

duty if scoured. But no provision whatever was made as to combing and carpet wools if *washed*; they were admitted at the same rate of duty whether washed or unwashed. This amounted to a lowering of the duty on carpet wools.

Before washing, carpet wools weighing one and one-half pounds would be charged with a duty of twenty cents. The same wool when washed would weigh only one pound and would pay a duty of only thirteen cents. The result was that carpet wool was advantageously imported in a washed condition, and the duty was in effect appreciably below the rate on unwashed wool. Yet the compensative duty on carpet wool was arranged as in the case of clothing wool—at the full compensatory duty on unwashed wool. Thus the Republican-protectionism manufacturers, and their diffident Democratic contemporary carpet manufacturers, received the full compensating rate on their product, though they did not pay the intended duty on their imported wools.

"It is a well-known fact," says the historian, "that this anomaly in the Act of 1867 was due chiefly to a prominent manufacturer of New England, whose business, as a consequence, was made exceedingly profitable during the years immediately succeeding the passage of the Act."

In the "profitable years" which marked our childhood dear old Dad and our sweetly-tempered, toiling mother could not afford even one carpet on any of the three-room floors which comprised our factory-town tenement. Dad was busily engaged, outside of factory hours, energetically advocating his mill-master's protectionism among the weavers in Ward Nine. Mother was busily engaged, from dawn 'til dark, tending looms which wove cotton cloth which the family purse ill could afford to buy.

In the twilight we absorbed the endless harangue on protectionism, and, betimes—whilst the carpet manufacturers dropped a small part of their extra profits into the collection box—we lustily joined the choral-seeking to "Wash My Sins Away," uninformed that the protective tariff had washed away the carpet maker's tax on wool though paying to him a "compensatory" duty in full.

"Children of dust, astray among the suns,  
Children of the earth, adrift upon the night.  
Who have shaken the pageant of old gods and thrones,  
And know them crushed and dead and lost to sight?"

**B**UT it seems to us the vice of socialism in all its degrees is its want of radicalism, of going to the root. It takes its theories from those who have sought to justify the impoverishment of the masses, and its advocates generally teach the preposterous and degrading doctrine that slavery was the first condition of labor.

THE CONDITION OF LABOR, BY HENRY GEORGE.

## Henry George The Economist

Remarks of Broadus Mitchell, Associate Professor of Political Economy, Johns Hopkins University, at a Memorial Meeting in Honor of Henry George, held at Princeton University, October 31, 1937.

This memorial meeting is one incident in the growing recognition of the permanent place of Henry George in the economic thought of this country and the world. Henry George always wanted, with a solicitude which did us too much honor, to be accepted in academic circles. But most of our universities and colleges did not give him while he lived or for years afterwards, even a fair hearing. It was as though we believed that our disapproval, due to befuddlement and fear, could really hamper the progress of a great idea. It is now our part, in repair of our self-respect, to learn of his life and opinions, and to try to impress them upon those who look to us for guidance.

Henry George was America's foremost contribution to economic insight. The next claimant after him, for very different reasons, would perhaps be Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton in most ways was a man of special circumstances. His thought sprang from a particular situation, and his proposals in turn changed this situation. This is not a detraction from the boldness of his conceptions, nor from the quality of his mental and moral capacities. It is simply a fact that it was Hamilton's business to take a confusion and make of it a country.

Henry George's analysis, and the applications which he drew from it, were as nearly as possible universal. They were more universal, in space and time, than the teachings of Adam Smith, and maybe more so than those of Karl Marx. This much said, I do not need to go further in mere praise of Henry George.

I would like, in this place, to do what I can to repel a persistent and pernicious statement that is made about him. It is not so much a criticism of George as it is an attempt to put him out of serious notice. It is a familiar device of the shallow, the timid, and the designing. It belongs to a great disreputable company of efforts to undermine a powerful influence. I refer to the allegation that Henry George was a brilliant crank. This charge met his first writings, followed him through life, and has sought to attach itself to his followers.

If we leave aside the less worthy aspects of this comment, it amounts to the belief that he was a poor mental workman, that with him infatuation took the place of inquiry, that ardor stood in the stead of assiduity. It is said that in presenting a panacea he *must* be wrong. A panacea, it is declared, however justified by certain social phenomena, implies a neglect of other and probably contradictory areas of economic achievement and conduct. In short, George's generalization glitters, but is not gold.

Now his analysis may, in fact, fall short. That would not be remarkable, but with it I am not concerned at the moment. I want to make the point that George

did not content himself with a quick glance at the causes of social misery, arrive at a sudden explanation, and devote his life to shouting instead of searching. He was, on the contrary, a conscientious and well-equipped student. He read widely, he traveled more extensively than any other economist of his time. His varied personal experience was enriched and turned to account by his extraordinary knack of observation. He lived in economic environments of very different sorts—the East, with manufacturers and nature, and the West, extractive and a frontier. In his early years he tried many ways of earning a living. He went from galling poverty to the acclaim of millions. He stood in the morning chill of a San Francisco street to beg of a stranger, and he later formed a plan for the economy of the world.

His glance was not hastily cast upon one environment nor upon several. Remember that when monopoly drove him from California to the East to seek out a way for independent enterprise, he was shocked at what he saw in the social contrasts of New York. He had come from what he still considered to be the classlessness of opportunity, from the democracy of the buoyant primitive. Still with nature's promise to man in his mind he drew back at what he discovered had been the result of social evolution in old settled communities. Here was such a great divide as he had not passed in his journey across the continent—suffering on the one hand and surfeit on the other, the alley and the avenue. Profoundly as he was moved by this paradox, and solemnly as he promised himself that he would find its cause, he did not leap to a conclusion. There were to follow patient years of more observation, more reading, more thinking. The query constantly presented itself to all that struck his senses, but did not find its answer. It is worth while to remark that in this industrious scanning of his environment he did not recognize nor develop the implications of his own earlier inspiration. The complaints of gold-miners of falling earnings, the doubts of what the railroad would bring to the Pacific coast had retreated in his memory to the faintest echoes. He went on busily, talking with everybody, writing on many topics until, in the strawstack of his threshing, he really found his own sharp needle.

Some are apt to consider that George was more mindful of land than of capital, that he did not scrutinize industry. This was many times refuted, as it would be easy to show at length. It is enough to be reminded that "Progress and Poverty" was written in the midst of a great industrial depression, that the sub-title of the book declared this, and that the opening sentences gave such a picture of industrial lapse as few have penned.

And even when he had completed "Progress and Poverty" there was time for a passing fever of conviction to cool.

First of all, the manuscript went the dreary round of publishers unimpressed. There is no superior prescription for an author's disenchantment. In that manuscript, both copies of which are now the cherished possessions of two of our foremost libraries, he had invested not only a year of composition. He had confided to it the burning thoughts of an obscure man, like which there is no shorn lamb in the untamed wind of hostility or the rawer blast of mere neglect. If Henry George was to be disillusioned, now was the time. But he kept up his belief in himself while he contrived a way to get the book printed. He moved to New York to await his success, but there ensued another trying period of pause. He did hackwork, even humiliating hackwork, for a living. Sales of "Progress and Poverty" at first continued to be slow, and reviews were uncomprehending. Still he did not revise the judgment he had reached. When notice came—sudden, widespread, acrimonious, enthusiastic—he was called, in lectures, newspapers, and more books, to the severe text of elaboration. He had to apply his principle to the thousand and one events of the passing scene. He must answer, in the impromptu of the platform, the considered, searching questions of some of the quickest minds of his time. He must convince the understanding and attract the loyalty of men of all kinds of interests. Few works have queried so many accepted doctrines and institutions as "Progress and Poverty," or lain so much in the cross-fire of economic and political controversy.

So this book, and the others so closely related to it, grew out of thorough inspection and were allowed to stand after full criticism. Many things have been said of the author of "Progress and Poverty" by threatened landlords, by selfish officeholders, by smug economists more pontifical than another critic in Rome itself—but nobody, to my knowledge, ever said he was not honest. If he had come to believe there were faults in his work, that he had preached what he could never perform, he would have been the first to amend, to correct, or to disavow.

A thoughtful student of the history of economic doctrine said to me recently that Henry George the propagandist will tend to fade, while Henry George the economist will grow more distinct and distinguished with the years. This may very well be true, but I should like to make two remarks in connection with the observation.

One is that if George, the popularizer of a principle diminishes in perspective, we may hope the example which he gave of reforming zeal shall not be lost to present and future philosophers. This was where his moral courage and his unselfishness marched side by side with his mental acumen. The plague of our social sciences is inquiry that stops with inquiry, that does not find legs with which to walk about in the world of men. Economic investigation which treats insecurity, for example, as an



element in an academic experiment is a degenerate performance. If we have something to offer for human betterment, we must do it eagerly and not be deterred because many call us rash or wicked. Nor should we ever forget that Henry George spoke, like a true political economist, for the public advantage. Particularly since the World War we have imported into our academic curricula many studies which, grouped under the head of "business economics," are often mere techniques of private acquisitiveness. They put personal gain ahead of common benefit. Henry George remained always in the great tradition of political economy by aiming to formulate principles of statecraft.

And if Henry George the propagandist is to recede relatively, I want, in the second place, to acknowledge the debt which we owe to his devoted disciples. Not a few of those present belong to this company. Has there ever been such a group for accepting the mantle of a lost leader? Their perseverance in thought, in the spoken and printed word, and in proper political activity has been an indispensable element in the preservation and spread of George's influence. Their appeal, as his, has been to reason. How often we meet adherents of reform philosophies who have accepted a party name without being able to define or to defend their faith. I have never encountered a Single Taxer who did not know why he was a Single Taxer and who was not bent upon convincing rather than just converting. George was not least fortunate in the character of his followers.

Today we look back across forty years to the final scene of this man's career. The welfare of a great city was under fierce debate. And there we find, more striking than ever, what we always meet in Henry George's history—a clear mind and an ardent spirit at the service of the human throng. He gave himself a ransom for many. His genius was not greater than his generosity.

## Gilbert M. Tucker at the Detroit Conference ORGANIZATION

THE subject assigned me is Co-ordination of Ideas, but perhaps I can stretch it to cover the co-ordination of activities, for, while correct thought must precede right action, unless thought leads to action it is of but little value.

Co-ordination means co-operation and this means union. Today the most vital need of the Single Tax movement is a greater degree of unity and team work and, to have this, we must sooner or later develop a broad nation-wide organization of those who put faith in the philosophy of Henry George. I hope the time is not far distant when we can look for aggressive political action and, when this time comes, we shall need an organiza-

tion more or less on the lines of the present-day political parties. Why not start to build such an organization now. Even today we should learn Hiawatha's lesson of tying our little sticks into a strong bundle that can not be broken.

I am not advocating a new organization to displace any of those now functioning so well nor to overlap in their fields—far from it. Rather an association which shall strengthen them and reinforce their work and fortify their position. Something to co-ordinate their work and to attempt the things that no organization today is fitted to do.

Such an organization should be broad, general and national, and of a nature to enlist all Georgeists, without splitting hairs over fine points and distinctions which can well be relegated to the background, pending the achievement of our great purpose. Therefore I would make its platform brief, broad and general—one to which all can subscribe without mental reservation. I suggest:

We favor the collection of all ground rent for the support of government and the abolition of all taxation save that on land values.

To make its membership broad and general and comprehensive, and to keep the interest of its members alive I would suggest two things: First, very low dues, of course with provision for classes of members who could and would pay larger fees.

Tentatively I would suggest:

Dues of \$1.00 a year, including subscription to the *Freeman*.

Dues of \$3.00 a year including both *Freeman* and *LAND AND FREEDOM*.

And we might also have a class of associates who would pay no dues but who would subscribe to our platform, for such a list would be invaluable for the use of the schools and for recruiting, and it is not always policy to start by asking each convert to pay anything or to become a formal "joiner," just as soon as they "see the cat."

Of course headquarters should be maintained, with a paid executive and whatever office staff is desirable and necessary.

In order to place major control in the hands of those who have demonstrated loyalty, and willingness, and ability to serve, I suggest that some plan be worked out to give to the organizations something like proportional representation in management. Control might be centered in a board to have either membership or votes selected by our active organizations, such, for instance, as the School, the Schalkenbach Foundation, the Henry George Fund, the Fellowship, the Manhattan Single Tax Club, etc., each group having voice proportioned to the number of their members who become affiliated with the national organization. Such a policy would have the two-fold advantage of stimulating the formation of other Single Tax groups, as for instance, local chapters of the Fellow-