

bility between Capital and Labor and the Constitution under a new name for the Republican party. Now *there's* a neat number of points, each carefully set apart like the four vegetables on a partitioned-plate at a vegetable dinner, wherein the diced carrots stand apart from the cabbage whilst the peas do not roll into the mashed potatoes. Dishing up a programme in *that* form presents an edible whole which means much to the empty Republican stomachs and to the vacuous digestive tracts of independent, dyspeptic Democrats of advertised Jeffersonianism. Hash, on the other hand, while being a one-point lunch does not begin to offer the epicurean allurements and public exposure of what's-in-this-lunch as does the four-point, blue-plate, partitioned vegetable dinner.

Success in putting over your reform of the taxation muddle lies in offering a fascinating number of points. Surely, there is a number which fascinates you, is there not? *We* have a weakness for fives and sevens, though we don't know why and they've never brought us luck in the nigger pool. It's just a hunch. If we were asked to write an "eight-point," Republican, salvation programme (under four items) we would submit the following:

(1) A balanced budget arrived at by spending for government costs an amount equal to the revenue derived from a single tax upon the site-values of land.

(2) Repeal of the surplus profits tax and of all other taxes upon industry.

(3) Avoidance of entangling foreign alliances by the means of free trade, free speech universally, free men, women and children, economically as well as physically.

(4) A balanced responsibility between Capital and Labor by preventing owners of natural resources from boosting and pocketing the site-values of land, and by harmonizing the now-contradictory clauses and amendments of the Constitution—all done under the new political party name of Republocrats or Demicans.

Now *there's* an "eight-point" (four item) salvation programme which tells *how* to accomplish the eight points proclaimed by Senator Vandenberg. Congressmen have no difficulty in naming an eight-point, or ten-point, or sixteen-point goal, but they seldom know *how* to reach it. For three centuries our eminent statesmen complacently have been enunciating prolifically-pointed programmes to gape-mouthed captains of industry until the tidal wave of economic chaos has grown to mountainous proportions. Half a century ago Henry George waded through the deluge of verbiage and sorted the wheat from the chaff—filtered the juice from the pulp—took the kernels from the husks—and wrote a one-point programme, Single Tax; a one-point programme which has one point too many to be comprehended by some minds; a one-point programme which is several points too few to satisfy the complicated thoughts of perplexed politicians, erratic economists and straddling statesmen.

A point is position, says the geometrician. The center of a circle is its locus, whilst the circumference is the locus

of all points which are equi-distant from the center of the circle. Statesmen with a flair for many points will be found out on the circumference running around in circles or—if their points are not equi-distant from a common center—running around in ellipses, spirals, trapezoids, polygons, parallelograms or parabolas; all the while professing to be oriented to the common point of common sense.

### THE NEGATIVE APPROACH

"Capital does not limit industry, as is erroneously taught. . . .

Capital does not maintain laborers during the progress of their work, as is erroneously taught. . . . Capital does not supply or advance wages, as is erroneously taught. . . . Capital does not supply the materials which labor works up into wealth, as is erroneously taught. . . ."

Thus wrote Henry George in 1879, all of which he painstakingly proved.

You, Mr. Big Businessman, and you, Mr. Little Businessman, may put these five contradictions of five erroneous teachings, into your pipes and smoke 'em. Both of you have had nigh unto three centuries in which to discover correct methods for permanent success for industry—without regard for the length of time similarly at the disposal of your foreign forebears. Both of you have had nigh unto three score years and ten in which to read the long-discovered correct methods for permanent success of your own affairs. Little attention, if any, has been given by your almost entire multitude to the logic (?) of erroneous economic teachings. Little energy, if any, has been expended by you in solving the simple equation which governs your own commercial lives. As long as your individual heads escaped the brick-bats of bankruptcy you all, each and severally, naively plodded your nonchantly selfish ways and let your sinking fellowmen go to economic hell. His plight, your engulfed fellowmen, and the plight of the low-browed multitude—wearily unemployed or busily brawling with Big and Little Business Bosses—these plights, sez you, were none of your business.

Oh, yeah?

What did you care about the error or truth of the teachings of your professors of political economy—what did you care as long as *you* made a profit? "Am I my brother's keeper?" (meaning *no*) sez you to yourself time and again during the last three generations.

Well . . . are you?

You felt certain, did you not, that the rising tide of economic chaos *never* could reach *your* doorstep?

Well . . . did it?

You are charged, both of you, by Bernard M. Baruch with not having done your share toward rectifying the causes of industrial disaster.

Well . . . have you?



"Business hasn't wanted a change," swears witness Baruch. "It hasn't cleaned up its own stables."

Well . . . have you?

Do you want anything except to return to "old times" when *you* were making money and you felt sorry for your bankrupt contemporaries, whilst being somewhat annoyed by the low-browed rabble in its raucous demands for higher wages and shorter work-days?

"If the government will only leave us alone we can restore the old times of prosperity." That's what *you* think. In what manner can you make a success of old notions and efforts—which are based upon erroneous teachings—if you are unhampered by all the busybody Mr. Fixits now toggled out in official togas and governmental gumshoes and horn-rimmed specs?

Has it ever occurred to you, Messrs. Big and Little Businessmen of these United States, that in original thought—in observation and deduction—you are not so hot? In one breath you have asked our paternalistic national government to loan you money—to fix your minimum prices—to rig your markets; in the next breath you have asked the same pater to "leave us alone."

Do you know what you *do* want. The evidence shows that, basically, you do not know. Furthermore, you are too busy grumbling at "cruel Fate" to find out what ails yourselves. You do not know whether you have a headache or a stomachache, or a backache, and your bill of complaint indicates that your thoughts originate anywhere except in your heads.

Your organizer of a National Little Businessmen's Association opines that Big Business and Brain Trusts and individuals all have failed in showing our government the way out of the dilemma, so he and his crowd "might as well have a fling at it." Your leaders of Big Business assert that the governmental programme is "all right—all wrong—right in part—right with modifications—wrong in part." In other words it is all right but it wont work; it wont work any better than your own methods which, based upon erroneous economic teachings, have built up this nation's commerce—during three centuries—to a big let-down.

During three generations the disciples of Henry George—the disciples of taxing site-values and of untaxing industry—politely have proffered to you, positive principles found in true economic thought. These you have ignored.

We hand you, herewith, the negative approach to your problem.

**T**HE power to reason correctly on general subjects is not to be learned in schools, nor does it come with special knowledge. It results from care in separating, from caution in combining, from the habit of asking ourselves the meaning of the words we use and making sure of one step before building another on it—and above all, from loyalty to truth.—HENRY GEORGE.

## A Note on Henry George's Conception of Civilization

BY WILL LISSNER

**I**T is in his contribution to the general theory of civilization that Henry George has established one of his several claims to the appraisal of him by John Dewey: "One of the world's great social philosophers, certainly the greatest which this country has produced," Professor Dewey himself, of course, is among the most important contributors to our modern conception of civilization. In respect of George's conception of the general nature, origin and measurement of progress in civilization, it is most fruitful to ask, how does Dr. Dewey arrive at this evaluation of George as a social philosopher.

To estimate George's contribution, we must understand the idea of civilization dominant in his time. It was assumed then, as Professor James Harvey Robinson has pointed out, "that man was *by nature* endowed with a *mind* and with reason. These distinguished him sharply from the animals, which did wondrous things, it is true but not as a result of reason . . . (but) by instinct." Civilization, which by prejudice was confused with "urbanity," "civility," was contrasted with "rusticity," "barbarity," "savagery." It was a state, or rather stages achieved by evolutionary causation, and its achievements were transmitted by an hereditary process which, it was thought, changed the character and powers of man.

This concept, expounded by Spencer in George's time (Phil. of H. G., p. 524), was challenged by George. George did not play a lone hand in the recasting of the concept of course. Certainly, it appears that the major credit for the initial development of our present theory of civilization should go back to Darwin and E. B. Tylor. The former's "Decent of Man," and the latter's "Primitive Society," both appeared in 1871, eight years before "Progress and Poverty" made its appearance, in the year in which George formulated the essentials of his economic theory in the then little known pamphlet, "Our Land and Land Policy."

But the evidence indicates that too much importance cannot be attributed to George's work in bringing about a thorough renovation of the general idea of human progress and in forcing moral philosophy to take realistic account of social problems. Here again, there are others whose contributions must be noted. In Europe, George shares credit with his contemporary and anticipator, Karl Marx; his partial followers, the Fabians, to followers like Tolstoy; and most of all to his followers Oppenheimer and Muirhead; in America, to a lesser extent, with his contemporaries, Bellamy, and to a greater extent to intellectual allies like Veblen.

The sociologists and moral philosophers were more willing than the economists of the time to discuss the