

Physiocrats, Libertarian Pioneers

The pioneering of the French physiocrats in libertarian thought is recounted colorfully by Joseph Dana Miller, editor of Land and Freedom, international organ of the Georgist movement, in an article on "The Golden Age of Economic Thought" in the current issue of that journal.

Mr. Miller describes the contributions of Turgot, the Finance Minister in whose brief tenure important doctrines of the school were enacted into law; of Quesnay, the titular leader; of Gournay; of Du Pont de Nemours who named the group and of Condorcet who broadened its horizons.

"There is no period in history in which there were so great a number of men gifted with real vision as in the time of France immediately preceding the Revolution," the editor declares.

Noting the chief events of Turgot's career in office, Mr. Miller relates how the nobility and the other privileged classes forced his retirement and how the anti-libertarian policies of his successor, Necker, aided in bringing on the Revolution.

"When Turgot was forced out of office and Necker took his place the stage was set for the Revolution," he concludes. "So passed this brief period in which, like expiring candles, these great souls flashed their message on a decadent nation. Condorcet perished through exposure and Turgot lies in an unmarked grave. In this way France paid her debt to these great souls. In the day of smaller men that were to succeed them these pathfinders on the road to liberty were forgotten. Yet they

could have saved France from the ruin that overtook her. Can their teachings yet save America?"

Mr. Miller's article complements that on Quesnay which appeared in the February issue of *The Freeman*. Written by one who knows through intimate study of the best sources the achievements and the shortcomings of the Economistes, "The Golden Age of Economic Thought" should be of keen interest to all readers of *The Freeman*.

In the same issue Mr. Miller dis-

cusses the problem of monopoly from the viewpoint of one who opposes the modern theory of monopolistic competition and also discusses the effect of poverty upon the development of art. Those who are not already subscribers should send \$2 to the publication at 150 Nassau Street, New York, for a year's subscription. Graduates and students of the Henry George School of Social Science may obtain the year's subscription at the special introductory rate of \$1.

—W. L.