

# Progress Reports

A POPULAR session held at each annual Henry George School Conference is the one in which reports are given by various Georgist and related organizations, which seem to be growing in variety, scope and interest. Laurence Kobak, assistant director of the school in New York, presided over this session on July 6th in Toronto, and said by way of introduction, "we don't have to educate *all* the voters—we're getting successes now—things are beginning to happen."

Peter VanMeggelen, representing The Alumni Group of Toronto, said the School of Economic Science was without a director for several months, but after James Ramsay took over, 12 classes were started in and near Toronto. From these classes 100 students were graduated, having studied *Progress and Poverty*, *Science of Political Economy* and *Protection or Free Trade*. Democracy versus Socialism will be incorporated into the curriculum when the new course begins this fall.

True to the goals outlined for alumni members, every individual tries to make progress in whatever field is open to him for passing on the teachings of Henry George; and from the recent group of graduates a "hard core" emerged who went out to give lectures, start classes, or engage in other activities. In addition to administering education The Alumni Group has held well publicized monthly meetings with prominent speakers on particular problems, and when the Canadian government set up a commission on taxation, an impressive brief was presented setting forth the case for land value taxation (see HGN, June, 1963, p. 10).

Raymond Perron, director in Montreal for less than two years, who attended his first conference as a director

last year in Pittsburgh, began by saying, "a few of us old-timers decided to start a committee to write letters." This of course drew chuckles from the audience, which included a few *real* old-timers, but also more than the usual number of active young Georgists. Last year Mr. Perron brought as a guest to the conference a young woman, strikingly French, who is now his wife.

After a period of letter-writing it was decided that research would open more doors. So a committee was formed to submit a brief at the hearing before Canada's Royal Commission on Taxation, and considerable newspaper publicity followed — also requests for copies have been received from a number of interested sources in the United States as well as Canada.

William Camargo of New York spoke as advisor of AGLA (Asociacion Georgista para Latino America), a tool for Georgist expansion through Spanish language correspondence. He reported 2,000 enrollments in South America and some in Spain. Classes in Fundamental Economics in Spanish at the school's headquarters in New York have been conducted with a good percentage of students completing the courses. Among those who finished the work a great need was felt for some kind of association through which they could continue their interest and activity. In order to put this energy and enthusiasm to work the Spanish newsletter "Noticias Del Agla," was started. From four to six pages are prepared bi-monthly by students who represent several Spanish speaking countries. This circulates in South America where George's message is deemed very important to counteract the strong pro-Castro feeling prevalent there. Mr. Camargo said at present more corres-

pendence teachers are needed, since there is a shortage of persons capable of doing this work.

Mina Olson, new executive secretary of the Chicago extension of the Henry George School and member of the Henry George Woman's Club, said this group had enjoyed a busy and profitable year. Happily affiliated with the Chicago and Cook County Federation of Women's Organizations and The Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, the Henry George group continues, as in the past, to raise money through several efficient and well planned social events during the year, and this money will be used to help the "new extension." Mrs. Olson noted that while this extension is considered new, its eleven-member board includes two persons who graduated from one of the first classes in Fundamental Economics ever given in Chicago, in 1934. Five members of the board are members of the Henry George Woman's Club. This club has helped to promote and teach the new neighborhood classes resumed last year, and plans are now being made for an essay contest based on *Progress and Poverty*.

Noah D. Alper started the Public Revenue Council in St. Louis 12 years ago because he was convinced that not everyone would take the 10-lesson course in economics at the school, and many would be capable of grasping the importance of Henry George's method by other means. He feels there is a tremendous need to introduce clarity of thought into confused economic thinking and has found this can be done with printed material dealing with economic science and public revenue.

The response received from publications issued by the Revenue Council and mailed to such selected lists as professors of economics, has been reassuring, and recently requests have been coming in for copies to be used

in their classes. Mr. Alper is director of the Henry George School in St. Louis and author of the popular HGN feature "Brief Cases." His faithful efforts over the years have borne fruit as indicated by increased attention in the St. Louis press to the connection between public revenue and land.

Edmund C. Darson of Detroit made the brief observation that a League to Untax Buildings was started 18 months ago with Joseph Pietruska as president. Certain key people in local political circles have chosen to favor the homeowners' organization, and one of the members of a consolidated homeowners organization has adopted the idea. There is now a Greater Detroit Homeowners Association which is gaining steadily in public acceptance, and when Mr. Pietruska goes out to speak he will be speaking for this large group and representing the point of view of a large segment of voters. Mr. Darson believed such influence could exert quite a bit of pressure, especially as its president seems to have the ability to reach the right people at the right time with important information.

### RSF Seminar

Robert Schalkenbach, a New York printer and a self-made man, left a will which resulted in the founding of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation in 1925 for the purpose of "teaching, expounding and propagating the ideas of Henry George," said Miss V. G. Peterson, the executive secretary. She mentioned that this foundation has a large board of twenty-one unpaid members, and a small staff. Its modest offices are located in the same building as the Henry George School. Among other things, the RSF provides textbooks at cost for the use of the Henry George School.

It is now well known that the lec-

ture tour of Dr. Rolland O'Regan of Wellington, New Zealand, was sponsored by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. He was chosen for this coast-to-coast tour because of his excellent speaking ability, his dynamic personality, and his long and intimate knowledge of how the unimproved rating system has operated in New Zealand. Many important organizations invited Dr. O'Regan to their platforms, and a number made requests for second appearances or asked for copies of his speech to be distributed to their membership.

Other RSF activities during the past year included work on a manuscript concerning free trade which, it is hoped, will be ready for publication within another twelve months. A new Spanish translation of *Progress and Poverty*, by Baldomero Argente is now in type and will be published this autumn in Valencia. A modern Hebrew translation of the 228-page English abridgment of *Progress and Poverty* has also been made, and is being printed in Jerusalem. The executive secretary of the Jewish National Fund, near neighbors of the RSF in New York, has written a short foreword. This is appropriate because the JNF, whose founders wrote into their early documents that land owned by their fund should never be sold but should be leased to users at the equivalent of economic rent, has had a great influence on the spectacular development of Israel.

The popular short motion picture, "Land and Space to Grow," introduced by the Schalkenbach Foundation in 1960, has had 119 television showings over independent stations, and 4,265 screen showings, with an estimated total of 3,074,190 viewers.

A three-day academic seminar was held last month at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, under RSF support. It was the third such seminar —

and the twenty professors were invited to discuss the role of land value taxation in less developed countries. Each man invited had shown some previous interest in this subject. These seminars are held on university campuses in different parts of the country each year.

Percy Williams of Pittsburgh, executive secretary of the Henry George Foundation, is our honored and able exponent of the Graded Tax Plan, which, with Hawaii's recent endorsement, has now gained an international reputation. It is 38 years old, one year younger than the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, Mr. Williams said.

Although any attempt to affect political action in the United States is difficult, it is hoped that success can be achieved in adoption of the Graded Tax Plan by at least one more city in Pennsylvania (Erie). Sidney Evans, Jack Motley and Wylie Young have been faithful proponents of this campaign, aided initially by the lecture visits of Dr. Harry Gunnison Brown. Such a victory would be a great cause for rejoicing on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the plan in Pittsburgh. Encouraging news was received shortly before the Henry George Conference in Toronto, that the new state of Hawaii had ratified a plan of this type applicable to the entire state. See page 11 for details of this legislation.

Judge John Fuchs of New Braunfels, Texas is president of the Henry George Foundation. He introduced an amendment to the state constitution favoring land value taxation, and will submit it at the 1964 general session.

Sidney Evans of San Diego and several other speakers representing organizations related to Henry George, wore more than one hat. Not only is he intimately concerned with the Henry George School in San Diego, but he speaks eloquently also for two new tax-conscious organizations.

The Incentive Taxation Committee of California (1960) of which he is a director, is enjoying a reputation for vigorous action in the field of property tax reform, with the result that there is now a great deal of acceptance and understanding of its objective among legislators. Bulletins are published from its year-round office in San Diego, and a paid staff attends to correspondence and sends speakers around the state. Through the activities of this committee residents are being made aware of the need for reform in the property tax, and the amendment ACA 20 embodying this is being studied

with increasing hope of approval.

Mr. Evans is also the secretary-treasurer of a homeowners association conceived in 1961 offering tax relief to the group of "orphan children" who are now being discriminated against in taxation, namely the homeowners. This organization will try to build up voting strength among its members who will pay dues of \$12 a year. The Statewide Homeowners are starting with offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego, with six paid workers. Various experimental methods will be used to recruit members and arouse interest.

## *Fairhope High School Winners*

**B**RUCE EVANS, JR. of Fairhope, Alabama, director of the Fairhope extension of the Henry George School, taught economics classes last term at the Fairhope High School and School of Organic Education, with a total of 34 students. Many of them wrote contest essays of 1000 words on the subject "Employment in a Single Tax Economy." A committee of three, with C. W. Arnold as chairman, found a longer time than usual was needed to decide on the winners among these alert students.

The first prize of \$100 was awarded to Phil Porter Dyson, and he receives an additional \$100 a year for the next three years if he goes to college. The second \$100 went to Sally Lege; with James Michael Ottinger winning \$75; Nancy Brown, \$50; and Allan Hoffman, \$25.

Mr. Arnold, chairman of the Educational Committee of the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation, said the essayists showed with remarkable clarity that shifting taxes from wages, personal property and buildings to land would inescapably promote industrious activity in all phases of man's

endeavor, resulting in rapidly expanding business, fast increase of employment, and, if fully applied, would eliminate involuntary unemployment and poverty. The young authors seem to have grasped the fact that these benefits can be realized within our present framework of laws to promote freedom in private enterprise without submitting personal freedom to the withering hand of socialism. "This," he said, "is the true beauty of the single tax philosophy."

The instructor, Mr. Evans, is constantly amazed to find that his high school students show understanding of economics which college graduates often fail to grasp. He remarked jocularly that after the awards were made he cornered the five winners and demanded a 10 per cent cut of their "easy money."

One of them responded promptly, "Mr. Evans, you spent several hours teaching us that it is unjust to tax either labor or initiative."

When this rejoinder was told to the student's father next day, he replied that the instructor had them "thinking single tax."