

eans will have no quarrel and may then safely call themselves "socialists," as Marxism will long since have perished. Meanwhile the Single Tax Party can never gain the confidence of the American people and commence to win elections till it convinces them that it has entirely repudiated Marxism, that dreadful menace to existing civilization. Finally, I believe that the Georgan programme offers the only policy to save the American middle class from destruction by the combats—or worse—the price-raising combinations of the land and labor monopolies—the modern Gog and Magog of free institutions. But this demonstration must be left for another article.

R. B. BRINSMADE.

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## Henry George—Prophet

THE captain of the hosts of Syria lay stricken with a leprosy. Naaman was a great man. Great in honor and achievement. His hand had freed Syria of the foreign tyrant. But he was a leper.

It was determined to send him down to Israel to be cured by the great man there who was reputed to be a Prophet of God.

When Naaman came to Israel, Elisha, the prophet, bade him bathe seven times in Jordan and be clean.

"How foolish," spake Naaman and his retinue. "Are not the waters of Syria as potent to save as the waters of Judea? If the great man had stood forth and called upon God to save the flesh of Naaman we would have believed him. If the man of God had laid hands upon Naaman and made him whole we would have said he was truly a prophet.

"But to ask Naaman to bathe seven times in the foul waters of Jordan is a silly and a foolish way to cure a leprosy."

So hath it ever been with prophets.

Once upon a time there was a country called Columbia. On the western slope was the province of California. A man named Henry George lived there. He was a poor printer employed by one of the great newspapers. He saw a great transcontinental railroad approaching his city of St. Francis. Tie by tie, and mile by mile, nearer it came. As it approached, the town lots in St. Francis rose in selling value, which is to say use value, by leaps and bounds; and in the sister city across the bay, where the railroad must have its terminus, the once useless and valueless land was being sold at thousands of dollars per acre. This was a phenomenon about which Henry George spent many an hour of thought.

Across the great country of Columbia on the eastern shore, was the city of Manhattan. It was the greatest of all the cities of the land.

Famed was Manhattan, as a city of countless industries. Men gathered from every quarter of the earth to labor, and its wealth increased marvelously.

But lo, a grievous leprosy fell upon the land. As wealth and progress came there also came to those who toiled, a grinding poverty. Splendid tenements arose. Those who created the wealth of the city were huddled in hovels of misery and hounded by the fear of destitution.

To this City of Manhattan came Henry George, the Prophet. Material prosperity he found. Wealth was abundant and comfort luxurious. But wealth was not distributed; comfort was not diffused. On one side was fabulous riches; on the other was poverty so degrading that its victims had lost all hope. Between these two extremes was a harrowing fear and a paralyzing dread of poverty that seemed worse than poverty itself.

Although Manhattan was extraordinarily prosperous, due to the augmented working power of its numberless men and wonderful labor saving machines, yet it was those who actually did the work who remained poor and were ever becoming poorer.

Wherever the Prophet saw Progress he always saw the leprous handmaiden, Poverty, stalking by her side.

He had reflected with infinite pains upon the significant fact, found everywhere, but especially marked in Manhattan that "where population is densest, wealth greatest, and the machinery of production and exchange most highly developed, we find the deepest poverty, the sharpest struggle for existence, and the most of enforced idleness."

This poverty was not merely deprivation; it meant shame, degradation; searing of sensitive natures as with hot irons; the breaking down of morals; the denial of the strongest impulses and sweetest affections.

When George first saw and realized the squalid misery of the great city it appalled and tormented him and would not let him rest for thinking of what caused it and how it might be cured.

"For what does it matter when death shall come," he asked, "whether we have fared daintily or not, whether we have worn soft raiment or not, whether we leave a great fortune or nothing at all, whether we shall have reaped honors or been despised, have been accounted learned or ignorant;—as compared with how we may have used that talent which has been entrusted to us for the Master's Service?"

With this consecration the Prophet called the great men of the city together and told them how the leprosy could be cured.

He proposed to them that a cure could be at once effected, "by gradually, but as rapidly as possible, exempting everything but land values from taxation."

Simple? Yes, too simple for the great men of Manhattan.

Like Naaman and the captains of Syria, they laughed with scorn.

"How foolish," said they. "Have not the great teachers

of political economy given us the laws of wages and of rent and of population? To attack the evil by merely shifting the burden of taxation is a silly and foolish way to cure a social leprosy."

So hath it always been with prophets.

The priests of Judea gave no comfort to Naaman and his followers.

"Bathe ye seven times in Jordan, and be clean!"

No other cure was offered, although one can well believe that Naaman tried every lotion and nostrum that quackery and cupidity could offer him, until in desperation he finally went down unto the waters of Jordan, and lo, he was clean!

Then did he and the hosts of Syria acclaim Elisha as truly a Prophet of God.

The great men of Manhattan and the leaders of Columbia also have persisted in refusing to accept the simple formula of their prophet. Nostrum, after nostrum, born of quackery and cupidity, are being tried in an effort to cure the social leprosy, but it continues to grow worse, as did Naaman's of old.

But George stands always before them saying: "Turn to Justice and obey her; trust Liberty and follow her, and the dangers that now threaten must disappear, the forces that now menace will turn to agencies of elevation. With want destroyed; with greed changed to noble passions; with the fraternity that is born of equality taking the place of jealousy and fear that now array men against each other; with mental power loosed by conditions that give to the humblest, comfort and leisure; and who shall measure the heights to which our civilization may soar?"

"Words fail the thought!"

"It is the Golden Age of which poets have sung and high-raised seers have told in metaphor!"

"It is the reign of the Prince of Peace!"

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Now it was really a harder task for Naaman to accept the cure offered him by Elisha than for the wise men of Columbia to accept the teachings of George, because Naaman had nothing to go upon but the word of the Prophet. He had to believe that *word* and have *faith* to go down unto the waters of Jordan.

But George asked no exercise of Faith. He asked the men of his day to apply to the cure of their social leprosy a faculty that all men have. That faculty is reason. He gave unto them an unanswerable argument, an argument that they and their teachers could read and weigh and ponder. The arguments of the Prophet are in the hands of all men. Every book store and library in all the land of Columbia has made them accessible to the people. Priests of the Prophet proclaim the saving gospel every day. None have been able to controvert or overthrow them, and yet—

This Naaman, Columbia, still stands stubborn and reluctant on the Shores of Jordan and the leprosy still wastes her flesh!

E. G. LESTOURGEON.

## NEWS—DOMESTIC

### California

THE call for a Single Tax conference at Fresno, signed by 95 Single Taxers in the State, has been definitely called off. The reasons assigned by the Los Angeles body is that without waiting for the action of the conference the Eastern leaders of the Great Adventure group announced a campaign for 1924. We regret this decision. There could be no harm, and might be much good in interchange of opinions, and we trust the decision to abandon the conference will be reconsidered.

The *Henry George Standard* for December points out that those who voted against the Single Tax measure were but a third of the electorate and that the adverse vote was decreased ten per cent. 325,000 of those casting their ballots refused to vote against the Single Tax.

### Colorado

MR. B. HAUGHEY is busy in Denver and will work for an amendment to the city charter to be voted on May 16. The purpose of the amendment is to reduce rents and encourage industry by lowering the city tax on homes, stores, factories and their contents twenty per cent. each year and to increase the tax on city lots twenty per cent. each year whether they are used or not. No city tax is to be levied on the value of any building erected after the adoption of this amendment if the building is used exclusively for dwelling purposes.

Gerrit Johnson has made a generous contribution to get the movement for this amendment started.

The measure is called the Optional Amendment because it gives owners of improved property and others the option of paying the tax proposed, or in lieu thereof to remain under the old system at a reduced rate.

The Denver *Express* promises support for the bill.

### Cleveland Club's Work For 1922

THE work of the Cleveland Single Tax Club for 1922 is told in the club's Bulletin of eight pages for January. Fourteen speaking dates were filled in December and six secured for the first month of the new year. During the year 13 speaking dates were secured for John Z. White and 19 for James R. Brown. Local speakers—E. W. Doty, Virgil D. Allen, Peter Witt, Charlotte Smith, Henry P. Boynton, Bradley Hull, Wilbur B. Lutton, and James B. Lindsay—addressed more than 105 audiences. The club celebrated the birthday of Billy Radcliffe in April and that of Henry George in September; held a picnic in June at the country home of William Feather; and had a large and lively