

circumstances one need not wonder at the growth of fascism. A poverty-stricken people are the prey of any crackpot scheme promising security. To some degree fascism holds out this faint prospect. Anything is preferable to a democracy that has failed. This democracy is no proof against the imperative cry of hunger.

SO civilization turns back. Liberty will not be satisfied with any half service. That America should escape from this retrogression it is quite hopeless to expect. That the full backwash of these forces has not yet overtaken us is due to the fact that ours is a more deeply rooted tradition. We still have our memories. If it is unlikely that we could muster a Valley Forge or an embattled Lexington we can yet refer to them in our school books. That is something at least.

THERE can be no such thing as a political democracy where economic inequality prevails. The ballot means nothing where there is even a large minority dependent or impoverished. They are easy prey to the specious appeals of demagogues and dictators. "The destruction of the poor is their poverty," says the Scriptures. The saying embodies a profound philosophy. A house divided against itself cannot stand. There is no room in a true democracy for monopoly or privilege. These have yet to be destroyed.

## Was The Campaign Of '86 a Mistake?

IT is a good thing to have an historic background of the Single Tax movement in the contemplation of certain great events that ushered it in.

There has grown up among recent adherents to our movement an impression that the campaign of 1886 was a mistake, that Henry George might better have devoted himself to the writing of other great books to add to those he had already written. This impression is rather widespread, but chiefly among those who have come late to the ranks. To this impression Albert J. Nock, in his admirable article on Henry George, has lent the weight of his name.

We think the impression is wholly wrong. Mr. George made no mistake in entering the campaign of '86. He had what his later-day critics seem to lack—a keen sense of the dramatic. The whole world learned in this campaign who Henry George was. Not that many had any very intelligent comprehension of what he stood for—his philosophy remained in the background, only dimly perceived. But many did learn it and a number of great names were emblazoned in the early chapters which begin the annals of our movement.

Think of it! Had it not been for this campaign we

might never have heard of Father McGlynn, William Lloyd Garrison, John S. Crosby, Ernest H. Crosby, and many other great names. It disclosed Henry George as perhaps the most moving orator of his time. It had tremendous influence abroad and really started the movement of which the Henry George School is the final link in a continuous chain. We heard him cry out at a great meeting in that clarion voice of his: "We are firing a cannon tonight whose echo will be heard round the world," and again we call attention to his sense of the dramatic. The campaign of 1886 was the cannon whose echo was heard round the world. In the time to come that clarion cry will be quoted.

The campaign of '86 added to the weight and fame of his books that were now to be carried everywhere. It illuminated his message. Regardless of its political effect—all that aside, for no political effect was sought—the stage for the opening of the great drama was begun. The curtain had risen.

The campaign of 1886 was no mistake. It is meaningless to assert in criticism that the time given to this campaign might better have been devoted to the writing of another book. Even at that time his writings were nearly complete. Mr. George was wiser than his later-day critics.

We have purposely refrained from any allusion to the campaign of 1897, for Mr. George was in no condition to undertake it. Yet even here it would be rash to question his judgment. The occasion and manner of his death, which he deliberately chose—still alive to the sense of the dramatic—was no hastily conceived sacrifice. The world in the days to come will regard it as a second Gethsemene, the effect of which was worth the sacrifice.

## Organization

A SOMEWHAT unfortunate outcome of several attempts to form Single Tax organizations has prejudiced a few of our friends against organization per se. Yet how a movement such as ours can function at all without organization of some kind must perplex those who think they are opposed to organization. Yet the conviction that we must have some kind of organization still persists, as was evidenced by the almost unanimous vote at Toronto endorsing the Tax Relief Organization.

Every movement has its machinery for cooperation and mutual interchange of views. Also for information for the public at large. It may be said that we are not anarchists, and the work that must be accomplished is dependent largely upon what can be done working together. It is for this reason that we are strongly in favor of some kind of organization with headquarters in some central city and branches in every town and city.

We have spoken of the somewhat unfortunate outcome of attempts at organization. We recognize the dangers that must be guarded against. But there is another

side. Not all Single Tax organizations have been fruitless. There was a time in the history of this city when the Manhattan Single Tax Club was vastly influential. It accomplished much. To its credit is to be placed the par value assessment on land and buildings. It is not too much to say that due to its influence New York City has the best system of assessments of any city in the country. How many prominent in this city owe their first acquaintance with the philosophy of Henry George to the Manhattan Single Tax Club? Recent disciples, seeing the marvelous growth of the Henry George School, are skeptical of the value of other methods. They are not to be blamed for not knowing. Oscar Geiger, founder of the Henry George School, was an active member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club and knew the value of organization. James R. Brown used to boast that the club was founded by Henry George, but of this there seems to be some doubt. Nevertheless the achievements of the club should be a lesson in the value of organization.

We are earnestly in favor of the Henry George Fellowship. The graduates of the School need some place to go. Many of them cannot teach, or think they cannot, but want some work to do for the cause they have embraced and to meet and work with those they met in the classrooms of the School. They are on their toes, waiting to go somewhere. They will make mistakes, of course, as the result of their zeal. But who hasn't? They should be encouraged and from them will come leaders and workers.

So too, if the Michigan movement results in the establishment of an organization for effective work, all honor to A. Laurence Smith and Col. Rule. We may learn from the failures of the past but nothing should deter us from the attempt to found an organization for cooperation in the years that lie ahead of us.

**T**HE worth of a State, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it. . . . A State which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes—will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished.

If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.

JOHN STUART MILL.

**I**F you want war, nourish a doctrine. . . . A statesman who proposes war as an instrumentality admits his incompetency. A politician who makes use of war, as a counter in the game of politics is a criminal.

WM. GRAHAM SUMNER.

## The Tax Relief Association Its History and Purpose

BY V. A. RULE

**O**NE cannot read such splendid books as that compilation of Single Tax History, The Single Tax Year Book, by Joseph Dana Miller, without being impressed by the universal appeal of the principles of Henry George. The material so ably presented to the Toronto Congress by Miss Margaret Bateman should be used to bring that history down to date. Nor can one browse through these stirring tales without being impressed by the vision of the early leaders. They recognized the need of some national organization which would give coherence to the movement and guide its growth according to a practical pattern. That their vision was not realized, that nearly fifty years of sporadic local campaigns have left us where we were then and are today, is all water over the dam of time.

A correct idea never dies. It may lie dormant and quiescent for a long time but a renaissance is sure because it has within itself all the elements of immortality. It must have been of this that Henry George was thinking when he wrote:

The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be, it would have been accepted long ago. If that could be, it would never have been obscured. But it will find friends—those who will toil for it; suffer for it; if need be, die for it. This is the power of Truth.

So it has been with this idea of national organization. It was agitated in 1890; in 1930 Clayton J. Ewing raised the question at San Francisco. In 1933 at Chicago, where Mr. Ewing was the general chairman of the Congress, a definite committee was set up to look into this matter and report to the subsequent meeting. It was my privilege, under the leadership of Arthur Falvey of Omaha, Nebraska, to serve on this committee. Unfortunately most of us did nothing about it. As far as I know the only proposal was for a lodge sort of organization, in the various degrees of which the principles of Henry George would be taught. This plan did not meet with general acceptance and it was abandoned, only to be used for other economic ideals by the Utopians of California. They had some temporary and spectacular success with it as a method of publicity.

### INFORMAL MEETING AT CINCINNATI

In 1936 an informal meeting was held as part of the Congress at Cincinnati, Ohio. Rabbi Michael Aaronsohn, general chairman of that Congress, was anxious to see something permanent come out of that convention. This meeting was attended by about thirty people all of whom are still active in the matter. This group appointed a small committee which was to sound out the leaders of