

evening broadcast over station WBIL. All this at seventy-three years.

We missed Mr. Hardinge of Chicago, Abe Waldauer and Rabbi Aronson of Memphis, Carl D. Smith of Pittsburgh, Mrs. Skeel, Harry Weinberger and the genial Miss Schetter of New York.

HERE is a complete list of the Henry George Congresses:

YEAR	CITY
1926.....	Philadelphia
1927.....	New York
1928.....	Chicago
1929.....	Pittsburgh
1930.....	San Francisco
1931.....	Baltimore
1932.....	Memphis
1933.....	Chicago
1934.....	Chicago
1935.....	New York
1936.....	Cincinnati
1937.....	Detroit
1938.....	Toronto

Farewell,—Co-workers of Canada,

Good bye, lovely land of the maple leaf.

We hope that the impulse to advance and pride of achievement which you will carry away from the 1939 Convention will be as vivid as those which you generated in us.—B. W. B.

The Editor Comments

THESE annual gatherings of the Henry George Congress serve one important purpose if no other. They enable us to meet face to face with those who have been working in collaboration in the interchange of views and ideas. They furnish inspiration for the year to come. They enable us to understand one another better. They cement lasting friendships. Therefore our thanks are due to Secretary Williams for his earnest work in sponsoring these Congresses with the equally valuable cooperation of President Evans and other officers of the Henry George Foundation.

WE differ from some of our friends in their curious opposition to organization. Whether the Tax Relief Association now started on its career has the most desirable set-up, or whether the name is the best that might have been selected, we can afford to disregard for the moment and await results. It is at least up to us to cast no stone in its path. It is patent disloyalty not to wish it all possible success. Organization of some kind we must have and will have despite our predilections. It is a reflection on our ability for team work that we are without some form of national organization.

WHAT a pleasure it was to meet our Canadian friends with whom we have corresponded these many years. And some of the people from our home-land like Crosman of Revere, Mass., and Donald MacDonald of Alaska, Lingham of Lockport, the indefatigable and efficient Clayton J. Ewing of Chicago, and Mrs. Ewing, whose sense of humor enabled her to enjoy some of the proceedings which may have been lost on the others.

WE were delighted to meet Mrs. Christine Ross Barker, mentally alert as ever. How well we remember those brilliant shafts of wit which in the old days she carried in her quiver. Her jests were scintillating but even her victims were amused, for these were rarely ill-natured. Nevertheless we feared her!

At the banquet two great speeches were made by Peter Witt and

A. W. Roebuck, the latter a member of the Ontario Legislature. Never in the years we have been connected with the movement have we been privileged to listen to two greater speeches. One could not help being thrilled by them. Oratory has not yet lost its great masters.

THE Henry George School was well represented at the Congress with Frank Chodorov the director and three of the trustees, Mrs. Anna George deMille and Messrs. Greene and Miller. Messrs. Madster and O'Connor appeared unofficially for the New York teachers and Captain Jenks and Mr. Fee represented Philadelphia. Miss Bateman of Montreal in her able paper on the progress of the movement made a signal contribution to the proceedings. As a graduate of the School Miss Bateman is a witness to the value of its teaching methods. Through the kindness of Mrs. McAvoy five hundred copies of this issue are to be circulated among the members of the House of Representatives and Senators and others, or mailed as Mrs. McAvoy directs.

MRS. MCAVOY contributed some fireworks to the Convention. She always does. She is a very useful member of any convention and we are sure that her criticisms were taken in good part. We are disposed to think they were needed. Just now Mrs. McAvoy is engaged in the preparation of a concordance to "Progress and Poverty," a work which our friend Arthur C. Pleydell, once had in contemplation. We wish Mrs. McAvoy all the success in the unselfish work she has undertaken.

MANY churches nowadays have bulletin boards outside the edifice with biblical and other quotations on display. An interesting coincidence should be reported. During the week of the conference a Toronto church had one of these "wayside pulpit" bulletins which read: "We must conform to the Golden Rule if we could secure the abundance of peace.—Henry George. "It may interest Torontonians to know that this was displayed by the First Unitarian Church on Jarvis near Dundas street in that city.—J. D. M.

And the Fruits Thereof

A READING PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY NORMA COOLEY

Characters:

The Recording Angel

Steven Braswell — a Baptist Minister

Thomas Barcklay — a Methodist Minister

Jonathon Downs — a Presbyterian Minister

A Messenger

Prophet Isaiah

Scene: A well-lighted, spacious room with windows overlooking a garden. Walls are hung with large, astronomical maps. In center of room, a white-clad figure is writing at a flat-topped desk, bearing two small signs, "Recording Angel" and "Information." Half a dozen comfortable-looking chairs are placed near the desk.

(Enter three middle-aged gentlemen, dressed in clerical clothes. The Recording Angel looks up inquiringly. The central figure advances diffidently.)

Clergyman: Pardon me, sir, perhaps you can help us. We have been commissioned by our respective congregations—that is, by our religious organizations—to petition, or to appeal to—(he hesitates).

Angel: Yes?

Clergyman: Well, you see, sir, we have come to present a very urgent case—in short—we wish to see God.

Angel: (kindly) But, gentlemen, you must understand that no one sees God.

Clergyman: (with astonishment) No one sees God?

Angel: No. Never. Those who have complaints or requests to make must do so through His assistants. You represent others and wish to make an appeal in their behalf?

Clergyman: Yes, sir, we wish to report conditions in our land; and ask for Divine help in correcting those conditions.

Angel: Be seated, gentlemen, I cannot promise you assistance, but I can assure you that your case will receive the most careful consideration.

(He touches a button on the desk. A boy appears with unusual alacrity.)

Angel: (to boy) Tell Prophet Isaiah there is a delegation to see him. Also, ask Mark to relieve you; then you may go.

(A few moments elapse during which the Angel resumes his writing. The clergymen remain silent and look wonderingly toward the great maps. Enter Isaiah. The three clergymen rise respectfully with evident awe. The messenger boy places a chair for Isaiah and retires. Isaiah bows to the clergymen and motions for them to be seated.)

Isaiah: (pleasantly) Be at your ease, gentlemen. There is no cause here for fear or timidity.

(The central figure of the three clergymen resumes the role of spokesman.)

Clergyman: We are from the United States of America, sir.

(Isaiah glances inquiringly toward the Recording Angel.)

Angel: America is on the planet, Earth, in the Solar System, one of the lesser groups in the Galaxy which the gentlemen recognize as the Milky Way. It is your home planet, by the way.

Isaiah: (smiling a little) Of course. For the moment it slipped my mind. Now, gentlemen. Of the United States, I know only by hearsay. It was not a part of the world I knew, but I learned its language long ago and have conversed with many of its countrymen.

Clergyman: It is in behalf of our countrymen that we have come. The gentleman on my right is Reverend Steven Braswell, of the Baptist faith; on my left is Reverend Jonathon Downs, a Presbyterian. I, sir, am a Methodist. My name is Thomas Barcklay. We have come here because the situation in our country is most distressing, and our prayers, our most fervent prayers, seem to have been somewhat—well, seem to have been—

Isaiah: Slighted, or ignored?

Mr. Barcklay: (in some confusion) Well, sir, to be frank with you, they didn't seem to be receiving the attention we would naturally expect. To put it bluntly, sir, our prayers for the mitigation of economic distress did remain unanswered.

(Isaiah nods understandingly.)

Mr. Barcklay: You see, conditions have become very bad, very bad, indeed. Millions of people are out of jobs and many of them, even some who have occasional work have no homes, or are poorly housed. They are not adequately clothed. They are undernourished. Many would starve if the government did not feed them or make jobs for them.

Isaiah: (with a puzzled look) One moment, Mr. Barcklay. I don't quite follow you. You say that millions of people are out of work, yet many of them have no homes. Your planet, I know, is subject to great, and often destructive, cataclysms of nature. Have these forces of nature destroyed all of the building materials? Is there no more wood and stone in your country, no more clay from which bricks can be made?

Mr. Barcklay: (hastily) Oh no, sir. I didn't mean that. Our forests have been greatly depleted, it is true, but there is plenty of lumber and plenty of cement and clay and steel, and all the things we need for the construction of dwellings. But, you see, these people have no jobs and, consequently, no pay. They cannot afford to build homes.

Isaiah: Still, I do not understand. These people who have no work and no homes, why don't they build homes for themselves? Building is working, is it not?

Mr. Barcklay: (becoming confused) Yes, sir, but there is no one to employ them—I mean no one does employ them.

Isaiah: But if they need these homes, can they not employ themselves, even as their ancestors did when they built their log cabins?

Mr. Barcklay: But you see, sir, the thing has become very complicated. In the first place, a man must have somewhere to build his house, and if he can't afford to buy a plot of land, he can't build at all. And then if he has no money, he can't buy building materials.

Isaiah: Just what do you mean when you say that if a man cannot afford to buy a bit of land, he cannot build a home? Has the population of your country increased to such an extent that every foot of land is occupied?

Mr. Barcklay: Oh no, sir. There is a great deal of land in our country that could be used. There are many acres that are not being farmed, and in and near our towns and cities there is a good deal of vacant land. But you see it is already owned by somebody, and the others cannot afford to buy it. Indeed, many of them cannot afford to pay their rent. No, our problem has nothing to do with land; there is plenty of that. Ours is an economic

problem, lack of purchasing power. As a matter of fact, many farmers do not own the land they are working. Share-croppers, we call them, and their condition is deplorable. Our government has tried many plans for relieving both agriculture and industry, but we continue to have these industrial depressions, and each one seems to be worse than the one before.

The situation has been further complicated by the propaganda of Communists and Socialists who have sent their agitators among our laborers. My brothers of the cloth (indicating his two companions) will confirm my statement that every church in the country has sent up prayer after prayer, asking God to do something to relieve the suffering of our poorer classes, of women and little children who are forced to work in sweat-shops, of the men who toil in mines and at the forges in the great steel works—

Isaiah: (interrupting) Why do men work in mines and factories, and little children in sweat-shops if they don't want to when there are fields for pleasant labor and sweet meadows for little children to romp in?

Mr. Barcklay: Well, but they must earn a living, even though it is a meager one. They must take any jobs they can get, although the work may be very disagreeable. It means bread and butter to them. Though they live in miserable tenements, there is rent to pay. Labor unions have succeeded in forcing up the wages and cutting down the hours for certain groups, but that does not affect all workers. Many are working long hours at very low wages. As I said before, millions have no jobs at all.

Isaiah: (looking very keenly at Mr. Barcklay) A moment ago, Mr. Barcklay, you said that many people have not sufficient food. Has something happened to destroy the fertility of the soil, or is there lack of rainfall and not sufficient moisture, or not the right temperature for the maturing of crops? Old Mother Earth is not as young as she used to be.

Mr. Barcklay: No, sir, it isn't that. I didn't mean that. We have our droughts and floods and unseasonable hot and cold spells, but the fact is, our farmers and orchardists raised too much. The government had to curtail their production—kill some of the stock, plow under some of their crops, let some of their land lie idle—that sort of thing. But we made it up to them with what we call benefit payments through a processing tax, money raised by taxing industry. Of course, the consumers really paid that. You see, by curtailing the production of food stuffs, the farmers could raise their prices. That helped to increase their incomes.

Isaiah: (with a puzzled look) But you just said that many people had no jobs at all, and others had very low wages. How can they pay these increased prices?

Mr. Barcklay: (hesitatingly) Well, of course, it is very difficult for them. But when you try to help out one

group, I suppose some others naturally have to sacrifice a little.

Isaiah: But those who are working long hours, Mr. Barcklay. They must make a good many things during those hours. Why don't they trade what they make for the foodstuffs that the farmers raise?

Mr. Barcklay: Well, you see, these people are all employed by some one. They don't keep what they make; it belongs to their employers. There are some people who say that what is produced belongs to the producer, if you know what I mean. But those people are reformers, not practical business men. If an employer pays wages to his workers, of course what they make belongs to him. Still, it is all very complicated and confusing. That is why we have come here. Unless God will intervene, I don't see how we ever can solve our problem and relieve this very serious condition. God is merciful. I am sure He cannot be aware of the plight we are in, of the suffering of mankind, or He would not permit it. If you could lay these facts before Him, tell Him that all our efforts have failed, I am sure He would take some steps to restore man to—to—

Isaiah: (with some agitation) To what, Mr. Barcklay? In Heaven's name, restore man to what? As a minister of the Gospel, you must know that God has made both material and spiritual laws to rule the universe. The earth is no exception. Like all the other celestial bodies, it performs in every particular in accordance with Divine law. And this law governs the behavior of men in their social, as well as in their individual lives. Did you think that God would make laws governing the melting of ice and the budding of flowers and forget to make rules to govern the economic life of social units—of nations and civilizations? Whenever men come together to live and think and act in groups, they make rules to govern their conduct and activities, but if those rules run contrary to the laws already ordained by God, disaster will follow. In that case, you men must change *your* laws, not expect God to alter *His*.

God created a beautiful world, well dressed with plant and animal life, and gave man dominion over all the earth and the fruits thereof. He gave man all the raw materials, as you call it, that he could possibly need for his comfort and well-being, even for his pleasure. He gave these things, not to one man nor to any group of men, but to all men. He requires only one thing of mankind—labor. Human effort applied to these materials is the only method God provided for creating wealth—that is, the things that men need and want and can use and enjoy. No man, or group or men, has the right to deprive others of free access to these materials any more than one man has the right to deprive another of life itself. To deny a man the means of livelihood *is* to deprive him of life. Every babe that is born on earth, by the mere fact that it

is born, inherits as much of the earth as it needs for a comfortable, happy life—as much as it needs, and no more. When a man dies, his need ceases, and he automatically relinquishes any right to further control.

You say that your problem is an economic problem and has nothing to do with the land. Is it possible to produce food or build homes or carry on trade without using land? Your economic problem, Mr. Barclay, is, first, last, and all the time, a land problem. In your greed and selfishness you have robbed each other of the earth and its resources that God intended for the use of all. In consequence, you wrangle and quarrel among yourselves and plunder each other and suffer economic disaster. You refuse to obey the Divine laws that were laid down for you. That is why your prayers remained unanswered, as you say. You want the rules changed to save you from your own mistakes. God's laws are eternal and cannot be set aside because of human ignorance and error.

Men are not born with knowledge, but with the capacity for learning. In what manner all may enjoy the fruits of the earth as God intended, is not a difficult problem. In fact, it has already been solved by some of your own countrymen. But the rest of you will not listen. You will not even try to understand, but call them theorists and dreamers, and try by all possible means to get some little advantage over your fellows. You buy and sell the God-given earth as if you had made it yourselves. You will not let one man build a home or plant a garden unless he pays another for the privilege of using the earth to which he has as much right as anyone. God has no favorites among the little babies when they are born on earth. They all share and share alike in that Divine inheritance.

(Isaiah rises, and the three clergymen do likewise.)

Isaiah: Mr. Barclay, and you, Mr. Braswell, and you, Mr. Downs, go back and tell your congregations that they may pray and pray and pray, but unless they change the laws governing their social life, unless they restore the land to the people, they can expect no relief. Salvation lies not in prayer, but in action. Go back and tell your people that God cannot alter His laws to save mankind from its own mistakes. I am not at liberty to discuss with you the details of the solution of your problem. You would not believe me if I did. It is not necessary, because, as I have said, some of your own countrymen have already found the answer.

You would have no cause to fear the false doctrines of Socialists and Communists if you would make a few simple adjustments in your laws. Make them coincide with God's laws, and you will rob no one of his earnings. You will restore to all, that freedom that is their inherent right, that equality of opportunity that you promised yourselves in your own Constitution. Go back and tell your congregations to act like intelligent, tolerant, thinking people,

not like stupid, selfish brutes, and they will soon solve their problem.

God has seen other civilizations rise and fall, *and He did not lift a finger to stay them in their downward course.* It may be that He will see this one pass into oblivion. Its fate hangs in the balance. But do not rely upon prayer to save it. Prayer did not save the other civilizations, and it will not save yours. Gentlemen, the interview is over.

(The three clergymen bow silently and walk with a crestfallen air toward the exit at the right.

Isaiah turns, and he and the Angel gaze at each other for a moment in silence.)

Isaiah: (musingly) I wonder! I wonder, after all, if God, in His infinite wisdom, who must have foreseen all things, really foresaw such colossal stupidity!

CURTAIN

Land Tax Campaign In New Jersey

BY ALFRED N. CHANDLER

THE Sanford bill 160, to permit any municipality by referendum vote therein, gradually, over a period of five years, to repeal taxes on improvements and tangible personal property, by shifting taxes to all taxable land value, passed the New Jersey State Assembly this year by a vote of 31 to 23, for the first time since its initial introduction a number of years ago.

The bill was drafted by the late George L. Record, an eminent attorney of New Jersey, and ardent Georgeist. It was presented and advocated by the Progressive League of New Jersey, organized exclusively for that purpose.

In the Senate: Of eleven votes necessary for passage, nine senators, including the President and Majority leader, said they would vote for it; eight others, from whom the remaining two votes were possible, had not expressed their intention when the legislature adjourned.

This advance was brought about solely by persistent work of the league in educating legislators, editors, and through the latter the public, and others of influence throughout the state that this bill would permit reduction in taxes on industry, homes and farms, and therefore be of inestimable benefit to the entire state.

The bill had substantial support of newspapers in many parts of the state, and this support, now that the bill has passed one House, can be increased, and the bill enacted, by continually keeping editors, legislators and business men informed of it from now until the next session of the legislature.

Meanwhile, we shall urge its merits, and also a surtax on unused land, before the two new State Tax Commissions appointed to (1) "study the entire tax structure