the School. The enrollment in advanced classes is in addition to these figures.

Year.	No. Local		No. Extension		Enrolled		Expense.
	Classes.	Enrolled.	Classes.	Enrolled.	Total.		
1933	11	84	none	none	84		\$1,618.39
1934	18	335	4	48	383		5,534.00
1935	33	811	71	1,438	2,249		9,464.39
1936	44	1,196	166	3,069	4,265		14,069.74
1937*	51	855	113	1,926	2,781		12,825.67

* Five months—January 1 to May 31.

At first the faculty consisted of Mr. Geiger, his son, George Raymond Geiger, Ph.D. (Columbia), Mr. John Luxton, teacher at the Tilden High School, New York City, and Mr. Max Berkowitz, A.B. (C. C. N. Y.). In 1937 the faculty at the School—not including extension courses—consisted of twenty teachers.

The School year ending December 31, 1936, gives a clear picture of the rapid growth of the School from its humble beginnings. The strain upon its excellent staff of devoted volunteers became too great for the work. It was necessary to supplement this with a full-time manager, and with several full-time secretaries. This was made possible by the increase in the number and size of the donations and by several generous bequests. Mr. Frank Chodorov, A.B. (Columbia), a former school teacher and an experienced business man, was engaged

to take charge of the School. He is assisted by five secretaries, in addition to the usual complement of graduate volunteers, to say nothing of the five trustees who meet weekly for the purpose of formulating and directing policies.

A Correspondence Course was added to the curriculum in February of this year. At the present writing over four hundred students are enrolled in this course, quite a number of whom include high school and college instructors.

EQUIPMENT

The School library now consists of 4,107 volumes, dealing mainly with economics, sociology, government and philosophy. Three rooms are equipped with the usual classroom furniture. A fourth classroom, used only for advanced courses and for board meetings, has removable chairs, in addition to desks, and office library. The office for the local work, on the first floor, contains several desks, office files, typewriters, dictaphones, etc. The extension class and correspondence course offices are similarly equipped.

COURSES AND METHOD

Part I.—Fundamental Economics and Social Philosophy.

This is a ten-lesson course required of all students. Each session is two hours in duration, and is held once a week. The textbook is "Progress and Poverty," by Henry George. Collateral reading is suggested. At the end of each session the students are given a printed list of questions which cover a reading assignment in the textbook. These questions are answered and discussed at the subsequent session. The discussion method is followed in the classes. Full freedom within the scope of the subject matter of the lesson is encouraged.

This course is followed by a six-week course in International Trade. The textbook is "Protection or Free Trade?" "Social Problems" is collateral reading.

Part II.—The Science of Political Economy.

The title of this course is also the title of its textbook. In this course, which also consists of ten two-hour sessions, various schools of economic, political and sociological thought are discussed. Six additional weeks are devoted to the study of the Philosophy of Henry George, by Professor George Raymond Geiger.

TEACHERS TRAINING COURSE

This is a course of indeterminate length, but never less than ten sessions. Enrollment in this course is by selection, and the classes are limited to not over twelve students. Each student is required to teach at least one lesson. The method of classroom discussion is explained. Each question in the Teachers Manual is analyzed, so that the fundamental concept which the answering of this question is intended to bring out is understood.

Out of this class the teachers for classes and for the Correspondence Course are selected. Usually the prospective teacher supplements his training course by handling correspondence lessons before being assigned to a class.

FACULTY

From the above outline of the Teachers Training Course it can be seen that the main requirements for the faculty is a complete understanding of the subject matter and the methods of this School. Previous training or cultural background is not stressed in the selection of instructors, because it can readily be understood that unless one has had a sufficient amount of education, business training or general experience the probability of qualifying is very remote. Most of our teachers, therefore, are college trained. It is, however, even more important that they have those gifts of "sweet reasonableness," dialectic, and demeanor which are necessary for the teaching of adults in discussion groups. And, of course, a thorough knowledge of the subject matter.

Among our teachers are to be found men and women of such diversified interests as lawyers, bankers, public accountants, school teachers, engineers, brokers, manufacturers, journalists, insurance men, minis-

ters. All of our teachers are volunteers. They teach because of their sincere interest in the subject matter. Their attitude toward this avocation is not to be measured in terms of money, and all of them teach at the sacrifice of time, effort and personal comfort. Most of them contribute money as well to the work of the School.

However, even though the teaching is on a volunteer basis, the course is held to a definite form, through the required use of a Teachers Manual in all classes. This instrument, therefore, assures uniformity of interpretation and instruction, if not in presentation. Further conformity is assured by the use of common textbooks.

Above all, the teachers are trained to avoid all appearance of political partisanship, propaganda or bias. In the teaching of political economy a purely objective point of view is sometimes difficult. But this very difficulty is an asset to our teaching, because we have found that fairness and impartiality in handling all questions and all schools of economic thought induce a greater willingness to learn what Henry George has taught. This is impressed upon the teachers not only in their training course, but also by the quickly gained knowledge that to hold one's classes one must be impartial.

CHARACTER OF STUDENTS

This is a venture in adult education. Invitations to our classes are sent promiscuously to the general public. A cross section of our student body will contain almost every occupation that man engages in, and every age from eighteen to sixty. The greatest number, however, seem to come from the professional and business fields. School teachers, lawyers, and public accountants are relatively the most abundant. Architects, brokers, dentists, clerks, manufacturers, housewives, business executives, students—it is impossible to characterize the kind of students who attend these courses except to say that they are men and women who are interested in studying fundamental economics and social philosophy. Since the knowledge gained at this School cannot be capitalized by the student for his material advantage, and can have to him only a cultural value, it must be evident by the numbers who take this course that there is an actual need for it. It serves a useful purpose in adult education.

A Poet's View of the English Land Question

The people they left the land, the land,
But they went on working hard;
And the village green that had got mislaid
Turned up in the squire's backyard:
But twenty men of us all got work
On a bit of his motor car;
And we all became, with the world's acclaim,
The marvelous mugs we are:

CHORUS

The marvelous mugs, miraculous mugs,
The mystical mugs we are.

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON.

TURNING back, wherever there is light to guide us, we may everywhere see that in their first perceptions, all peoples have recognized the common ownership in land, and that private property is an usurpation, a creation of force and fraud.—PROGRESS AND POVERTY.

"POLICE Urged to Study Teeth in Curbing Crime," is the heading of a news item. Good! Our war against crime seems to be making progress.

A Bit of News and a Word of Thanks from the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation

IT is our pleasure to make an interesting and important announcement.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held May 25, 1937 (too late to be reported in the last issue of LAND AND FREEDOM), the Honorable Lawson Purdy, one of the original trustees named in the will of the late Robert Schalkenbach, was elected to fill the vacancy created by the death of Charles O'Connor Hennessy. The nomination was made by Anna George deMille.

Mr. Purdy has been a shining light in the Georgeist Movement since its earliest days. A friend and co-worker of Henry George, some of the most valuable accomplishments have been the results of his labors. As Secretary, then President, of the New York Tax Reform Association, he was instrumental in bringing about the separate assessment of land and improvements in New York City. Mr. Purdy is the only surviving member of the Committee of Five appointed by Henry George in the days of his mayoralty campaign. The others, Charles Francis Abbott, Jerome O'Neil, Charles Frederick Adams and Charles O'Connor Hennessy, have dropped from the ranks. At the same meeting John W. Angus, Lancaster M. Greene and Otto K. Dorn, were elected trustees. Philip H. Cornick will continue in the active role of First Vice-President.

We are deeply grateful to our friends for the splendid way in which they responded to our "Open Letter" (last issue of LAND AND FREEDOM) asking for help in establishing "Progress and Poverty" with the bookdealers. As a direct result of your efforts, the sale of "Progress and Poverty" to bookdealers increased in July *sixty-six per cent*. We earnestly hope you will continue your splendid work.

Frank Berman, Bronx, New York, recently sent a large selection of books, including all the important titles, to the library of the West Point Military Academy. Said Mr. Berman in placing his order, "In case of trouble, we might as well have the officers on our side." This is an excellent example of the good work that can be done, at little cost, among the libraries. Does your local library have sufficient clean copies of the latest edition of "Progress and Poverty"? Why not look into this next time you are browsing around?

The *New York Times*, Sunday, July 18, 1937, reported, "St. John's College Turns to New Teaching—'Best Books' the Basis—Ancient and Modern Works, from Plato to Marx, Are Listed for First Course." In the article that followed it was stated that one hundred books will form the basis of the new curriculum. Said President Barr, "For fifteen years we have sought the most effective