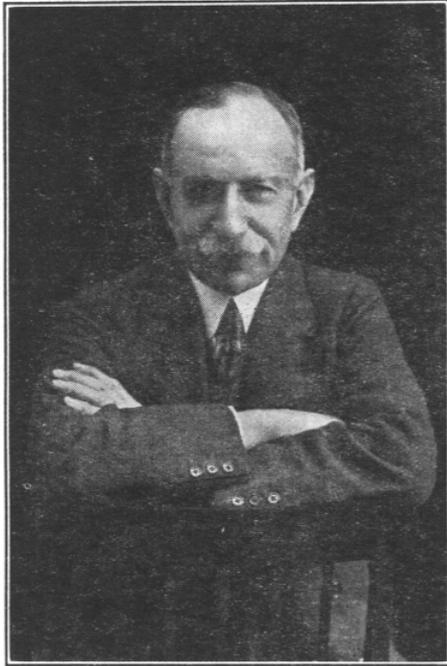


A DISCIPLE OF HENRY GEORGE



LOUIS PHILIP JACOBS

Here, it seems to me, is the gist and meaning of the great social problems of our time: More is given to us than to any people at any time before; and, *therefore*, more is required of us. . . .

Whoever, laying aside prejudice and self-interest, will honestly and carefully make up his own mind as to the causes and the cure of the social evils that are so apparent, does, in that, the most important thing in his power toward their removal. This primary obligation devolves upon us individually, as citizens and as men. Whatever else we may be able to do, this must come first. For "if the blind lead the blind, they both shall fall into the ditch."

Social reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting; by complaints and denunciation; by the formation of parties, or the making of revolutions; but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought, there cannot be right action; and when there is correct thought, right action *will* follow. Power is always in the hands of the masses of men. What oppresses the masses is their own ignorance, their own short-sighted selfishness.

The great work of the present for every man, and every organization of men, who would improve social conditions, is the work of education—the propagation of ideas. It is only as it aids this that anything else can avail. And in this work every one who can think may aid—first by forming clear ideas himself, and then by endeavouring to arouse the thought of those with whom he comes in contact.—Henry George in *Social Problems*, Chapter XXII.

But faith in these economic or fiscal results—all-important as they are—does not by any means account for the fire which burns in the breast of every true Georgean, or for the tenacity with which, through good or ill report, he holds to his creed—a tenacity which has impressed me as peculiarly like that of the Jew to his Creed. The inspiration behind the Single Tax Movement resides in the profound conviction that, through this economic amelioration, through this widening of opportunity, by the juster distribution of wealth and the greater diffusion of population throughout this and every other country—and by these agencies alone—can the

hydra-headed social problem be hopefully and successfully attacked, and the road be cleared for that higher and happier civilization of which the Prophets have sung, and for which ministers of religion, statesmen and philanthropists are labouring so painfully.—Louis P. Jacobs in *Social Justice and the Jew*.

In the passing of Louis Jacobs the movement for economic justice as defined by Henry George has lost one of its outstanding advocates. The meeting held to pay tribute to his memory, on record in another column, was an experience not soon to be forgotten by those in attendance. In the gracious words spoken by so many co-workers telling of his lovable character and steadfast adherence to the work, it was evident that a noted disciple of Henry George had fallen, and that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find another to take his place.

The spirit of the meeting was one of personal sorrow mingled with so much pride in the thought that our colleague had kept the faith and to the last had maintained his interest in the fight. All through his trying illness his chief concern was with the prospect of the overdue land value legislation. At times he doubted if events were on our side and daily and hourly watched from his sick room the progress of the Land Valuation Bill in the House of Commons. When it was known that the Bill was shelved for the time being he shared in the common expectation of a Budget tax on land values; and from the distant shores of California, where he had gone to escape the rigours of an English winter, he thought and wrote of his place in the coming agitation. It was not to be: he was to behold the Promised Land from afar, but not to enter in.

Coming with his family to England some twenty years ago, Mr Jacobs settled down in London and at once became a member of the United Committee. The nature and scope of the agitation then under way made its own appeal to him and from first to last he took a leading part in the publicity campaign. He came with knowledge and zeal born of his intimate friendship and association with Max Hirsch. Together with Mrs Jacobs he was deeply attached to the memory of this eminent exponent of the Henry George doctrine and was ever ready to bear witness to his influence and consummate skill as a defender of the faith.

In his able and instructive pamphlet, *Social Justice and the Jew* (an Address delivered to the Melbourne Jewish Undergraduates' Society, 1913), Mr Jacobs joyously refers to the fact that Jews were among the most prominent workers in the Single Tax cause. In an engaging reference to Joseph Fels he says of him that he possessed dynamic energy, that apart from his fortune he was liberally endowed with the qualities of heart, head and imagination, and that the teaching of *Progress and Poverty* was to him at once a passion and a religion. It was a faithful picture of the man, and when Joe laid down his task here on earth it can be truly said that Louis Jacobs in measure came to take his place. It was a passion and a religion with him also to have the teaching better understood.

He was a faithful member of his Synagogue, but more than once he openly confessed that were it not for the hope that he derived from his understanding of Henry George, he would become in spite

of his religion a complete pessimist. On one occasion when he was stricken down in Algiers some six years ago with a sudden attack of pneumonia his doctor asked him if he would like to leave any message in the event of his passing away. He replied with feeling and in all seriousness that the only message he would like to be conveyed to the members of his family was that they would do their utmost to uphold the teaching of Henry George. It was the message of a man who had grasped the inner meaning of a philosophy that he would have all men understand.

We are mourning the loss of a highly esteemed and never-to-be-forgotten colleague yet the thought prevails that through our Henry George Foundation he is still with us speaking for "the truth that will find friends—those who will toil for it; suffer for it; if need be, die for it."

But quite aside from this beneficent Trust, expressing as it does his unqualified belief in the power and potency of Henry George's own works and the importance of keeping them in circulation, Louis Jacobs had for long years given generous financial support to the United Committee. It is true to say that many an impressive service rendered by the Committee could not have been undertaken but for his timely aid.

He took no part in platform work but on occasion could busy himself with the arrangements incident to any public conference, demonstration or series of meetings. The men in the firing line and at the outposts could always count on him for a hearing in any enterprise that was considered worth while.

He was equally concerned with the urgency of new pieces of explanatory literature. Our latest pamphlet "*Light on the Land Question*" was well taken by our people as an original and forcible statement of our aim and object. The service can be put to the credit of Louis Jacobs. The idea of having the case stated in this new style was due to his insistence and without his warm approval it would have remained an idea like very many of the kind, to be considered some other day. To the last he was convinced of the utility of this publication and from his retreat in California, in failing strength, he listened in with pleasure to the good news of its reception.

Yes, we shall miss Louis Jacobs. We shall miss him for his personal friendship and for the great help he could be to the cause: He was restless in his desire to strengthen its hold on public opinion. It appealed to his higher nature and brought light and warmth to his daydreams of a land flowing with milk and honey where the sin and sorrow that spring from human maladjustments would have no place.

We extend to Mrs Jacobs and her family our sincerest sympathy in their irreparable loss.

J. P.

"Only, when I first realized the squalid misery of a great city, it appalled and tormented me, and would not let me rest, for thinking of what caused it and how it could be cured. But out of this inquiry has come to me something I did not think to find, and a faith that was dead revives."—PROGRESS & POVERTY: Conclusion.

NOTES AND NEWS

Mr Wm. D. Hamilton announces in the *Ardrossan Herald* (Ayrshire) that he will supply anyone with a free copy of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. If others think to follow Mr Hamilton's good example we are prepared to supply any quantity of the books at a reduced price for this special purpose.

Mr I. T. GARRIDO, Barcelona, writes: "I notice the *Daily Herald* announces a substantial taxation of land values in this year's Budget. This is most promising and I have no doubt that it has come about by the constant hammering of the United Committee and its associated Leagues. This in itself is a magnificent result and it fully justifies the existence of your organization and would justify a much greater financial support than what you are getting."

At the recent London County Council Election (5th March) our co-worker, Mr F. C. R. Douglas, ex-Mayor of Battersea, stood in the Labour interest along with Mrs C. Ganley for the North Battersea constituency. The two seats were held by the "Municipal Reform" Party, but the Labour representatives had a large vote, the result being: E. J. Sainsbury (M.R.), 4,781; V. Clarke (M.R.), 4,647; Mrs Caroline Ganley (Labour), 4,107; F. C. Douglas (Labour), 3,969; S. Saklatvala (Communist), 728; Ellen Usher (Communist), 535.—No change.

Mr. Douglas is an Alderman of the Battersea Borough Council.

If I was asked to name the happiest man in Aylesbury at the present moment my vote would go to Councillor Rupert East. To make Mr East sit up and take notice one has only to mention Fertilizers or Taxation of Land Values. The latter question has been Mr East's pet political hobby for as long as I can remember him. Our worthy ex-Mayor could speak for hours, and with authority, on this question.—From the editorial "Observations" in the *Bucks Herald* (Conservative), 8th May.

"What most landowners need is something to stimulate their agents into activity and to get the land they own producing wealth, of the potentiality of which they seem to be quite unaware. . . . There should be no differentiation between land ripe and unripe. Let the tax be on its value whether fully developed, ripe for building, or agricultural. Single taxers hope to see a complete change during a period of 20 or 30 years, whereby the basis for taxation should be changed from one on improvements to that of land value. Such a change would make for continuous prosperity. The present method is the root cause of lean year periods, disturbing to the peace of the world and disastrous to so many people."—Mr JABEZ CRABTREE in the *Building Societies' Gazette*, March issue.

Cheapness and plenty should benefit everyone. Low prices seem to profit the owners of valuable land and sites enabling them to buy more for the rents received, while those who pay them, directly or indirectly, must give more in goods and services. Why should the many pay a few of their number for merely the right to live and work in their own country? A tax upon land values is the most economic form of taxation. Unlike other taxes it cannot be passed on, but tends to cheapen land and bring it into use, thus providing employment of the really useful and needed kind.—Miss EMILY LINDSAY in the *Northern Whig* (Belfast), 17th March.