

# EQUAL RIGHTS

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"ALL PEOPLE HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS TO THE USE OF THE EARTH"

## HENRY WARE ALLEN AND HENRY GEORGE

"It was on a misty Sunday morning in the spring of 1890 that Henry George and Mrs. George, pausing for a brief stop in Kansas City on their way to Australia and thence around the world, were greeted at the old Union Station and conducted to the Midland Hotel for breakfast by young Henry Allen, bustling with the importance of being the committee of one designated by the Single Tax Club of Kansas City to meet the distinguished visitors. Mr. Allen's subsequent contacts with Henry George, both in the Midwest and in New York were frequent, and it was not long before he had established a reputation as one of the outstanding writers in the Georgist movement." [Editors, *The Freeman*, January, 1943]

Born in 1861 in Massachusetts, Allen was living in Kansas City, Missouri when Henry George's lecturing activity was at its height. He remained active in the Single Tax movement throughout the remainder of his long life, which ended in 1957 at age 96.

Allen delivered an address on "Social Injustice" at the 1932 Henry George Congress held in Memphis, Tennessee. Later, he contributed a number of thoughtful essays to *The Freeman* during its years of publication by individuals associated with the Georgist movement in New York. What follows is an excerpt from Chapter V, "Freedom", from the book *The Man, Henry George*.

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By the discovery of a great natural law, Henry George gave to the world in his masterpiece, *Progress and Poverty*, the right way to abolish land monopoly and undeserved poverty. This philosophy has never been successfully converted.

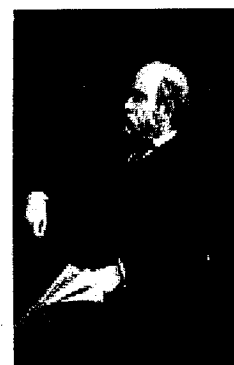
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Henry George was born in Philadelphia, within a half mile of Independence Hall, September 2, 1839. At 19 years of age, he went to California, working his way as a sailor before the mast around the Horn. When in San Francisco as a young married man, a printer, and writer, he experienced the pinch of undeserved poverty and no-

ticed that experience in the lives of others. He observed the contradiction of grinding poverty amidst advancing wealth. This enigma had puzzled the minds of countless others, but Henry George with greater intellect, greater heart, greater perseverance and clearer vision than other men resolved that he would not rest until he had discovered the cause and the cure for this puzzle, this inability of men wanting to work but unable to earn wages above the cost of a bare living. He examined every available authority in the realm of political economy with the purpose of following truth wherever it might lead and with the elimination, if necessary, of any and all established theories or convictions concerning the problem.

...His great book, *Progress and Poverty*, was published in 1879, and it proclaimed to the world in classic language and with unanswerable logic the philosophy, which has since been associated with his name.

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HENRY GEORGE

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## HENRY WARE ALLEN AND HENRY GEORGE

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According to this philosophy, economic rent resulting from the value given to land by population was a community value and belonged to the community as the rightful revenue collected by government through taxation in order to provide for the necessary expenses of government.

### The Philosophy of Henry George



William Lloyd Garrison

When **William Lloyd Garrison II** had accepted the philosophy of Henry George, which caused him thereafter to be a notable supporter of that philosophy, he advised Henry George, adding that he did not believe that the Single Tax would cure all the ills which afflict society. "Nor do I," responded Henry George, "but freedom will." And it will be well for those who may have had the same reaction as Mr. Garrison to remember that in our present day existence freedom is denied to us in a multitude of ways.

Says Buckle in his *History of Civilization*, every great reform which has been effected has consisted not in doing something new, but in undoing something old. The most valuable additions made to legislation have been enactments destructive of previous legislation; and the best laws which have been passed have been those by which some former laws have been repealed." ...

The philosophy of Henry George is revealed or uncovered by repeal of those laws and regulations, which are found

to be unjust, leaving only the taxation. This is a practical expression of the great natural law that was discovered by Henry George.

The single tax is the name for a practical application of that natural law which automatically provides adequate revenue for the normal expenses of government.

... This discovery of a great natural law in the realm of political economy was comparable to and of far greater potential benefit to mankind than was the discovery in physical science of the law of gravitation by Sir Isaac Newton. The single tax involves the abolition of all ordinary taxes. Those taxes violate the principle of justice. According to Addison, justice is the greatest and most God-like of all the virtues; and according to Henry George, unless its foundation be laid in justice the social structure cannot stand.

... Justice demands that economic rent, a product of the community, be conserved in full to the community by taxation. Justice also requires that rentals of buildings of every kind produced by man's labor rightfully belong not to the community, but to the owners of these buildings and, in consequence of this, that they should be free of taxation. ... Over-taxation is robbery; under-taxation is dishonesty. A just tax measures exactly the equivalent service rendered by the community. The single tax is the only tax which conforms to this requirement. ...

The present system of taxation is thoroughly dishonest. It robs certain classes for the benefit of other classes and is

frequently accompanied by inquisitorial methods. It penalizes thrift, industry and enterprise, while providing to other classes monopolies and special privileges. It has the effect of creating a steadily increasing proportion of tenant farmers in place of the sturdy independent farmers of earlier days. It makes necessary an expensive army of public officials and tax gatherers who might otherwise be engaged in productive enterprises. The cost of all agricultural products being based on inflated land values, it increases the cost of living to artificially high levels. The single tax would reverse all of this bad influence. ...

Those who have come to understand the great natural law upon which the single tax is founded invariably experience a new appreciation of the wisdom of the Creator: as Herbert Quick expressed it, they have been privileged to see a great light. They have been privileged to understand how every new labor-saving device or machine, how every improved method in transportation and every advance in the arts and sciences would provide increasing benefits to all mankind.

With a fine understanding of this. Dr. Edward McGlynn, the eminent New York City Catholic priest, exclaimed, "The single tax simply means making room at the Father's table for all His children!"

*the above article was edited  
and condensed by Ed Dodson*