

they describe, the last view they give, are of a field in ruins. As we cast our eyes backwards, we gaze at the wreckage of former empires, of brilliant civilizations, of great attempts to realize the ideal of pacifism. The epitaph is provided by a further prophetic saying, that of Jeremiah, which the sceptic Ernest Renan liked to quote :

"And the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary."

The course of world history, as thus treated, appears to be equally meaningless, for what it shows us throughout the centuries is not the history of a human world, but only the history of different opposing nations. Notwithstanding all the relations, resemblances and repetitions which have been revealed, we only see the parts, which exist for themselves alone. And at bottom it cannot be otherwise. For every nation, like every man, is a world in itself, living its own life, with its limitations and restrictions, and is at the very least fitted and enclosed within the compass of its language. All the different peoples co-exist in a juxtaposition which is usually only there in order continually to be disturbed and destroyed again and to become an opposition. History, when written in this way, is not only meaningless but destructive and makes its way through ruins. It is lacking in constructive and permanent unity.

Every world history which sets out to relate only the history of many peoples and powers, and is therefore merely a history of quarrels, wars and interludes of peace, renounces in reality everything which should act as a common cement, everything which would serve to unify it. That is to say, it renounces everything with which, as a matter of fact, world history is unable to dispense if it is to deserve its name. Unity is not brought about by the summation and combining of individual elements. It is rather always the expression and result of a creative act. The cosmos is thus a unity as the creation of the one God, and an ethical deed, an idea, or a work of art is a unity as the creation of man. It is likewise only by creation that history can possess unity and thereby be world history. Every ethical achievement, every example of intellectual accomplishment, every work of art, everything in fact which is a realization of the profoundest spirit of man, and by its creative work enables the infinite to enter into the finite, which introduces unity, harmony or peace into this world and gives it a meaning—these alone constitute world history.

Every people, every community in which there lives something of all these creative tasks has its share in world history; each of their members who stands out by his leadership and by that which he contributes is a world historical personality; every achievement possesses truly historical importance. And the representation of world history is the representation of the way these tasks have been fulfilled and the effect they have produced, their cessation and re-awakening, their defeats and successes. The history of the great revealing religions is therefore world history in the truest sense. Their history, in so far as it is real history—not their far more comprehensive church history, which only marks a special field of political history—is truly constructive, unifying, and therefore world historical; in other words, the history of peace.

The final consummating act of creation, the harmony in which the whole of mankind will fashion itself and unite, is the ultimate goal. The path to that end, this history of the world, is marked by the recognition and fulfilment of all the tasks which have the goal as their purpose. The outstanding tasks, needs and ideas are those of the true, positive, social messianic justice which find their realization in mankind; for they

create the strongest and most intimate form of human fellowship, which is the expression of human unity. The justice which is only negative and prohibitive serves to protect men and peoples in their juxtaposition, but insistent, positive justice unites men and peoples and is truly historical. World history is, above all, the history of this social and messianic justice.

The prophetic, messianic idea owes its great importance to the fact that it was the first to reveal what true world history is, how it acquired its meaning in the unity of its task, in this true kind of peace, and how its motive force is justice, progress towards the goal of peace. This has been laid down in this article as the ultimate meaning and expression of world history. From this messianic standpoint alone is it possible to adjudge the historical importance of any age and its position in the life of humanity.

THE PROPHET OF SAN FRANCISCO

Posthumous Work by Louis F. Post

This volume,* by a loyal and loving disciple of Henry George from a manuscript completed shortly before the death of the author in 1928, has been handsomely produced by the Vanguard Press, New York. The competency of Louis F. Post for the work here presented would be acknowledged, no doubt, by readers of his previous books, especially his engaging *Ethics of Democracy*, but is particularly suggested by his well-known intimacy with Henry George during the life of that social philosopher and economist. In a notable introduction to the present volume, the late Edward N. Vallandigham says of Mr Post :—

"No living man is so fitted as he to write this record of Henry George, the man and philosopher, and of the movement that took origin from his writings, and from the eloquent message of his living lips. The man and the movement are here in detail, and Mr Post, as a life-long student and exponent of the Georgian philosophy, has in this book set it forth in all its aspects, summed it up as it is found in many volumes, interpreted it, cited opinions of its friends and believers, analyzed and effectively refuted the criticisms of the most distinguished economists who have dissented from Henry George's conclusions."

Besides his keen analysis and explication of Henry George's writings, Mr Post, while disclaiming any intention to write a biography, gives many interesting and delightful reminiscences of his long and intimate friendship with the "Prophet." The book reveals Henry George's individual and family life, his passion for justice and his high spiritual vision. But its most useful service is its clear and competent analysis of the Prophet's social and economic philosophy which has found and is still finding ardent followers in all lands.

The appearance of *The Prophet of San Francisco* should be of real interest to teachers of economics, as to all serious students of the personality and philosophy of a great American, whose intellectual eminence is receiving a constantly broadening recognition in his own, as in other lands. To confirmed disciples everywhere, the book will, no doubt, be welcomed as a happy and an abiding contribution to the literature of the Movement.

* By Louis F. Post, New York. Vanguard Press, \$3.00. Just published.

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