

A Free Private School for Adults

Henry George School of Social Science in 21st Year

By B. B. Rowe

WHILE officials of many educational institutions are wondering how to make ends meet, a private school that offers all its courses free of charge is starting its twenty-first year.

Founded in the depression year of 1932, the Henry George School of Social Science now has 65,000 graduates, extensions in twelve states and Canada, and branches in six foreign countries. In New York, the school is at 50 E. 69th St., in the former home of Otto Donnerich, a wool factor who was noted as a lavish host. Director of the school is Robert Clancy.

The school was founded to teach the principles of economics, and particularly the economic philosophy of Henry George, developer of the "single tax" theory. The basic course, built on George's "Progress and Poverty," is offered to all new students.

Masterpiece, Best Seller

George wrote "Progress and Poverty" in 1879 to expound his theory that income should be free of tax, with all revenue taken from land rent. An all-time best seller in the field of economics, "Progress and Poverty" has been translated into every civilized language and has sold more than 3,000,000 copies. Aside from its stature as a work on economics, the book is considered a masterpiece of English prose.

Students at the Henry George School are drawn from all walks of life. About 55 per cent are women. White collar and skilled workers make up 52 per cent of the student body; business and professional, 24; non-commercial, 19, and manual and unskilled, 5.

Teachers at the school are former students, specially trained for the task and working on a volunteer basis. The Socratic method of teaching is used, with emphasis on questions and answers

and discussion. There are no scholastic requirements for entrance; only intellectual curiosity and a willingness to learn.

The school is chartered by New York State but does not grant credit toward a degree. Some colleges will grant credit for work done at the school.

All courses are free, with the student being asked only to supply himself with the texts used. Not all the courses require textbooks. Donations and bequests support the school. Correspondence courses, with individualized instruction, are available for those who cannot attend classes. There are afternoon and evening courses.

Besides the basic course—an inquiry into the causes of poverty and depression—the school offers a number of advanced courses. Among these are: Democracy vs. Socialism; Human Rights; the Philosophy of John Dewey; European History, American History, and Public Speaking.

George's single-tax theory was evolved as a result of his search

for a substitute for socialism—an economic system he rejected as infringing on human rights. While there has been a lively world-wide interest in his tax theory since its inception, heavy increases in taxes have focused additional attention on it in recent years.

Might Have Been Mayor

When George died in New York in 1897 he was engaged in a bitter fight with Tammany Hall. Students of the political history of that time say that had he lived he would have been New York's first reform Mayor.

Some years ago, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower voted for Henry George instead of "Stonewall" Jackson for inclusion in the Hall of Fame.

And commenting on the work and philosophy of George, John Dewey said: "Henry George is one of the great names. It would require less than the fingers of the two hands to enumerate those who, from Plato down, rank with him."

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HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

50 East 69th Street

New York 21, N.Y.

Phone: RHineland 4-8700

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