

The Gospel of Justice

Author(s): Francis Neilson

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# The Gospel of Justice

By FRANCIS NEILSON

## Economic Idealists

LONG CENTURIES HAVE PASSED since individualists and socialists began their search for an Elysium in which humankind might settle down, live in peace, and enjoy an abundance of the good things of earth. So far, their efforts have failed signally to impress the tenants of lands east, west, north, and south, that they might aid in the adventure and plan a future for themselves and their heirs that would be less toilsome than the system which they now endure.

Perhaps one of the chief reasons for the apathy of mortals to making a change for the better is that they are still addicted to the blood-and-grime business of war. And now that threats and rumors of strife are politically necessary to keep labor and capital employed in making munitions, the industrial victims of the State imagine war loaves are larger than peace rolls, and preparations for a fight will insure for them a steady job, enabling them to pay the installments on their cars, radios, and television sets.

It may be that such a system is, to the artisan, an Elysium—the best that can be hoped for in this world of confusion and turmoil; and that it is safe to think that it will last, at any rate, until he is eligible for an old-age pension.

The nineteenth century was not alone in producing men who really believed that most of the troubles which beset their fellows were economically unnecessary. As long ago as the days of Pindar, the Greek poet, there was an idea abroad that there had been a time when men knew a pleasant existence. In the *Isles of the Blessed* we learn of that happy condition:

They till not the ground, they plow not the wave,  
They labor not, never! oh, never!  
Not a tear do they shed, not a sigh do they heave;  
They are happy for ever and ever!

Even so late in the classical period as the time of Justinian, Roman jurists held the notion that conditions for humankind were better in the days when no one spoke of progress than they were under the rule of imperial Rome. Indeed, it is easy to trace this notion all through the Pentateuch down to the time of Jesus, through medieval days, during the

Renaissance, terminating with the great announcement of the Prophet of San Francisco.

Henry George was imbued with such a high ideal that I sometimes think he might have been looking over the shoulder of Alexander Pope when he wrote the lines:

All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail,  
 Returning Justice lift aloft her scale,  
 Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,  
 And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.

The rosy hopes of modern economic idealists began to wither toward the end of the last century. The imperial policies of the six leading powers of the world turned men's attention away from the things to be bettered at home, and launched them into wars waged for the ownership of natural resources of backward lands. The Cuban war, the Boer War, and the Russo-Japanese War were conflicts that foreshadowed the outbreak of the first World War.

The exploitation of territories rich in diamonds and gold, tin and tungsten, rubber and fuel, were El Dorados for the concessionaires who, without mercy, slaughtered thousands of natives and enslaved the survivors. Rich ores and underpaid native labor were the magnets that drew governments into the nets of concessionaires and brought to the peoples of the earth world wars.

#### War and Economic Enslavement

HENRY GEORGE was a prophet. His vision reached afar. Indeed, he saw all this taking shape. In his work, *Protection or Free Trade*, he wrote:

Protection . . . has always found an effective ally in those national prejudices and hatreds which are in part the cause and in part the result of the wars that have made the annals of mankind a record of bloodshed and devastation—prejudices and hatreds which have everywhere been the means by which the masses have been induced to use their own power for their own enslavement.

Where is the informed person who will now challenge this statement? Surely it is plain to those who have taken the trouble to study the matter that one of the chief reasons for the first World War was the growth of German industry and the inroads that she made into markets beyond the seas, which had been special preserves of British manufacturers. As for the second World War, both Great Britain and the United States entered the fray because Hitler had decided to abolish the system of foreign loans and to adopt a trade policy of barter.

In *Progress and Poverty*, George deals with the question of the diversities in social development. He points out that the social feeling ceases to be a factor in uniting families and tribes when they become separated from one another. Under certain circumstances, differences in language, custom, tradition, and religion foster the worst defects of political nationalism. He says:

. . . With these differences, prejudices grow, animosities spring up, contact easily produces quarrels, aggression begets aggression, and wrong kindles revenge. And so between these separate social aggregates arises the feeling of Ishmael and the spirit of Cain, warfare becomes the chronic and seemingly natural relation of societies to each other, and the powers of men are expended in attack or defense, in mutual slaughter and mutual destruction of wealth, or in warlike preparations. How long this hostility persists, the protective tariffs bear witness. . . .

He saw clearly that "warfare is the negation of association."

#### George on the Modern City

ONLY A FEW GEORGISTS know how great a prophet George really was. Nearly all that is now taking place in the investigations in Washington, regarding political and social crime, was foreseen by him; and there are passages in his works which describe accurately the present appalling conditions in our great cities. Is not the following, taken from *Progress and Poverty*, a fairly complete picture of what is recorded in the daily papers?

The type of modern growth is the great city. Here are to be found the greatest wealth and the deepest poverty. And it is here that popular government has most clearly broken down. In all the great American cities there is today as clearly defined a ruling class as in the most aristocratic countries in the world. Its members carry wards in their pockets, make up the slates for nominating conventions, distribute offices as they bargain together, and—though they toil not, neither do they spin—wear the best of raiment and spend money lavishly. They are men of power, whose favor the ambitious must court and whose vengeance he must avoid. Who are these men? The wise, the good, the learned—men who have earned the confidence of their fellow-citizens by the purity of their lives, the splendor of their talents, their probity in public trusts, their deep study of the problems of government? No; they are gamblers, saloon keepers, pugilists, or worse, who have made a trade of controlling votes and of buying and selling offices and official acts. They stand to the government of these cities as the Praetorian Guards did to that of declining Rome. He who would wear the purple, fill the curule chair, or have the fasces carried before him, must go or send his messengers to their camps, give them donatives and make them promises. It is through these men that the rich corporations and powerful pecuniary interests can pack the Senate and the bench with their creatures. It is these men who make

School Directors, Supervisors, Assessors, members of the Legislature, Congressmen. Why, there are many election districts in the United States in which a George Washington, a Benjamin Franklin or a Thomas Jefferson could no more go to the lower house of a State Legislature than under the Ancient Regime a base-born peasant could become a Marshal of France. Their very character would be an insuperable disqualification.

Those who follow closely the evidence given in these investigations of political and social crime might say that the above statement, made more than seventy years ago, is somewhat mild. It may be true that Henry George did not foresee the full extent of this shocking debasement of the public mind. No one could have conceived a condition so alarming that our magazines, for the past two years, have lamented the fact that the people generally in the country have lost all sense of rectitude and indignant protest.

#### The Problem of Involuntary Poverty

IN AN EXTRAORDINARY REVIEW of Anna George de Mille's life of her father, which appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* (June 29, 1951), the critic, with unusual sympathy, lauds the author of *Progress and Poverty* in terms such as are seldom bestowed on men of singleminded purpose. He says:

The legacy of this remarkable man was not his policy of hypothesis. They did not give him the greatest public funeral New York had ever known for that. "He was the innocentest man that ever I knew," said his faithful Irish servant; and the epithet is most apt in its Latinity. He was the conscious symptom, the public conscience, of his society's *malaise*. That he did not discover the proper solution—or even that he found a wrong, or inadequate, one—is beside the point. He was perhaps the last of the great humanists. They could be wrong about means times without number, yet render humanity a profound service because they kept pointing to the right ends. Henry George's critique was of the ends which western industrial society had set itself. About the means of achieving them he could afford to err. But two generations after his death, and three after his book's first appearance, few thinking men anywhere in the West will refuse him the palm of the prophet. In spite of our progress, the Lady Poverty abides with us, but in a guise the more terrible because it is less material.

Was Henry George wrong? If he did not find the proper solution of our economic woe, who did? It is inconceivable that a critic of repute, who shows in his writing that he is a fairly intelligent student of affairs, should labor under the delusion that a solution of the disabilities and afflictions of men are matters that may be left to the discretion of politicians. For, if George's solution is not the right one, then it is to be in-

ferred that the State will discover some means of rectifying the evils which beset us.

Some European States have, for the past four generations, since the end of the Napoleonic Wars, tried every expedient to ameliorate the economic condition of the masses. As Jacques and Robert Lacour-Gayet show succinctly in *De Platon à la Terreur*, there is not one new political trick attempted by the modern State that has not been repeated many times ever since the days of Pericles. There has been a change of labels for the measures, but no matter what high-sounding title has been given to the dodge, it has, in practice, proved to be a very old one.

It is well our critic admits that in spite of our progress, poverty is still with us. In this respect, he agrees with George. But unlike the subject of his review, he does not ask why there should be involuntary poverty, and this is strange because he admits it is prevalent "in a guise more terrible because it is less material." Yet, make-work schemes, bonuses and doles, as sops and poultices for economic ills, have been administered by the State, decade after decade, since Coxey's army marched on Washington and the British Fabians infiltrated into the Liberal party.

Today, material poverty in the whole of Europe threatens not only to destroy the best in its culture, but to drive its people to desperate action. Here, in our country, a war scare was necessary to save us from a slump. Early in the spring of 1950, the prospects of a letdown in trade were so serious that the government resorted to one of the oldest dodges of distracting the people—that of starting a war. But war was never yet a cure for involuntary poverty, and the expense of the Korean conflict, in men and treasure, is so fearful that it is admitted on all sides to be a thoroughly unpopular one.

#### The Physiocrats on Taxation

NO MATTER HOW DEEPLY our critic appreciates the character and purpose of Henry George, his review reveals the sad fact that he has not understood the gospel set forth in *Progress and Poverty*. Students of fundamental economics are, by now, conversant with the extraordinary notions some of our academic economists have held regarding the proposals for abolishing involuntary poverty. But I doubt whether anyone has ever read such a hodgepodge of confused thinking as our critic reveals in the following statement:

. . . The Physiocrats had demanded the single-tax, *l'impôt unique*, and Voltaire had lampooned them in *L'Homme à Quarante Écus*, in which he asked why the peasant-farmer-landlord should pay everyone's taxes, and

the manufacturer, merchant, shopkeeper escape. The second point is more puzzling: the "single tax" was not even new at that time. During the last third of last century even outstanding British Conservatives had advocated a single tax on capital (though not only land) values, or property. America had started the ill-fated, and regularly evaded, Personal Property Tax. And Henry George's sole taxation of land values seemed likely to hit the poorer nations, peoples, and continents harder than the richer, since they would be less able to finance their needs from such a tax. Thirdly, George affirmed that his tax would stick on the landlords, and would not shift, whereas Shearman and many other followers or admirers of George's ideas wanted the tax because they declared it *would* be shifted from the payer at its first incidence to everybody else in proportion.

Suppose we examine this extraordinary rigmarole and try to find if it has any relation at all to the ideas expressed by George. It does not follow, because Voltaire did not understand the proposals of Quesnay, that "the peasant-farmer-landlord should pay everyone's taxes." There is nothing in the literature of the Physiocrats that I have seen which suggests such a purpose.

To abolish taxes upon farms and take the rent of the land, apart from improvements, was not only a relief for farmers, but a similar fiscal system instituted in urban areas would be a blessing for those who lived and worked there. To be rid of the imposition of taxes upon wealth was not only good for the farmer but also for the merchant and the artisan in the towns.

It is amusing to think that our critic is one with so many academic economists in being in no better position to understand the proposals of Quesnay than Voltaire himself. Certainly no progress toward a just fiscal system has been made by these critics which can be recorded as a credit, but the poverty of their ideas seems to grow apace.

However, the confusion becomes more mixed in the second point, which our critic says is "more puzzling"; "the 'single tax' was not even new at that time." At which time? When Quesnay announced his proposal, or when George wrote *Progress and Poverty*?

#### The Land Values Movement in England

THE NEXT SENTENCE is still more baffling, although we may gather from it that the date of its newness is to be found somewhere about the time George was writing his work. "During the last third of the last century even outstanding British Conservatives had advocated a single tax on capital (though not only land) values, or property."

It is news to me to learn of this. I should like to know what authority

there is for making such a statement. When the Land Values Movement gathered strength enough to force the Liberal party to make it one of the chief reforms in its program, I became a candidate for a county division. So far as I know, I was one of the first to advocate a tax on the capital value of land from the political platform.

True, the leagues for the taxation of land values, in England and Scotland, adopted the policy of Henry George shortly after his visit to Great Britain and Ireland. But in national politics, no one that I know of had made it a party question since the days of Richard Cobden when, in his speech at Derby, he demanded the taxation of land values for revenue to enable the government to abolish the breakfast-table duties.

In London, 1845, he said:

I warn (the landlords) against ripping up the subject of taxation. If they want another league at the death of this one (the Anti-Corn Law League), then let them force the middle and industrious classes to understand how they have been cheated, robbed and bamboozled upon the subject of taxation.

From that time until the war began in 1914, the outstanding British Conservatives, as a political body, were bitterly opposed to such a measure.

It is difficult to unravel the tangle of notions referred to by our critic in the last sentence I have quoted. Does he mean a single tax on the value of capital? And what does he understand as capital? All the factories, shops and residences; all the tools, machines and furniture of all the buildings in the land? Or does he mean the capital value of the land, apart from improvements? The two last words of the sentence—"or property"—lead one to imagine that the single tax was not to fall on the value of land but on the wealth—property—that was produced from it by labor and capital.

In the fourth point, the critic refers to the confusion which "arose from the outset between the real whole-hogging single-taxers who would have taxed land and land alone . . . and those . . . who merely looked for, and found, an additional source of revenue by clapping a tax on the secular increment of land values."

The confusion is in the mind of the critic. No one suggested a tax on land. The tax was to fall on the value of it, and the Budget of 1909 called for a revaluation of the land of England and Wales, and that was why the bill was rejected by the House of Lords.

For fifty years a doubt has been lurking in my mind as to the value of the knowledge of George's works his critics have revealed in their



strictures. Many of their references indicate that they have either misread *Progress and Poverty* or that they have merely learned from some academic economist what he thinks about George's ideas. I have never debated with an opponent, either Socialist or Tory, who revealed a scintilla of evidence that he was familiar with the books. And I may say that I have seldom met even a single taxpayer who has read *A Perplexed Philosopher*. All true Georgists that I have known have considered that this critique of Herbert Spencer's work on Justice was indispensable in the great structure of fundamentals that George built up.

#### The Theory of Value

FOR THOSE WHO CONSIDER the theories of Henry George are out of date, and not applicable to the conditions which exist, I would remind them that it is possible to take whole sections from his books which might have been written this morning by an impartial observer.

As for the critic of Anna George de Mille's work, he reveals in the following objection, the cloven hoof of the bureaucrat:

. . . Fifth and lastly, George's book was in fundamental opposition to all collectivisms, because its policy, devised merely as a means and not as an end, was to circumvent, not strengthen, the hand of the State on the individual citizen. It is odd that both George and the collectivists made the same error. Both based their policies on the old labour theory of value, whereas in an increasingly industrialized—and therefore capitalized—world, *the social utility theory of value alone can be safely employed as a measuring rod of reward, purposive planning, and efficacy of social policy.* . . . (Italics mine)

These are mere phrases. And it is very difficult indeed to learn from them just what the critic intends us to know. It is true that George's book advocates a policy, which is in opposition to collectivism, and that the taking of rent and abolishing all taxes on wealth would weaken the hand of the State. But he says that "both George and the collectivists have made the same error."

This does not make sense. Surely the hand of the State is stronger and heavier today in all the principal nations than it has been since the days of imperial Rome; and collectivists are responsible for the growth of its power. He says George and the collectivists based their policies on the old labor theory of value. Does he mean "surplus value," as expounded by Marx? Surely he cannot mean that the full value of his product should be the reward of the laborer, as advocated by Henry George!

If this is not mixing theories that cannot possibly blend, I should like to know what it is. But the critic reveals his utter inability to clarify

the matter when he says that the social utility theory of value alone can be safely employed as a measuring rod of reward. Does he know any department of any State that has devised a method of ascertaining how value can be determined by the social utility theory? Is he oblivious to what is now taking place in Great Britain and this country, where men who are attempting to regulate the prices of commodities and the wages of labor, to say nothing of the return to capital, are thimblorigging the business morning, noon and night, and do not know what emergencies they will have to meet next week?

Now George, in *A Perplexed Philosopher*, describes accurately the very condition that exists in Britain and the United States:

The truth is that customs, taxes, and improvement taxes, and income taxes, and taxes on business and occupations and on legacies and successions, are morally and economically no better than highway robbery or burglary, all the more disastrous and demoralizing because practised by the state. There is no necessity for them. The seeming necessity arises only from the failure of the state to take its own natural and adequate source of revenue—a failure which entails a long train of evils of another kind by stimulating a forestalling and monopolization of land which creates an artificial scarcity of the primary element of life and labor, so that in the midst of illimitable natural resources the opportunity to work has come to be looked on as a boon. . . .

A financial and commercial journal of repute, in an article upon "The Tax Load," said: "We are in the gravest danger of being taxed into a depression that will cause irreparable chaos."

Would our critic say the "needs" of our State justify the fiscal robbery which grows by what it feeds on?

How long are we to tolerate this impertinent imposition of critics who write about George but do not take the trouble to read in *Progress and Poverty* the warning given about the necessity of understanding the meaning of economic terms? One of the chief features of George's work is his clear analysis of the meaning of the terms he uses: namely, land, labor, capital, wealth, rent, wages, and interest. No one, so far, has succeeded in controverting his definitions of these terms.

#### Government Revenue and Government Waste

THAT A TAX on land values might hit the poorer nations, peoples and continents harder than the richer, because they would be less able to finance their needs from such a tax indicates clearly to me that our critic should read *Progress and Poverty* once more, and strive earnestly to understand George's proposals. For here he implies that the expenditures of govern-

ment under the system of the taxation of wealth are necessary.

I maintain there is not a government in Europe or America that could not manage its civil administration upon a third of what it now spends. The costliest "service" the taxpayers are called upon to maintain is that of the bureaucracy. Add to this the phenomenal waste of money that is thrown away upon the armed services, and it may easily be reckoned that the tax upon the value of land should be sufficient to pay the expenses of a country governed by honest men who have the taxpayers' interests at heart.

I could give many examples of what takes place in the departments in Washington and in most of the States concerning the waste of money, that goes on year after year. Here are two: A civil servant told me that at the end of World War II, in her department the majority of the staff had nothing to do but work out crossword puzzles, solve anagrams, and play the races on paper. The other instance was given me by an intimate friend who was made chairman of a State commission. After he had been in office for a month, he was appalled at the number of people in his department who had little or nothing to do. Within a year or so, he had cut the staff to about half and, being a shrewd judge of what people were capable of doing, he was not much surprised to find the work was being done more efficiently.

But Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps beat all records for wasting the taxpayers' money. At one camp I visited, a corporal told me that two years' work on a road up a mountain went for nothing and that the old mule path, there before they attempted to make the road, was much safer for a motor car.

The so-called "needs" of revenue for spendthrift governments are now a byword. During the war a southern senator declared that "there must be some waste." Waste is still in progress, and the poverty of senatorial notions of how to stop it increases week by week. Indeed, the present tax burden threatens to put the producers of wealth out of their blue jeans into bottomless barrels, to hide their nudity.

#### **Tax on Land Values not Shiftable**

THE NEXT POINT made by our critic is about the possibility of shifting a tax upon land value. How prices can rise in a falling market is a conundrum that has never been answered by those who believe landlords could shift the tax. I was told by the contractor of one of the largest estates in London that if a tax on land values were imposed, he would not know where to find the capital (tools) to set men to work to tear the

ancient buildings down and erect modern ones. Over a large area, in that estate, there were streets of houses on lease which had been put up a hundred years previously. If the tax on land values could have been shifted, it would have been passed on to the tenant by the landlord or the lessees, and there would have been no reason whatever for the outcry which was raised by London landlords, when in 1909, the government introduced a bill calling for the revaluation of the land of England and imposed a small tax on the capital value. No one knows better than the landlord himself that, under such a system, he would be unable to shift the tax.

Landlords, then, would be in competition to find land users, and speculative value would come to an end. Two landlords for one land user would be the order of the day. And I might point out here that our critic should look up the speeches of Richard Cobden, delivered in the House and in the country, and try to understand what he meant when he told the Commons that the wage question was so simple that a child could understand it: two men for one job, low wage; two jobs for one man, high wage.

But legitimate competition is anathema to a sentimental Liberal, and the wonder of it is that so many of them imagine that they are free-traders. I remember addressing a meeting in London many years ago when I told the audience that they should consider that all men were land animals and could not live without land. A heckler in the audience shouted out, "What, all men?" For a moment I was stumped, and then an inspiration came to me and I retorted, "All men but Fabians and Marxists." I was amazed when the gentleman applauded loudly and gave me a cheer.

#### The Object: Justice

HOW STRANGE IT IS that George's object explicitly set down is so seldom referred to by his critics. He says, the object is justice; the means, taxation. He saw the great injustice in the monopolization of land and its resources and that it was the chief cause of involuntary poverty. It was to remove this injustice that he began to study the age-long problem and find a solution for it. Hence, the pronouncement he made in *Progress and Poverty* to abolish taxes upon wealth and take rent, which belongs to the community, because land values are created by its presence. Land is the source of all their needs. All food, fuel, clothing and shelter are produced from it by labor with the aid of capital.

Perhaps in this, George struck at the root of the problem better than he knew. Although in the controversy with Herbert Spencer, as it is described so powerfully in *A Perplexed Philosopher*, he touched the fountain source of justice, I doubt whether he realized that he was girding

himself with the sword of Jesus of Nazareth. When the Galilean presented himself to the Baptist at Jordan, John said, "I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me?"

"And Jesus answering, said to him: Suffer it to be so now. For so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. . . ."

The mission of Jesus was to establish God's justice upon earth. For he was the seer who discovered the purpose of his Father. When he said, "I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world," he had divined the goodness of his Father in giving the earth to *all* men for their sustenance. And that, to him, was marked clearly in the distinction between what was created and what was produced. He knew from the Torah that property was wealth and belonged to the producer. But that which was created—the source from which food, fuel, clothing and shelter were produced—was for all the children of God.

The great injunction of Jesus, the eternal imperative, was: "Seek ye first the kingdom and its justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." Perhaps it was this, the first principle of the gospel, which inspired Henry George.

Who can read the chapter entitled "The Central Truth," in *Progress and Poverty*, and not realize the deeply religious note that is sounded in it? It is without creed, cult, race, or color, and embraces all the peoples of the world. The tone is elevated, and the crescendo rises to poetic heights. The marvel of it is that all churches were not stirred by it.

Now that the world is in sore travail and millions in Europe and Asia cry for food and raiment, the appeal that George makes is more relevant to the conditions of the people than ever it was. Here, the whole structure is artificial. We are borne up on the waves of inflation, and the industrial wheels are kept spinning in making the munitions of war. But when the waves recede, what will happen in this land cannot bear thinking about.

We have had one experience of a depression, but unfortunately the lesson of it was not learned. Today a generation is carrying the burden of it, which knows little or nothing of its afflictions. Although the mass of our people are employed, they live from hand to mouth. Mere nominal wage seems to satisfy the workers. But few understand how the value of the dollar has shrunk rapidly in the past two years. And, yet, the cry of the politicians is for more and more taxation to fill the maws of the spending departments. In this respect, our Congress out-Herods Herod in its greed for the revenue of the producers.

So it is with us as it has been with all civilizations in their decline.

"Whom the gods destroy, they first make mad." The old saying, "*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*," should be emblazoned on every house of legislature in the land.

#### The Warning of Henry George

HENRY GEORGE WARNED US of what would happen if we did not seek the kingdom. *Progress and Poverty* is the only book written by a layman of the west in which it is foretold, with a clarity that an intelligent student might understand, that the political and economic injustice of men would wreck their States.

George knew all the tricks and dodges of the palliatives politicians would prescribe for economic ills. And he realized that there was no hope coming from them for reconstruction, that generation after generation only political tinkers would be found to solder the widening seams in the rotten fabric of the State.

Nothing less than justice would satisfy George, and he knew that there could be no liberty without it. It is best to remind single taxers of the high ideals of George's gospel. There is far more in it than the matter of the means: taxation. It is the object that should always be kept in the forefront of the mission of Georgists:

In our time, as in times before, creep on the insidious forces that, producing inequality, destroy Liberty. On the horizon the clouds begin to lower. Liberty calls to us again. We must follow her further; we must trust her fully. Either we must wholly accept her or she will not stay. It is not enough that men should vote; it is not enough that they should be theoretically equal before the law. They must have liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life; they must stand on equal terms with reference to the bounty of nature. Either this, or Liberty withdraws her light! Either this, or darkness comes on, and the very forces that progress has evolved turn to powers that work destruction. This is the universal law. This is the lesson of the centuries. Unless its foundations be laid in justice the social structure cannot stand.

Unerringly he divined that civilizations based upon injustice cannot continue. Indeed, he said that the eternal laws of the universe forbid it. A generation before Oswald Spengler wrote *The Decline of the West*, George prophesied our fate, if we neglected the duty imposed upon us by the great imperative of Jesus. What he asked for was:

Something grander than Benevolence, something more august than Charity—it is justice herself that demands us to right this wrong. Justice that will not be denied; that cannot be put off—justice that with the scales carries the sword.

There is more true religion expressed in the gospel of Henry George

than we hear from the pulpits of our land. And it was his faith in a beneficent Creator that gave him the courage to devote himself solely to the mission of ridding the earth of economic injustice and restoring the boon of equality of opportunity to all men.

*Port Washington, N. Y.*

### *Good Advice for Scientific Writers*

THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL is taken from "General Notes on the Preparation of Scientific Papers," published in 1950 by Cambridge University Press for the British Royal Society. The research worker is advised to start drafting his paper while his work is in progress by writing parts of it, jotting down headings, and preparing tables and figures in various forms to pick the best. As to organization, follow that of the journal in which you intend to publish; observe its conventions strictly as to the form it requires, the manner and details of presentation, footnotes and references. To quote:

It may seem superfluous to state that the paper should be clear, precise, logical, and brief. Many papers submitted to journals are not, and authors should bear these four essentials in mind at every stage in the preparation of a paper. To most authors good writing comes only as a result of much practice. Experience shows that clarity and precision are best achieved by the use of short words and simple sentences \* \* \* Authors should not introduce new systems of nomenclature or new symbols unless they are unavoidable. If two or more accepted systems exist, authors should state clearly which system they are following \* \* \* Footnotes should be avoided as far as possible, since they break the reading of the text and are expensive.

Having completed your paper, ask colleagues who are not in the same specialty to read it critically and point out the irrelevant, illogical, obscure, or verbose matter. Lay your paper aside and give it a later rereading. Tidy presentation often brings to light errors that can be concealed in an obscure and polysyllabic style. Readers tend to doubt the validity and value of obscurely written papers. Write for the moderate specialists rather than for the scant half-dozen persons in the world who thoroughly know your own specialty; many of them will be interested and helped by part of what you have to say. Make your title specific and brief, but specific first, because many will decide whether or not to read the paper by its content as indicated by the title. Write your synopsis concisely but in normal not in telegraphic language; it should be intelligible *per se*.

*USDA, Washington, D. C.*

T. SWANN HARDING