

## *Progress and George*

"The great enigma of our times," wrote Henry George in 1879, is the "association of poverty with progress . . . Poverty deepens as wealth increases . . . because land . . . the source of all wealth . . . is monopolized." The potential value of the land becomes actual only as a result of the growth and development of the community, argued the former sailor, tramp, gold prospector, peddler, shop clerk, and reporter-turned-economist. Therefore, any increase in its worth should accrue to its creator, society. "The City of God on earth" would come to be through the abolition of all taxes save one: a single tax on land.

The author of *Progress and Poverty* was unsuccessful in his bids for public office. However, since it was first published almost 75 years ago, more than 3,000,000 copies of his major work have been printed in every modern language — including Chinese, at the specific request of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. And last week, in New York, the Henry George School of Social Science started its summer term by celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its founding and the "rediscovery."

The school . . . was started in 1932 by Oscar Geiger, a New York fur dealer. Since then, some 65,000 people in the United States and Canada have completed the basic course. The Henry George School is wholly supported by contributions. All the courses given by the tax-exempt, non-profit institution are free, whether they are taken as a correspondence course or at Henry George schools in eleven states. There are "sister schools" in England, Denmark, Australia, and New Zealand.

Although about one-half of the 5,000 men and women in the United States who register each year do not attend the two-hour classes for the full ten weeks, many go on to advanced courses (in human rights, monetary theory, and economic thought). All the teachers are part-time volunteers and former pupils who have received special training. The dean, George Royal, is employed as a probation officer in New York's Court of General Sessions.

In the early 1930s, Geiger regularly expounded the single-tax theory at the corner of Broadway and 125th Street in Manhattan — then known as "Bughouse Corner." Today's Georgist teachers pride themselves on their use of the Socratic method in imparting the message. And John Dewey, who served as the school's first honorary president until his recent death (*Newsweek*, June 9), ranked Henry George, along with Plato "among the world's [great] social philosophers."

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