

The neglect of Henry George, both as social philosopher and economist, shows little sign of changing — in the media, in academia, in politics and elsewhere.

The central issue to which he addressed himself in *"Progress and Poverty"* is still with us, for, notwithstanding progress in science, technology and the arts, relative, if not absolute poverty, persists, especially among particular sectors of society, and occasions well-meaning though often ill-directed concern where the emphasis is more on alleviation than prevention or abolition.

George's *"Science of Political Economy"* presents a coherent systematic treatment based on permanent principles in a world where the "desmal science" tends to describe things as they are in the hope that "fine tuning" and ad hoc adjustment (with due regard for favourable political ramifications) will somehow ameliorate matters sufficiently to obviate a major upheaval.

George's *"Condition of Labour"* is a reminder that genuine producers of goods and services will not, in general, prosper

as they can and should until social realities as real as the law of gravity are duly heeded — this in a world where false paths such as arbitration courts and narrow unionism have been tried and found wanting.

George's *"Social Problems"* was a superb treatment of current issues of his day, much of which is of permanent validity. Even with those problems that have now arisen after George's lifetime, George's methodology and insights are of substantial value.

In *"Protection and Free Trade"* George gave a grand vindication of the virtues and advantages of liberty, balanced however with justice. Today, when protectionism in its various forms still shows alarming vitality, George's book is as timely as when it was written, if not more so.

And his perceptive probing of Herbert Spencer's vacillations in *"A Perplexed Philosopher"* are today still enlightening, with so many philosophers of various sorts who, despite vast formal learning, lack an adequate overall perspective or world view.

Our society, all societies, need George's insights and outlook, doubtless developed and elaborated to meet contemporary conditions. Consideration and implementation of his key ideas would have an effect that would surprise those who at present neglect him and who are disillusioned with a range of proven failures from Marxism to monetarism.

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