

Marion Miles Miller

THE MAN SENT^{OF} GOD



A
POEM by
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THE MAN SENT OF GOD.

* "There was a man sent of God whose name was Henry George".
—FATHER MCGLYNN.

The World forgot its God ;
That early faith had gone
Which shrined Him in each clod
And hailed Him every dawn.
It felt His presence near
In even cool, no more ;
Nor longer did it hear
Upon the sounding shore
In His own voice the waves rejoice, the booming billows roar.

The Poor forgot their God ;
O'ershadowed thick with gloom,
Could they His glory laud
When darkness was their doom ?
How should Despair divine
That clouds would break above
And show the radiant sign,
The arch of Hope and Love,
When Woe's black sky gave Love the lie, and Want did Hope
disprove?

The Rich forgot their God,
And, as in days of old,
A wanton dance they trod
Around the Calf of Gold
They decked his silly brows
In gauds and garlands gay,
And with a wild carouse
Wore out each weary day,
Then, from a bed whence peace had fled, rose up again to play.

The Low forgot their God,
As Toil with bended head
His endless round did plod
To grind his bitter bread.
He had no other thought
Than, when his strength was grown,
The evil on him wrought,
With evil to atone.
To wreak his hate on Strong and Great, though Law be over-
thrown.

* These simple words, spoken at the funeral of Henry George by Dr. Edward McGlynn, the priest of the Single Tax movement as George was its prophet, were so charged with truth that, as by an electric impulse, the vast audience rose to its feet with irrepressible cheers—a tribute never before paid to mortal man.

The Great forgot their God;
Their ancient awe of Him
Who, royal, rode abroad
On wings of cherubim,
And trumpeted with tone
Of thunder and in flame
Of fearful lightning shone,
Had passed; they mocked His name:
"And shall we fear His bolt and spear who can their courses
tame?"

The Church forgot her God;
She turned His Word aside,
And at the warning nod
Of Wealth and Power lied.
Most pleasant, broad and fair,
The heavenly path she showed,
With many a rich man there
High on his camel's load,
A servile priest behind, the beast through Heaven's gate to goad.

The Law forgot her God;
When Labor urged his right,
Her feet with lead were shod,
Her hands too weak to smite;
Yet to pale Privilege
She gave such ready heed
That with her eager edge
She smote before the deed
Which guilty fear imagined near when wronged Toil did bleed.

The Fool forgot his God,
And said within his soul:
"Out on this priestly Fraud,
Who would our lives control!
Let us from Law be free,
From Duty let us fly,
Eat, drink and merry be,
For we tomorrow die,
And, though in debt to Nature, yet escape her pains thereby."

The Wise forgot their God,
And babbled like the fools :
“From slimy polypod
To man, one order rules
The which unordered is
For Chance is lord supreme ;
None other law than this
We own in Nature's scheme ;
There is no Right but custom'd Might, and Duty is a dream.

And men to Mammon gave
The homage due the Lord ;
Law was his willing slave,
For him Strength drew the sword ;
But still, despite their rage,
Was Nature not denied,
But unto all the wage
Of justice did divide ;
Nor when from Toil Strength seized the spoil, could man God's
law deride ;

For gifts thus foully riven
With blood were overspilt,
And Innocence to heaven
For vengeance cried on Guilt ;
And from the penalty
Of Nature with his gain
Might not the spoiler flee ;
No land but knew the stain,—
The sear'd brand which God's own hand sets on the brow of
Cain.

The palaces he reared
For Pleasure's pomp and lust,
By blood's corrosion smeared,
Fell, crumbling, into dust ;
And wasted grew his lands
Which Toil with tears had sown ;
Until of Tyre there stands
Nor stone upon a stone,—
The lean snake crawls o'er Babel's walls and booms the bitter
lone.

Nor did the toiler know
God's statutes to fulfil,
Whose wages were a blow
If good he did, or ill;
The more that Nature kind
Increased his scanty hoard,
The more was Labor fined
By Power's tithing lord,
Till tax and toll left of the whole what scarce would life afford

What wonder then, unlearned
In all that might be taught
In Freedom's school, he spurned
And set God's law at naught?
As spoilers in their greed
Smite till themselves are sore,
The toilers in their need
Must rob each other's store;
So, blow on blow, and woe on woe, the curse grew more and
more.

"How long, O Lord, how long?"
The saints cried in despair;
Their sighs were even song,
Their moanings, matin prayer.
"Let us curse God and die!"
The thoughtless spoke in wrath,
But sad nor bitter cry
Might move Him from His path—
That He withdraw one whit the law He for all Nature hath.

But that the world might trust
The mercy of the Lord,
On evil men and just
His equal rain He poured,
And in His own good time
His prophet voices sent
To tell His truth sublime
And warn of punishment,
To sound to all the Baptist call, "Repent, O world, repent!"

And one, because the Word
 He cried with flaming tongue,
 Was mocked by those who heard
 And into prison flung *
 And one, who spoke in youth
 With accents calm and clear,
 Denied in age the truth
 Because of Culture's sneer, †
 And one, a Dove with note of Love, nor high nor low would
 hear. ‡

Then God sent forth a man
 Whose name was Henry George; ||
 And by this noble plan
 Formed him on Freedom's forge:
 From Nature's purest soil
 Her finest ore He drew,
 And with the sweat of Toil
 Tempered each tender thew,
 And seasoned him in heart and limb where the wild tempest
 blew.

Then, with the key of Love,
 A dear wife's gentle croon
 Above her babes, God strove
 To set his heart in tune
 To tenderest notes, until
 Too soft was not a sigh,
 Too noisy not a mill,
 Nor attic room too high,
 For him to hear the summons clear, humanity's sad cry.

Or on the winds of North
 Or South or East or West,
 God's voices called him forth—
 The sighs of the oppressed.
 Out of the deepest mine.
 Through thickest factory wall,
 Where women waste and pine,
 And children faint and fall,
 In heart and brain he caught the strain, the battle's clarion call. §

* Thomas Spence, an enthusiast, who was expelled in 1775 from the Philosophical Society of Newcastle, England, and afterwards imprisoned, for declaring the equal rights of all men in the land.

† Herbert Spencer, who published in 1850 "The Right to the Use of the Earth," being the 9th chapter of his "Social Statics." This chapter he has suppressed in recent editions of the book (see Henry George's "A perplexed Philosopher").

‡ Patrick Edward Dove, who published in 1850 "The Theory of Human Progression," a book in which he prophesies a reign of equity upon the earth, to be brought about by the abolition of all privilege. It was little noticed save by the American abolitionists.

|| § See notes on following pages.

And forth from brain and heart
He sent again the cry,
So loud, the world did start
As at the bolt-rent sky,
And yet so piercing clear,
That with one lightning stroke
It shored the darkness drear
And trance-bound Faith awoke.
For God's own Word the nations heard when George His
prophet spoke :

"Thus saith the Judge of All
Who holds the even scales :
Think ye I rule this ball
With old wives' whimsied tales?
That these I will to Have,
And these, that they Have Not,
That Toil for Ease should slave
And bless Me for his lot.

Since from his woe shall meekness flow by charity begot?

"No! Me ye do blaspheme
And set My Law at naught;
Ye drones who idly dream
O'er cups with richness fraught.
No! not for drunken drones
This pulsing earth was planned;
Up from your easeful thrones
And hear My high command :

With righteous tolls redeem your souls; restore the folk their
land!

"And you, O simple Folk.
By false commandments cowed,
Arise, cast off the yoke
Whereto your necks are bowed,
Stand up, for ye are strong
In strength that will increase,
And right the ancient wrong
By bloodless arms of peace,

Till none shall know want's bitter woe, and war for aye shall
cease.

Henry George was born in Philadelphia, Pa., September 2, 1839. From early youth he earned his own living, serving at the age of thirteen as a sailor before the mast. He married early, and supported his wife and children, first as a compositor, then as editor, in newspaper offices of San Francisco. On a visit to New York, observing the striking contrasts of wealth and misery, he conceived the idea of his great work "Progress and Poverty," published privately in 1879, and afterward by D. Appleton & Co., New York, in 1880. In this book he traces the cause of unjust distribution of wealth to the monopoly of the land, the denial to labor of access to natural opportunities, and shows how just distribution will follow from a tax upon the rental value of land exclusive of improvements (the Single Tax).

"For lo, Mine ancient Word
Again I now declare,
That ye shall beat the sword
Into the plowman's share;
Into the pruning hook
The sharp spear shall be bent
If ye but heed the Book*
By Mine own servant sent,
And turn the spoil Tax takes from Toil to land-enriching rent."

So in these latter days
In terms to fit the time,
With Science' prosing phrase,
God taught His truths sublime;
And not by word alone
That, deedless, dies ere said.
His servant made them known,—
For them his own heart bled,
For them he wrought, for them he fought, and lay, their martyr,
dead.

And we, who knew not God,
The Poor, the Weak, the Low,
The Toilers undertrod,
Beheld Him in that blow;
"God doeth all things well,
His laws are perfect laws;
Let time His praises tell
Which truthward ever draws,
For from that death, with vital breath springs up anew the Cause."

And they shall know our God,—
The Rich, the Wise, the Great;
Not aye shall Justice nod
And Rapine rule the State.
Already in the East†
The signs of promise are;
With us are those who feast
Beneath the austral star;‡
With brightening skies, let hope arise; on to the Holy War!

MARION M. MILLER.

New York, April 7, 1899.

§ "He who will hear, to him the clarions of the battle call. How they call, and call, and call, till the heart swells that hears them. Strong soul and high endeavor, the world needs them now. Beauty still lies imprisoned, and iron wheels go over the good and true and beautiful that might spring from human lives."—*Progress and Poverty*.

* "Progress and Poverty," by Henry George, 'The Bible of the Single Tax.'

† In Great Britain the local taxation of ground rentals (the Single Tax) has become the leading plank in the Liberal platform.

‡ In Australia and New Zealand the Single Tax has been partially adopted, with remarkable results in improvement of social conditions.