

A Trade Union Organ On Henry George

FROM a review of Henry George's books we extract the following paragraphs. The review is by W. C. Glazebrook and appears in the *Record* of London, Eng., devoted to Transport and General Workers:

"The publication, in a cheap and handy form, of these books is a distinct aid to us of this generation to re-learn the truths that Henry George established.

"Reading these books, and reviewing them collectively—as the sequent items in the expression of a man's philosophy—I am convinced of several facts about the man and his work. There is, first of all, his passionate humanity:

"In cities where there exists a pauper class and a criminal class, where young girls shiver as they sew for bread, and tattered children make a home in the streets, money is regularly raised to send missionaries to the heathen! It would be laughable if it were not so sad. Baal no longer stretches forth his hideous sloping arms; but in Christian lands mothers slay their infants for a burial fee! And I challenge the production from any authentic accounts of savage life of such descriptions of savage life as are to be found in official documents of highly civilized countries, in reports of sanitary commissioners, and of inquiries into the condition of the laboring poor."

Then there is the literary quality of his writings. The purpose of prose, we are told, is to get itself immediately and continuously understood. The prose of Henry George fulfils this purpose. For example:

"Near the window by which I write a great bull is tethered by the nose. Grazing round and round, he has wound his rope about the stake until now he stands a close prisoner, tantalized by rich grass he cannot reach, unable even to toss his head to rid him of the flies that cluster on his shoulders. Now and again he struggles vainly, and then, after pitiful bellowings, relapses into silent misery. This bull, a very type of massive strength, who, because he has not wit enough to see how he might be free, suffers want to the sight of plenty, and is helplessly preyed upon by weaker creatures, seems to me no unfit emblem of the working masses. In all lands, men whose toil creates abounding wealth are pinched with poverty, and, while advancing civilization opens wider vistas and awakens new desires, are held down to brutish levels by animal needs."

"This passage contains practically all the virtues of prose composition. That, however, is for the academicians; what interests us is that he enforces and illustrates his lesson in a thoroughgoing way with nothing slipshod about it. I feel sure that this partly explains his hold over that generation of exacting scholars to whom I have referred. If those of the 'nineties demanded austere English usage, they had also some pretty notions as to the functions of the speculative thinker. Henry George's philosophy is clear and logical. In any seemingly cast-iron analogy

he can see, unerringly, the weak spot. His blows in destructive criticism are as devastating as a steam-hammer and as certain as a sculptor's; his arguments in building up a case are as purposeful as the moves of a chess-player and as patient as the solver of a jig-saw puzzle. I should like to have listened to Henry George debating."

Interesting Developments In Argentina

AN interesting conflict has arisen between the National Executive and the Governor of the province of Santiago del Estero. The Governor issued a decree offering for sale 375,000 acres of public land to meet obligations of the provincial debt.

This action was immediately disauthorized by the National Executive, in a telegram that reads as follows:

"The sale of the land in lots, which your decree proposes, far from attaining its object, promotes the monopoly of large areas, with all the known evils which that involves.

"The big estate, besides being the worst obstacle to progress, is the source of profound social evils, the grave consequences of which directly affect our national life. On the other hand, the reserve prices fixed for sale are so low that they constitute a veritable liquidation sale of the public land. Your Excellency well knows that this property is the sacred patrimony of the Nation, and that, only by means of a premeditated and careful plan of colonization could it be used to the best advantage of the public, and yet without the State having to part with one single square inch of its own exclusive property."

The Minister of the Interior then proceeds: "In order to meet the service of the debt, your Excellency's government should easily be able to select another source of revenue, without having to resort to the alienation of public land, the patrimony of which the national executive defends zealously on behalf of the supreme interest of the Nation, since wealth of the land, like that of the mineral subsoil of the Republic, cannot and must not be the subject of exploitations other than those of the Nation itself."

The conclusion of this singularly interesting declaration of the national executive runs as follows:

"Nothing, therefore, obliges us to precipitation in our plans for the public welfare. On the contrary, everything demands a constant vigilance on our part in order that the people's rights, which cost so much to gain, shall be maintained intact until, in the course of the government's progressive efforts, the moment shall arrive for settling them, on an effective organic plan that will make it possible to extend to all parts of the country the greatest well-being and happiness."

—*Tribuna Georgista*, organ of the Argentine Georgist Confederation.