

# "To Thine Own Self Be True"

By STEPHEN BELL

*same old ignominious ending*

Raymond Hammond poses this searching question for Georgists to answer:

"Can Georgism give its blessing and support to the nation's war effort without doing violence to its principles?"

He would appear to answer it in the negative, believing that to so bless and support the war would be hurtful, if not fatal, to the movement. It seems to me that he has not reasoned the thing quite through for his own logic should lead him to a contrary conclusion.

There will be no dissent with his statement that George believed war to spring from a violation of economic laws. His distrust of armaments as security against attack (not as a means of defense) and his trust in a long-range program for peace with

"voluntary" vocation. Thus, too, was individuality maintained, for a man might do exactly as he pleased so long as he gave the state the amount of labor he owed it and did nothing to injure his neighbor. And why should he injure his neighbor? Since he could not obtain money, or goods, or any sort of economic, social, or intellectual advantage or eminence by so doing, crime in Altruria disappeared. There remained but one way to attain distinction in the land—"The great man is the man who, for the time being, has been able to give the greatest happiness to the greatest number." All Altrurians worked for the civic good, and "no one among us is quite happy," explained Homos, "unless he had dedicated himself, in some special way, to the general good. . . . The possession of great gifts, or any kind of superiority, involved the sense of obligation to others, and the wish to identify one's self with the great mass of men, rather than the ambition to distinguish one's self from them."

(To Be Concluded)

*So far, no good at all.*

Free Trade as the keystone were well founded, as was his disbelief in the innate "cussedness" of other nations. But what has all this to do with charting a true course for us in the present emergency? To teach fire prevention when a great conflagration rages is usually futile.

Truly the genius of Georgism is educational. For this reason alone, if for no other, it becomes those of us who desire to aid in educating mankind along the lines of social or economic sanity to do all in our power to preserve and perpetuate the means and opportunities now at our disposal for continuing our educational work. We all agree with him that it is only in times of peace that the seeds of the philosophy of economic freedom can germinate and take root. Surely Mr. Hammond cannot believe that our abandoning the field to the Axis powers would bring peace to the troubled world. Indeed, he himself seems to say all that is necessary along that line:

"The Nazis know how to make war. There is no conflict in their minds. It is easy for them to accept war as a solution. Believing as they do that other nations are responsible for their misery, their object is to destroy the offending nations."

Of course Georgism cannot "bless war," but it may properly object to being destroyed, even while it heartily damns the war and the necessity therefor which has been forced upon it. By Mr. Hammond's own statement we have no choice left us except to crush the malign power of those who hold to the damnable Nazi philosophy.

"If the philosophy of ethical democracy cannot live by education, then it must die," he says. I agree, and by that token I insist that it is not only our right but our duty to do what we can to preserve the conditions in which education may proceed.

Fortunately, an abler pen than

mine has said on this question what may be considered the "last word." The late Henri Lambert, a Belgian manufacturer and economist, wrote a quarter century ago or more as follows:

"The fight for survival is the natural law of all beings deprived of morals; it remains the law of individuals and collectivities in those surroundings where an inadequate morality obtains—a state of things for which, by reason of natural solidarity, responsibility is forced on all. War is, therefore, if not a criminal or immoral act, at least a phenomenon caused by 'a-morality,' signifying non-morality—that is to say by ignorance or inadequate knowledge of the moral laws which should prevail in international relations. The wills and conventions of men can never make moral that which is immoral or 'amoral.' Logic and force of things will ever impede the introduction therein of a—so to speak—false morality. This only is given to men: to substitute by study, knowledge and practice of morality, the moral state of things for the 'amoral' state. Such are logic and just law. International morals and laws of war will ever be hollow conceptions and sterile script. There can only be international laws and morals of Peace." (Laws of 'Civilized' Warfare, Pax Economica, page 42.)

I may say of Henri Lambert that he knew and thoroughly understood the Georgian philosophy, and freely admitted its basic character. He regarded it, however, as too deeply basic for the nations to delve into it while wars and the fear of wars distracted them. His concept of the importance of trade seemed to outrun that of George—it filled his economic firmament. Civilization began when men began to exchange, and all the vast cooperations which make civilization possible were its fruits. Our sense of justice itself grew from the

(Continued on page 281.)

(Continued from page 273.)

need of evaluating things and their equivalents in trade. The extending of trade areas meant the broadening and deepening of civilization. Impeding and obstructing trade by any means meant the narrowing and retarding of civilization. Trade is the very lifeblood of civilization, whose circulation can be restricted only at our peril—if carried too far it may mean the death of civilization. Have we not seen it?

He was a pacifist of pacifists, who knew, as Cobden had said, that "Free Trade is the international law of the Almighty," but he had a "deadline" beyond which there could be no peace.