

Memorial Services to Charles O'Connor Hennessy

FRIENDS of the late Charles O'Connor Hennessy gathered at the Henry George School on the evening of December 11 to pay tribute to his memory. About one hundred were present.

Mr. McIntyre, a friend and business associate of Mr. Hennessy, gave an intimate account of his business connection with our late friend and paid to his memory a glowing tribute. Other speeches follow:

MRS ANNA GEORGE DEMILLE

FRIENDS: We who are trustees of the School and of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation purposely chose this small place for our meeting tonight to honor the memory of our friend, Charles O'Connor Hennessy. We could have gathered together Mr. Hennessy's many friends who knew him in all the phases of his career. Such a meeting could have been held only in a great hall, and it would have been a totally different kind of meeting. We chose instead this intimate gathering as the most appropriate. We chose this School, started by Oscar Geiger, friend of Mr. Hennessy, which grew from a dream—a dream in which, to Mr. Geiger's sorrow, Mr. Hennessy did not at first believe.

When Mr. Hennessy became convinced that the School was worthwhile, he became an ardent supporter of its work. He who did not at first believe in the School's possibilities surpassed us all in his support of its activities. He has made it possible for the School's work to go on. Because he has helped us to carry on the work at the School's headquarters, his name will go down in letters of gold in whatever part of the world the School may be.

Mr. Hennessy was engaged in so many activities that no one person is qualified to speak of him fully. He was a politician—and I use this word in its fine sense, in the sense in which it is used in Great Britain—a statesman dedicated to the welfare of his fellowmen, a man of grace and dignity. It has been my joy to see him carrying through difficult undertakings. An accomplished newspaper man, he was gifted in the spoken and written word. When he discussed law, he was a lawyer. When he considered financial problems, he was a financial expert. He guided meetings resembling gatherings of Kilkenny cats into orderly channels.

It was my great privilege to be with him last summer in England. We had long talks together, like so many other long talks we have had in recent years. They were talks to which I always looked forward with keen anticipation, talks which now I terribly miss.

Charles O'Connor Hennessy was wise, tolerant, understanding. Last summer he talked to a few of us and told us that he felt he was attending his last International Union Conference. Although he saw the handwriting on the wall, he felt neither sorrow nor fear—only realization that the time had come to put his house in order.

At that time he wanted to step down from the presidency of the International Union (which he had made financially possible), and was eager to have the young Dane take his place. I call him "the young Dane," but he is thirty or thirty-five, with the tradition of his parents behind him. It was difficult to convince Bjorner that he should take the chair, but at that meeting he was installed, and this great man, still living, heard beautiful things said about him by this young man, his successor in office.

Those who have known him at the Schalkenbach Foundation know of the uncounted hours he has spent to promote the doctrines of Henry George. The able man who is taking his place knows how much of his strength went into the work of the Foundation.

I must speak a little for myself. Mr. Hennessy came into the House of George early. He was one of the first to get Henry George to Brooklyn to make a speech. When he came to our home as one of Brother Harry's friends he always seemed like a boy.

Two or three messages in tribute to Mr. Hennessy have come to

me, and I must read them tonight. (Mrs. deMille here read tributes from Mr. Madsen, Foulke and Bjorner.)

He was a man among men. I shall never look upon his like again.

PHILIP H. CORNICK

The Committee has asked me to take charge of the meeting, and I am going to speak about the Art of Living.

Most of us from time to time are oppressed by the fear of death. We react to the stimulus of that fear in various ways. Sometimes we set our hearts on postponing the inevitable, and adjust our lives to that end. Others of us decide to live each day to the full. We are sure of this day and no other.

Charles O'Connor Hennessy had the moral, mental and physical qualities which are essential to the Art of Living. He lived far beyond the allotted threescore years and ten and he lived fully, deeply, richly. He laughed, he played, he thought, he suffered disappointments, he struggled, but he had that balance that enabled him to press on and accomplish much.

As a young man he served his apprenticeship in journalism, gaining a deep knowledge of human institutions and a keen insight into human nature. Then he went into the field of banking. For half a century he devoted himself to mortgage banking, became an authority and was called upon by governors and by a president.

He did not neglect his duties as a citizen, but took part in the affairs of his time. He was elected state Senator in New Jersey, and was closely associated as floor leader and adviser with Governor Woodrow Wilson. In addition to all this, for more decades than some of us have lived he was a devoted exponent of the philosophy of Henry George. With it all, he found time to manage his own affairs so wisely that at the time of his death he was able to pass on to his friends and associates the means for carrying on work which lay nearest his heart.

I would say that Mr. Hennessy was an outstanding example of the Art of Living. It is fitting therefore that we who have come here tonight to honor his memory should express our gratification for his successful living, rather than our grief at his passing.

HON. LAWSON PURDY

Thinking about my relations with Charles O'Connor Hennessy in times past, it occurs to me that he and I served together on the Committee of Five appointed by Henry George. On that committee were Charles Francis Abbott, Jerome O'Neil, Charles Frederick Adams, Mr. Hennessy and myself. I am the only surviving member. We were rather young in those days.

Mr. MacIntyre has told you much about Mr. Hennessy's life—his close association with politics and his work as a newspaper man. Let me tell you about Mr. Hennessy and New York City politics.

In those days the ballot was a poor affair. Its aim was to enable a candidate to have his name appear under that of a recognized leader at the top of the ballot so that he could ride into office on the strength of that leader's popularity. We felt that it was more important to keep the name of Henry George clear of reproach than to have him elected to office. As a matter of fact, in the beginning we did not even suppose he had a chance to win. As the campaign progressed, however, we were carried away by our own enthusiasm. We were in danger of bodily harm from the O'Brienites, tough customers in the politics of those days, but Charles O'Connor Hennessy, in his middle thirties then, guided us through the maze of local politics. This young man carried through the campaign with all the acumen of a much older man.

Charles O'Connor Hennessy was wise, intelligent, temperate, sound, never rushing into anything. He was a great leader and a great exponent of the philosophy that means so much to us here.

SPEECH OF FREDERIC CYRUS LEUBUSCHER

The death of Charles O'Connor Hennessy ended a friendship begun fifty years before. In the Henry George campaign of 1886 I went to greet the candidate at the headquarters in the Colonnade Hotel,

long since razed. There I met for the first time not only Mr. George but Louis F. Post and Charles O'Connor Hennessy. There is no truer friendship than joint endeavor in a great cause, one which to both of us was akin to religion. For a half century we met constantly not only in Single Tax circles but in business and in social affairs. I count it as one of my greatest privileges that he and his sainted wife were frequent guests at my home. It is fitting therefore that I say a few words on this occasion.

If I were asked to name the outstanding trait of this man I would select his quality of leadership. He displayed this in all the fields of human endeavor that he entered—journalism, finance, politics, literature and in organizations formed to spread the gospel according to Henry George. Physically he was a little man without the commanding presence that of itself often commands respect. Notwithstanding that lack his personality and clarity of expression invariably picked him out in a crowd.

He became a reporter soon after graduating from a public school and before he was thirty became city editor of a great New York City newspaper. But an even wider field soon opened before him. Imbued as he was with the individualistic philosophy of Henry George which stressed voluntary cooperation rather than state socialism, in 1888 he helped found the savings and loan association now known as the Franklin Society for Home Building and Savings. For more than forty years he was its president. It is now one of the leading cooperative bodies in the United States. While he believed that the adoption of the Single Tax would depopulate those breeders of misery, disease and vice—the tenement houses—he was intensely practical and could not wait. So that now through his efforts there are thousands of happy though modest homes in and around this great city. His leadership was soon recognized and he became in turn the head of the Metropolitan, New York State & United States League of Savings & Loan Associations and finally the president of the Savings & Loan Bank.

In politics he also attained honors. While leader of his party in the New Jersey State Senate he became its candidate for United States Senator and failed of election by only a few thousand votes. He was a many-sided man. A financier and a politician is rarely a scholar. He found time amid his activities to be a student of the writings of Lord Francis Bacon, becoming the vice-president of the American Baconian Society. Even his impromptu speeches were models of exquisite English.

But while he was a keen business man and loved his work of building homes for the poor he conceived his real life-work to be a follower of the Prophet of San Francisco. For a half century he used his tongue and his pen in the cause of recovering for the disinherited the land and natural resources that had been made for all and not for a few. Indeed that for him was a religion. Robert Schalkenbach in bequeathing a fund to be used for teaching the philosophy of Henry George was wise in his selection of Hennessy as one of the trustees. He soon became the president and until a few minutes of his death was indefatigable in the work of that Foundation.

He presided at an International Conference of Single Taxers held in Copenhagen, Denmark, ten years ago. I can still see his radiant face as the motion I made for the formation of a permanent body was carried. Elected in 1926 as the first president of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, in 1929 he was re-elected in Edinburgh, but declined re-election at the meeting in London this year, becoming honorary president.

Being intensely human, of course he appreciated the honors that came to him in finance, politics and the Henry George movement. But he shunned praise of his work and speeches. Applicable to him was the letter written by Henry George to Frances M. Milne, a California poetess: "Praise is the deadliest poison that can be offered to the human soul. Were I ever to accept it my power would soon be gone. What power I have comes from the fact that I know my own weakness; and when duty lay on me have neither feared blame nor sought praise."

I often marveled that Hennessy attained a half dozen years more than the psalmist's 70. I recall when, ill and frail in the early nineties, he took ship for Europe. A half dozen of us saw him off. As we waved him goodbye and left the dock one said "that is the last we will see of Charlie." Thereafter he had many diseases and operations, any one of which would have been fatal to an ordinary man. Indeed, once he was obliged to withdraw as a gubernatorial candidate because of illness. I believe that what kept him alive for almost fourscore years was his indomitable will that he must live for the sake of what I have called his religion—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Two years ago in this hall he made a most moving address at the funeral of Oscar Geiger. I will quote a paragraph, first taking the liberty of substituting his name for that of Geiger:

"Charles O'Connor Hennessy's greatest attainment was as a teacher of the truths of political economy as Henry George had revealed them in his immortal writings; truths which are now of the most vital concern to humanity; portentous truths which have been imperceived or neglected or distorted by most of the teaching professors of our time. It was Charles O'Connor Hennessy's part to saturate his fine mind with George's philosophy and economic teachings, and reveal them persuasively and convincingly to the minds of others."

And so this man, small of stature and with a frail physique, stands before us as a colossus. Builder of homes for the poor, tribune of the people and preacher of the only philosophy that can save civilization, we salute you!

Correspondence Course of the Henry George School

THE most recent development in the educational programme of the Henry George School of Social Science is a Correspondence Course. At this writing thousands of circulars offering this ten-lesson course in "Progress and Poverty" are being mailed to all parts of the country. This course is based upon the same technique that has been used so successfully in class room work, and the question sheets are based upon the questions used in the revised Teachers Manual.

The course should greatly accelerate the educational programme of the school. Fortunately sufficient funds have been contributed by a friend of the movement to assure the plans of the correspondence department for at least a year. This course is given free, as are all the courses of the school.

It can be readily seen how vast and momentous this new method of teaching "Progress and Poverty" can become. There are no limitations of time or space to contend with. Students can start any time, can work as fast as they like, and there is no problem of finding class room space or of developing teachers. The staff of the correspondence division will consist of graduates of the school for whom classes have not yet been organized, or who, although thoroughly prepared, are timid about teaching. This will open up plenty of opportunity for active work among graduates who are anxious to "do something about it." The staff will be under the direction of Mr. Frank Chodorov.

The correspondence course should also help in the