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Man Is Never "Satisfied"

By LANCASTER M. GREENE

(The following letter from the Chairman of the Board of the Henry George School of Social Science to the editor of The Wall Street Journal was published in the September 17th issue of that paper. It is reprinted here by permission.—The Editors.)

In your editorial "Free or Controlled" (Sept. 14) you speak of the resistance to the teaching of fear and "take what you want" on the part of "a happy and satisfied people."

A better word than "satisfied" seems desirable in this connection, for Emerson pointed out that man has an important asset, a driving force in his "divine discontent."

Henry George pointed out that man is the one animal whose desires

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are never satisfied short of infinity.

When any other animal has satisfied its desires in the direction of food, shelter and its reproductive instincts, then it settles down to sleep. When man has reached a comparable state of satisfaction, he has but set his foot on the first rung of a ladder of infinite progression, away from and above the beast. Quantity achieved, quality is sought.

If you would change that word "satisfied" to "hopeful," I would consider it a great improvement in a fine editorial. I agree that a hopeful, vigorous people will not believe their destiny lies in taking what they want from others.

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Mr. Greene's point is well taken and we are glad to accept the correction.—Ed.