

Joseph Dana Miller

The death of Joseph Dana Miller removes another of the old guard of pioneer advocates of the economic philosophy of Henry George, one who stuck to it and did good work for it until the end. My acquaintance with him began in 1894, shortly after I had been goaded into reading "Progress and Poverty," found it all that had been claimed for it, and joined the old Manhattan Single Tax Club, then on East 27th Street, not far from the present site of the Henry George School of Social Science. He was even then a veteran in the movement, and I soon learned to respect his judgment on the different phases of our philosophy. It was in this Club that I also made the acquaintance of Henry George in the closing year of his life. Mr. Miller was one of his intimates, as was also Oscar Geiger, founder of our School, who was then little more than a boy in years, though he had an old head for one so young.

Mr. Miller had already made a reputation as a writer, critic and poet before he made the acquaintance of Henry George and became associated with him in his campaigns for social reform. He assisted him in his fight for ballot reform which resulted in the secret ballot in nearly all parts of the country.

After the death of Henry George in the New York Mayoralty campaign in 1897, Mr. Miller took a more prominent place in our leadership. In 1901, he founded "The Single Tax Review," later changing its name to

"Land and Freedom." This magazine acquired an international circulation for it has been an authoritative exponent of the philosophy of economic liberty. In 1917, he edited and published the "Single Tax Yearbook," which is an encyclopedia of information regarding the movement up to that time and will be invaluable to future historians.

During the past half century or more he has contributed many articles on economics and current business developments to various magazines and sociological periodicals here and abroad. He was also a poet of note, for his poems were frequently to be found in our foremost magazines. He published two volumes of his poems, one in 1894, "Verses from a Vagrant Muse," and, more recently, "Thirty Years of Verse Making." He is credited with being the discoverer of Edwin Markham's "The Man With The Hoe" and introducing that western poet to the East.

A close friend and intimate of Oscar Geiger throughout these activities, he was one of the incorporators of the Henry George School of Social Science. He was also one of the original trustees of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

May I quote from my remarks at his funeral services in Jersey City on May 10?

"We have lost a friend, a brother, a wise counselor, a man of renown, but we are fortunate in having had him so long. He was one of those

to whom were given the vision of the Promised Land, the Civilization that will be when men have grown up to mental and spiritual maturity, but were not permitted to enter it.

"For more than half a century he cherished that vision, which will be realized when men have learned the deep significance of Abraham Lincoln's prayer at Gettysburg—'That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom,' the freedom to earn an honest livelihood, a 'freedom in which every man may sit under his own vine and fig tree with none to vex him and make him afraid,'—and sought to show the vision to others.

"Whatever may be one's lot in life, to have had this vision of the civilization that will be when Freedom truly reigns over the world, and to have done somewhat to bring that civilization nearer, is something to make life worth living, and to none was the vision clearer than to Joseph Dana Miller, who did what he could in his day to hasten that day, when 'Thy will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

"My grief at his passing is born of a deep sense of personal loss, but it is tempered by a feeling of exaltation and thankfulness that I was privileged to know him over a period of forty-five years, and can say 'He was my friend.' And I have an abiding faith that I shall see him again, face to face, for our social philosophy long ago 'revived a faith that was dead.'"

STEPHEN BELL.