Box 39

Philosophy of life

13277

LESSON I * The Life of Oscar Geiger Text: A SEED WAS SOWN
Part I - Life

First hour of class - Introduction and Life of Geiger. (Question sheets are intended primarily for correspondence students, but may be issued to class students at end of session, along with answers, and questions only to Lesson II.)

Oscar Geiger was first and foremost a follower of Henry George. He devoted most of his spare time to promulgating the Georgist philosophy, and his most important work was the founding of the Henry George School. But he was also a philosopher, and he developed a philosophy that he felt embodied "the wisdom of the ages." Much of his philosophy was based on George's. Though George was primarily an economist and social philosopher, he too was interested in general philosophical problems, and toward the end of his life was developing a broader philosophy (A Perplexed Philosopher, The Condition of Labor, Science of Political Economy). In this course we will follow the philosophy developed by Geiger, which touches the most important questions dealt with by philosophers, and so this course will serve as a good general introduction to philosophy.

Review main points of Geiger's life: Youth - scholarly inclinations - ordained a rabbi - the burning question, "Why is there so much human suffering in the world" - left religion because it did not supply a satisfactory answer - discovers Henry George - the answer - joined the movement - account of early efforts at propaganda and politics - Geiger's participation - the failure of these efforts and decline of the movement - Geiger's founding of the Henry George School - he died two and a half years later - left no plan for its continuance, but it continued and grew - he knew it would - this faith a result of his philosophy.

The first 3 questions need not be asked, but above summary should cover the points:

1. Describe some activities of the followers of Henry George after his death. (from 1897 to about 1924).

2. In Oscar Geiger's opinion, what were the shortcomings of most of these activities in "putting across" the Georgist philosophy?

3. What were Geiger's reasons for starting a school instead of continuing with political action, etc.?

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Second hour of class - the nature of philosophy.

4. What is philosophy?

Ask each student in turn to give his own conception of what philosophy is. These answers generally fall into two categories: most students conceive of it as a person's beliefs that guide him in life; some, however, see it as a larger study, to find out truth generally. Summarize the answers and point out that philosophy deals with both aspects. The basic purpose is to seek truth. Philo-sophia, the love of wisdom, leading to a search for it. It is also a guide to good living. Comparison with the "science" and the "art" of political economy. The science tells us how things are, the art tells us how to apply these truths.

5. What is the difference between
(a) Philosophy and Science?
Science discovers facts, and does not pursue questions further than facts.

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L. I contd.

Philosophy asks "Why" and is concerned with values, meanings, norms.

5. (b) Philosophy and Religion?

Both deal with similar basic questions. But religion is based ultimately on faith. Philosophy never stops asking questions, and seeks to demonstrate its conclusion. (Thomas Aquinas was both a philosopher and a religionist: he sought to reason things out, but when reason could not demonstrate the dogmas of Catholicism, he accepted them on faith. Spinoza was a philosopher, and even though he spoke so much of God that he has been called "God-intoxicated", he still tried to demonstrate his conclusions; and he left the Jewish fold because he would not accept on faith.) (Einstein was both a scientist and a philosopher: he discovered the formula that led to the atomic bomb; as a philosopher he sought to lead mankind away from the atomic bomb.)

6. Why study philosophy?

There are times when we must all be philosophers. There are times when we ask, What am I doing here? What is my purpose in life? What is life all about? The deeper we study, the better we can answer these questions.

At one time philosophy covered investigations into almost everything. Even as late as the 18th century, what we call "science" was known as "natural philosophy". But science has been encroaching steadily against the house of philosophy - first the physical sciences became separate studies - then the social sciences and mind sciences (psychology). What is left of philosophy? (Students may be asked to answer this.) Philosophy still deals with the evaluation of all other data, and the effort to seek the ultimate basis of reality, and to provide a guide to life.

Main branches of philosophy: Metaphysics
Logic
Ethics
Politics
Esthetics

Leaving out Physics (which is now science), these are the branches as outlined by Aristotle. With the exception of Esthetics, we will have something to say about all these branches.

LESSON II - The Road to Wisdom Assignment: Proem: The Road to Wisdom
(All assignments from this lesson on are in Part II, "A Seed Was Sown")

In the quest for truth, how to proceed? What path to take? How can we obtain valid conclusions which will guide us?

1. In the quest for truth, discuss the advantages and shortcomings of the following: (N.B. One student listed pleasant things for advantages and unpleasant things for shortcomings: e.g., for the senses, the advantage was that we see nice things, and the shortcoming was that we see ugly things. This of course is not what is called for! Regardless of nice or ugly, we want to discover the truth.)

	Advantages	Shortcomings
a) The five senses	They help us to contact the world.	Our senses often deceive us.
b) Experience (the things that happen to us in life)	We learn best from our own experience - what works, what doesn't work, etc.	Our own range of experience is too narrow to tell us the whole truth.
c) Authority (what we read, what others tell us)	Enlarges our experience. Tells us things we couldn't know otherwise.	Leaves us dependent on the word of others. They could be wrong.
d) Intuition, (impulse, instinct, the "6th sense")	Gives us clues for further exploration. Helps us in an emergency.	Could be wrong. How to tell "true" from "false" hunches?

(Skepticism might also be mentioned. Advantages: helps tear away insupportable ideas. Shortcomings: it is negative, and doesn't really explain anything.)

All the above are helpful <u>tools</u> in the quest for truth - but <u>mind</u> is needed to put the tools to use. We must <u>learn</u> to think - to <u>reason</u>.

2. Describe <u>reasoning</u>, and explain its importance in the quest for truth.

It is a process by which the mind takes a premise and by a series of connected steps reaches a conclusion. The purpose is to reach the unknown. See answer at bottom of page 40 - but stress that the steps must be connected. Reasoning is basically objective, rather than subjective. (Objective - proceeding from the object known and not from the subject knowing. Subjective - obtained from or based on one's own state of thought and feeling. Observation is objective; the feeling of pain is subjective.) Objective thinking is more difficult than subjective thinking - but needed.

3. What are the two most important forms of reasoning? Define.

Deduction - reasoning from cause to effect - from principles to facts - a priori.

Induction - reasoning from effect to cause - from facts to principles - a posteriori.

(In studying these forms of reasoning, we are studying <u>logic</u>. Logic is the study of the conditions of valid inference, i.e., a study of the conditions under which we can make valid conclusions.)

Explain the syllogism, the main form of deductive reasoning: two related premises, a major and a minor, from which a conclusion is drawn. The common or middle term in the two premises is dropped in the conclusion.

4. The following is an example of a correct syllogism: "All dogs are mammals. All mammals are vertebrates. Therefore, all dogs are vertebrates." Offer two more syllogisms of your own, one affirmative, one negative.

(Example of a negative: "No fish are mammals; all dogs are mammals; no dog is a fish!") In making up syllogisms, students will often fall into the error of the "undistributed middle." That is, a middle term which is not "distributed", i.e., universally true of at least one other term, therefore it cannot be dropped in the conclusion. This is illustrated by the following question:

5. The following is a fallacious syllogism: "All dogs are mammals. All cats are mammals. Therefore all dogs are cats." You know this is wrong in fact. What is wrong with it logically? Explain.

See if the students can figure it out themselves. Before asking the question, you might put on the blackboard: "All A is C; all B is C; therefore all A is B." This superficially sounds logical; but when you substitute dogs, cats and mammals, they can see it is wrong.

Example of an incompleted syllogism: Caesar was a tyrant; therefore he deserved death. Ask class to supply missing premise.

It is possible to reach a correct conclusion, even though false logic is used. Example: All French poodles are mammals; all dogs are mammals; therefore, all French poodles are dogs. (The undistributed middle.)

It is possible to reach an unfactual conclusion, even though the logic is all right. Example: No President of the U.S. has been a Catholic; Kennedy was President of the U.S.; therefore he was not a Catholic. What is wrong with that? The first premise. This was true before Kennedy. And this illustrates the importance of reasoning with correct premises - which brings us to the inductive method.

"This green apple is sour". Is that reasoning? No - only a fact which can be used as a basis for reasoning. Induction would consist of sampling many green apples, until one can say, "All green apples are sour." Is this an absolute conclusion? No, only a tentative conclusion, based on experience, and subject to alteration as new cases arise. If we discover some green apples which are not sour, we have to revise our conclusion. A "perfect induction" is when all cases are counted; e.g., "all students in this room have taken the School's basic course." We can verify this by checking every student. An "imperfect induction" would be to spot-check the students. Since in most scientific cases it is impossible to count every single case, imperfect induction is most often used in science.

John Stuart Mill's canons of induction are: 1, the method of agreement (a presumed cause is present when the effect is present). 2, the method of difference (the presumed cause is absent when the effect is absent). 3, the method of concomitant variations (the presumed cause is present in the degree that the effect is present). 4, the method of residual variations (after eliminating all other possible causes, there is still a residual effect which can be accounted for by the presumed cause). The planet Neptune was discovered by this method. The astronomer Herschel noticed perturbations in the orbit of Uranus. He figured that there must be another planet beyond Uranus, calculated its probable size, distance and time of revolution around the sun, and predicted where and when it would be found; later his calculations were proven correct, and Neptune was discovered.

Henry George also used these canons of induction in proving that land speculation is the basic cause of depressions. In Book V, Chapter I, he took each method in turn: 1, depressions are preceded by a wave of land speculation; 2, depressions do not

occur when land speculation is absent; 3, depressions are severe in the degree that there has been a land "boom and bust"; 4, after accounting for all other possible causes, depressions can only be accounted for basically by land speculation.

Ask students which they consider most important, induction or deduction? If they say induction, point out the wrong conclusions that can be drawn even if you have the right facts but use the wrong reasoning. If they say deduction, point out that the wrong conclusions can also be drawn if you use the right reasoning but have the wrong facts. (See q. 5 et seq.)

Both are equally important. In the quest for truth, facts and reason are needed.
Facts - correspond to the economic factor Land.
Reason - corresponds to the economic factor Labor.
We might say that these two produce the "wealth" of philosophy, which is truth or wisdom. "Capital" is the heritage of philosophy that we may use to help us find more truth or wisdom. But we must never forget the primacy of the two basic factors.

6. Some modern thinkers say that we cannot speak of "cause and effect" but only of the "probability" of an event occurring. What is your own understanding of the matter?

Explain this further, if necessary. Show "probability curve." We deal in probabilities all the time. At the Henry George School, we calculate according to probabilities in preparing our classes. We figure that if we do so much advertising, we will get so many students. This is adequate for everyday use. But it is incorrect to say because of this that this is all there is, there is no further exactitude of cause and effect. "Probabilities" indicate our own insufficient knowledge. If we knew all the factors, we could state the cause and effect relationship more precisely.

LESSON III - Natural Law Assignment, Part II, Chapter I

Review logic - induction and deduction.

The main purpose of philosophy is to serve as a guide through life. This suggests that it can throw light on the path ahead of us. Can we "see" into the future? Can we predict?

Some things follow other things. But do they do so necessarily, or coincidentally? The cock crows in the morning and then the sun rises. Is the cock crowing the cause of the sun rising? If someone said so, how could we prove otherwise? Try it under a variety of conditions. If we find that the sun rises even when the cock is not crowing, we know that the latter does not cause the former. Indeed, upon investigation, we find that it is just the opposite - the sun about to rise causes the cock to crow.

J.S. Mill sought to distinguish between accidental sequence and causal sequence. He said when there is an "invariable sequence", then there is a causal relation. But, in that case, does day cause night? (or vice versa?) Each is invariably followed by the other. But neither is the cause of the other. Both belong to the order of nature, both are caused by a third factor (the sun shining on a rotating earth). All possible efforts must be made under all possible variety of conditions in order to determine causal relations.

Cause and effect leads to discovery of Natural Law. Ask students to define Natural Law. Quote Geiger's definition (page 45).

1. How would you explain natural law to someone who had never heard of it?
2. How can we be sure that we have discovered a natural law?
   Allow students to offer their own version. In the course of discussion, bring out how we discover law. Bring out the necessity of observing and experimenting under a variety of conditions. These experiments may be mental as well as physical. Refer to Chapter III, "Of Method", of Henry George's Protection or Free Trade, and cite the story George tells of his boyhood mental experiment of how a metal ship floats.
3. "Out of a handful of seeds sown, some took root, others died. Therefore natural law is only approximate, not exact." How would you answer this?
   Refer to "probabilities" argument, and Geiger's reply. The shortcomings are in our lack of complete knowledge, not nature's inaccuracies. Students generally understand that differences in conditions produce different results - e.g., some seeds stronger than others, some soil better, etc.

   There is another aspect to Natural Law - while every phenomenon, however small, has a causation, there is also a "permissiveness" on the part of nature, for a phenomenon to exist under a given range of conditions. For instance, water remains in the liquid state between 33° and 211° F. (or between 1° and 99° centigrade). However, there is some cause for every change in degree, also some effect

4. Is natural law really natural, or is it manmade? Support your answer.

   This relates to the question of determining the difference between the subjective (what is within us) and the objective (what is "out there", in the world). It is a deep and controversial question, and different philosophers have taken different positions on it.

It is related to the basic question, "How do we know we know?" How do we know anything, and how can we judge of the reality of anything outside of ourselves? Is everything a figment of our imagination? Challenge students on this point - Temporarily

take the position that all the students in the class are figments of your own imagination, that you are dreaming them up, and as soon as you wake up, they will all disappear, and ask them if they can disprove your assumption. Whatever they say, you can reply, "That, too, is my dream!" Then you can point out that there is really no final and conclusive way of settling this. We simply accept the reality that "I am", that there is a real world in which I exist, and that there are other beings like myself with whom I can communicate. These are basic assumptions, and they do work. From them we can make progress. (By the way, the notion that the only reality is in "my" mind is called "solipsism".)Refer to Descartes - "je pense, donc je suis" - "I think, therefore I am."

Having decided this, we can continue to try to find out what is "out there". We make different experiments and formulate different laws. In one respect, the laws are "man made" in that they are our own formulations. But there are definite causal relations and regularities "out there", and the more we advance,the closer our formulations become to the existing realities and natural laws.

The "subjective" is very important in that it give us the driving force, motivation and incentive to make discoveries. Once we have that incentive, we must become objective in our quest. Example: Henry George was emotionally moved by the phenomenon of poverty, and this decided him to launch his quest into its cause. Once he decided to make his quest, he had to be very objective and unemotional in observing and recording his studies. Someone has said, "What is needed is a heart of fire and a brain of ice."

5. Justify the assertion that natural law operates in the social sciences. (Bear in mind the objection that "human nature is capricious".)

We have been talking about finding out what is "out there"But we ourselves are also part of nature, so what is inside us is, or should be also subject to natural law. This is more difficult to study precisely because we are so close to it that objective study becomes difficult. But it is nevertheless possible to make such a study, and it is essential that we do so.

Everything looks capricious when we do not know the underlying principles. So did the weather, which terrified primitive man. "The gods are angry", they said. The more we learn, the more we understand the order in nature. The problem is to seek beneath changing surface appearance for the unchanging reality underneath. Natural law in the social sciences deals with man's behavior, man's nature. Man does have a nature, and it should be possible to find what it is, through scientific study. Some economists and politicians want to make over society without understanding these natural laws, but their schemes never work.

6. Give three examples of natural law in various fields or subjects. Include a social science.

Physics - Law of gravity. Everybody attracts every other body with a force that varies directly as the product of the masses of the two bodies, and inversely as the square of he distance between them.

Biology - Mendel's law. In cross-breeding, dominant characteristics will appear in the first generation, recessive characteristics in the second generation, and both will appear thereafter in fixed proportions.

Economics - Man seeks to satisfy his desires with the least exertion.

Lesson IV - Unity Assignment - Chapter 2 (Some supplementary reading on atomic theory would be helpful)

If we are to find a reliable guide through life, we must understand what kind of universe we are living in - its nature, and our place in it.

(Question 1 ought to be saved in class until the end of the session, so that students will first have Geiger's concept of Unity.)

We have studied Natural Law. The universality of Law points to an underlying Unity in Nature, despite the never-ending variety of Nature. In addition, science has given much support to the philosophic concept of Unity. (Geiger felt that a philosophical idea, to be worthy of support, should be capable of demonstration. Therefore he turned to science to see how the concept of Unity was supported.)

2. In what ways do the findings of science support the philosophic concept of Unity?

In the immediate universe around our earth, the solar system, we find a striking testimony to Unity. Here is a "family," with the sun at its center, and 9 planets with their satellites revolving around the sun, all in exact and coordinated motion. The solar system is a unit. Beyond the furthest planet, the nearest star is very far away - 25 trillion miles. It takes the light from that star, travelling at 186,000 miles per second (7½ times around the earth) more than 4 years to reach the earth. Stellar distances are so great that we measure them in light-years - i.e., the distance light travels in one year - 5,865,696,000,000 miles. We belong to a system of stars of which the Milky Way is part. This galaxy is 100,000 light years in diameter. As stronger telescopes were developed, it was discovered that there were other galaxies immense distances away. (The first other galaxy discovered was one which we see through the constellation Andromeda.) After that many more galaxies were discovered. When the largest telescope ever made - the 200-inch lens telescope at Palomar, California - was first used, it was expected to show the limits of the universe - but it only revealed more and more galaxies into the endless reaches of space. These galaxies form patterns themselves, and there appear to be systems of galaxies. Thus we behold all matter in the universe organized into a unified system. The radio telescope penetrates to still further reaches of space, and we are learning many new things. All is Unity.

(While we know many things about our universe, we do not know how it got started. Cosmogony deals with theories on the origin of the universe, and of the solar system. The two leading ones today are the "big bang" and the "steady state" theories. The former says that the universe started with an explosion of dense primal matter and has been expanding ever since. The latter says that matter keeps being recreated and used up so that the universe is as it always has been. A third, cyclical theory, combines these two concepts and pictures a universe alternately expanding and contracting. One theory of the solar system that is gaining ascendancy today is not that it is an accidental occurrence, but is a normal development in the life of stars.)

Scientist find that the matter in the furthest reaches of space is composed of the same stuff as matter in our bodies. In the study of matter, we find still more evidence of Unity. It was formerly believed that matter was heterogeneous, and that every substance was indivisible. Later it was discovered that there were 92 basic substances - called elements - out of which all other matter was built up. These elements, and their atoms, were thought to be the final solid stuff of the universe, until the end of the 19th century. Then discovery followed upon discovery, until it was found that all matter is built up of basic nuclear particles, chief of which are the electron and proton.

3. Describe briefly the way all matter is built up from combinations of the prime units - the electron and the proton.

The electron is a negative electric particle forming the periphery of the atom. The proton is the positive particle in the nucleus. The neutron is a neutrally charged particle that appears in most atoms. There are other particles, and atomic physics is constantly making new discoveries. The meson, etc. Some particles last only a fraction of a second. However, the basic features remain the same - all matter has been reduced to electrical energy, and all atoms are built up on the principle that positive and negative attract one another, while positive repels positive, and negative repels negative.

The electron and proton are infinitely small. There are said to be 17 quintillion (17 followed by 18 zeroes) in an average cubic inch of matter - and yet these atoms are mostly empty space, formed by the electron whirling around the proton at a terrific speed (20 miles per second).

4. What is the nature of these ultimate particles (electron and proton)? Philosophically, why can't we stop there?

Electrons and protons are electrical force or energy. Matter is but an appearance created by the motion of these particles. If they stopped their motion, all matter would disappear. One scientist has said, "Matter is eating up space." The formula $E=mc^2$ equates energy and matter. Matter is energy contained within a specific field of space. Energy is this same matter released. The atom bomb is such a release.

Force is philosophically not understandable as a foundation. Science may stop there, but philosophy goes on with the question, "The force of what"?

5. What is the place of the "Ether" in Geiger's concept of Unity?

There must be a source of the force which manifests itself. Geiger posits the "Ether" as the source, an all-pervading substance which fills all space, and is indeed synonymous with space itself. Out of it come, and within it remain, all electrons and protons.

6. Discuss the terms "space" and "ether". Why did Geiger feel justified in using the two synonymously? (A suggestion: See "The Universe and Dr. Einstein" by Lincoln Barnett - a Mentor book).

The ether was posited in 19th century physics to explain the transmission of waves. Toward the end of the century, certain experiments were undertaken (the Michelson-Morley experiments) to determine whether there was any resistance to the ether by the earth as it travelled through space. Since the experiments did not reveal any resistance, the ether concept was dropped by most scientists (although Sir Oliver Lodge among others, held on to it). Einstein used "space" rather than ether in his concepts. But it was not a nothingness - it was a very real field, with the property of transmitting waves, and indeed the field of all electromagnetic phenomena, which is to say, all phenomena. Geiger therefore used "space" and "ether" interchangeably.

All existence, all phenomena, all manifestations take place within space. The ether concept has been received by Dirac and the Cambridge School.

Have class discuss Question 1 - How does Geiger's concept of Unity differ from:

a. Supernaturalism (the belief in a being or beings distinct from nature)
b. Materialism (the belief that nothing exists beyond the scope of our senses)
c. Dualism (the belief (the belief in a two-fold world - the tangible one of physical reality and the intangible one of mind)

Lesson V - Intent

Assignment - Chapter 3

Review Lesson IV, especially atomic theory. Refer to Question 1 of L. IV.

1. What does Geiger say is the nature of the "ether" (or "space")? Why this conclusion?

Space is the basis of all relationships and material phenomena. It is the field. It is not merely a "relation" but truly the creator. Refer to Henry George's concept of space as a "relation." He was right, but modern physics has shown the relation to be very dynamic. The same atomic particles in different spatial relationships produce entirely different results. Example: Take 10 protons and 10 electrons By combining them 1 and 1, you would have 10 atoms of hydrogen gas - which would be non-existent before the combination. By putting 10 protons in the nucleus and 10 electrons at the periphery, you would have 1 atom of neon gas - a wholly different substance with different properties (the same neon gas that lights up Broadway signs) By putting 8 protons in the nucleus and 8 electrons on the periphery, you would have 1 atom of oxygen - and take the remaining 2 - 2 hydrogen atoms, place them in a certain spatial relation with the oxygen atom, and you have H_2O - 1 molecule of water. Space is truly the creator.

We are seeking the basis of matter, and we have found it to be force. Geiger says force is not a final explanation, as it has to be the force of something. We have traced the source of the force-impulse, and all the varied manifestations there are, to space. So far, that is the most fundamental thing we have found.

At this point, read aloud, or have a student read Book I, Chapter I of George's "Science of Political Economy." George shows that spirit is the most basic thing there is. Thus we can make a syllogism:

> Spirit is the most basic thing there is.
> Space is the most basic thing there is.
> Have students supply the "therefore": Space is Spirit.

2. What relationship does Geiger see between Spirit, Force and Matter? How are these three factors reconciled with the concept of Unity?

Refer again to the three factors in Chapter I of "Science." It may be compared to the Trinity of Christian theology. It is basically one, with three aspects. Spirit is the basis. Force is the medium, the vehicle, the energy, through which Spirit is expressed or manifested. Matter is the concrete manifestation. Matter is the appearance assumed by Force as expressed by Spirit. Matter is "Spirit in motion." Spirit is the underlying reality, and matter is its outer appearance.

3. Give the reasons for concluding that there is but one Intent in the universe for all matter, instead of separate "intents" or "volitions" for all the different forms (manifestations) of matter.

Spirit implies intent. Law implies intent and achievement. Unity implies universality of Intent. To decide this question of one Intent vs. many Intents, we ask this question:- Read bottom of P. 52 (in both English and Spanish editions) - "Have the electrons..." ("Se han separado...") Read up to top of P. 53 - "...the one single all comprising Unity?" ("...de la unica Unidad que abarca todo?")

There is universality of Law, therefore of Intent.

Teacher's Notes

4. How would we go about seeking to learn what is the Intent in Nature?

By studying Nature. We only know Spirit and Intent through its manifestations. This can be done objectively, with philosophic knowledge. (Spirit may be known intuitively and immediately, as with the experience of mystics. But philosophically, these experiences must be tested in order to give them objective validity.)

More and more phenomena are being studied with respect to its electrical processes. The life sciences are an example. In seeking the causes of heredity, for instance, scientists have been compelled to examine more and more minutely the gems of heredity, and they found the "director" of heredity to be a component so small that it can only be described in atomic terms -DNA (dyoxiribonucleic acid). The functions of the brain are being studied more and more as electrical processes. More and more of our physical states are seen to be reflections of our mental state. Thus science is approaching the "space and spirit" view.

There are various interpretations of the universe. The "mechanistic" view sees the universe as an automatic machine. This view is no longer popular - but even if we accepted it - what is a machine? Even that implies a mind. There is the "organismic"view as advanced by Alfred North Whitehead - the universe as an organism. That, too, implies a unified intent. Modern scientists like to speak of the universe in terms of "pattern." But what is a pattern? That, too, implies intent. The only view of the universe that does not imply intent is that which sees a continual, accidental clashing and bouncing of atoms (Democritus). In that case, no structure could be maintained for long, no complex organism could be sustained, so it is a view contrary to the facts.

5. Taking a long-range view, what is the tendency of evolution, toward what does it seem to be tending?

Toward the development of life and consciousness. Trace development from gaseous nebulae, to solar system, to evolution of life. Higher forms of life represent more consciousness, more control over environment, more objective thinking. "All nature," said Geiger, "seems to be straining and striving toward consciousness."

The development of life is governed by an urge from within modified by resistance from without. The urge from within is the One Intent. God is in all things. The problem of "good and "evil" appears difficult if we think of God as a separate being "up there," or as an absolute dictator. But when we see a universal spirit manifesting itself in all the various forms there are in the universe, we see it in a different light. We see a continual flux and striving for expression, and an inner urge to grow and develop. The striving within ourselves is the God within ourselves. (This is explored more thoroughly in the next lessons.)

6. What are the reasons for concluding that thought, consciousness and reason are among the qualities or attributes of Unity?

Any expression of Unity must be of qualities that reside within Unity. Whatever is manifested must already pre-exist in some manner in the all-embracing Unity. The different manifestations of matter evoke from Space or Ether the particular qualities which they are fitted for expressing from the universal reservoir of all things. So that consciousness, thought and reason must in some way pre-exist within Unity.

What is man's place in the universe? Next week, a study of ourselves.

Lesson VI. - The Law of Achievement Assignment - Chapter 4

Review nature of Universe: Matter - Force - Spirit. Law - Unity - Intent (attributes of Spirit)

1. If everything, including ourselves, is part of Unity, why then need we master ourselves?

Because Thought and Reason, with which we are endowed, are among the higher attributes of Unity, and we are not allowing full expression of Unity if we do not make use of these faculties. Impulsive acts are to some extent an expression of Unity, but in a lower degree. As noted in Lesson II, impulse (among with other qualities) are "raw materials" for our conduct in, and understanding of the world - but these qualities must be brought under the control of reason if they are to guide us reliably.

2. "If everything is determined by natural law, this must include our own thoughts, choices and actions. Therefore, we have no free will." How would you answer this?

This is the age-old debate on determinism vs. free will. If everything is determined by a complete chain of cause and effect, does this not include everything we do? And how is this reconcilable with the idea of freedom of will, choice - and even responsibility for our deeds?

Show students the difficulty of deciding this, by asking them to prove that any action they take has been freely chosen. You can be the "devil's advocate" by insisting that everything they do has been pre-determined by the endless chain of cause and effect. This becomes a dilemma similar to the one on trying to prove that you exist.

The answer would be somewhat as follows: It is true that everything is determined by Law. Among the products of the workings of Natural Law is the development of creatures (like ourselves) who can think and reason. These attributes carry with them the power to choose. Not completely "free choice" in the sense of being able to do anything we please. We are limited in our choices by our environment and by natural law. But within these limits there are choices. The natural laws that govern human behavior - e.g., the law that man seeks to satisfy his desires with the least exertion - are not outside forces pulling us along like puppets, but they are laws of our own nature, and operate from within us. Exercising our power of choice involves a cooperation with natural law, and wise choices enable us to express, through ourselves, more of the attributes of Unity.

Mastering ourselves involves the ability to cope with the world - this means ability to achieve - to express our will upon the world. We must then learn the Law of achievement.

3. Out of Geiger's presentation of the Law of Achievement, make up a concise formulation of this law.

Achievement is determined by 1, Sincerity of purpose; 2, Concentration of thought and 3, Persistence of effort. Achievement varies directly with the above 3 factors and inversely with resistance from without. It could be formulated as follows:
A= E 1/R, where A is achievement , E is effort and R is resistance.
Show the importance of resistance from without. For achievement, a greater effort is needed to overcome this resistance. Also to overcome inertia from within. The unknown and fear of the unknown can also be great obstacles.
Read from " Seed", page 58 in both English and Spanish, Geiger's summation of the three factors of Achievement: "Sincerity of purpose, etc." (La sinceridad de proposito, etc.) Once sincerity of purpose is formed, others will follow more easily - but they must be followed.

To achieve, we must keep working, we must not be deterred by failure - we must not be stopped by discouragement, but find within ourselves the motivation to keep on. We must try and try again. This does not mean a "treadmill" kind of effort which will keep us in the same place no matter how hard we try. The wrong kind of "persistent" effort can be wasteful or harmful. When one is caught in quicksand, it is better to remain at rest - but if one struggles, he falls in deeper and becomes submerged. So the right kind of effort is needed, the kind that is based on thinking. Failures will be noted and studied, and new lines of approach will be sought after seeing that others are failures. Knowledge will be accumulated, and each step will be made the starting point for new advances.

4. How does the Law of Achievement apply in the evolution of animal life?

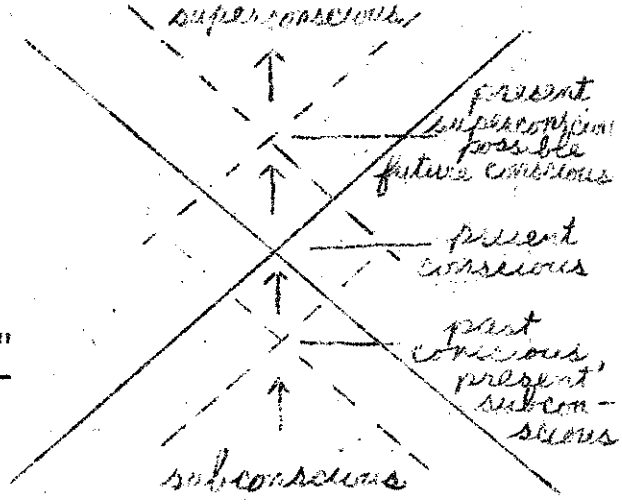
"Urge from within modified by resistance from without." If there is time, it would be worthwhile reading the footnote on page 125 of "A Perplexed Philosopher," on Schopenhauer's view of evolution. The importance of the will - the urge from within. There is more consciousness in animal life than we realize.

5. How does the Law of Achievement apply in learning a new skill? Describe briefly how you learned a particular skill.

First comes the resolve to do the job. We must bring the matter to a conscious decision. We will find that many acts that we do, seemingly without taking thought, are results of thoughts that we did take at one time, even though we may have temporarily forgotten them. The subconscious gives out what the conscious has planted there, leaving the conscious free for other pursuits. In making progress, the conscious reaches out for the "superconscious" and as it grasps it and makes it part of the conscious, then the subconscious, continually reaching out, it makes progress.

Edison said "Ideas come from space." The mind is a "receiving set" and can attune itself to receive ideas from Space. The mind is also a "sending set" and what it receives is in proportion to what it sends out.

"Inspiration" is the bonus nature gives to him who concentrates. It works something like the alternating currents of electricity. By concentrating, the mind has become an energized field. Then, when it is in repose, the "Ether" gives back to the mind an "inspiration" in proportion to the state of energization.



(Invite students to give personal instances.)

6. Offer an example of some great achievement of history (invention, discovery, etc.) Describe it briefly to illustrate the Law of Achievement.

There are many examples. Archimedes and the discovery of the law of specific gravity The discovery and exploration of the New World - Columbus, Cortes, Pizarro, etc. Henry George's discovery of the cause of poverty. First a firm resolve - then a constant thinking about it - the answer flashed through his mind - then he concentrated on working it out.

(Interesting reading: Napoleon Hill, "The Law of Success." Patanjali, "Aphorisms."

Lesson VII. - A Worthy Goal Assignment - Chapter 5

Review Law of Achievement. Each individual must decide for himself what he is going to do with his life. Society advances, and offers the individual wider choices - but it still remains for every individual that comes into the world to choose his own path.

Geiger teaches us, "I am the master of my fate, the captain of my soul." If we ask, "What can I do? What should I do? Nature answers, "What will you do?"

1. (a) Does the Law of Achievement work for goals that are "bad" as well as for those that are "good"? (b) What are the limits of this? (c) Can a natural Law work for a purpose that is contrary to nature?

These questions relate to the age-old problem of "good and Evil."

(a) "The sun shines on the just and the unjust." Henry George notes that a ship will sail on the ocean, if proper navigation is observed, whether it is a pirate's ship or a missionary's ship. What we may consider "bad" goals may be accomplished if the Law of Achievement is obeyed.

(b) The limits are when one collides with Natural Law. There is a great permissiveness in nature, the greater in proportion as the creature has consciousness, thought and reason - and the power of choice. But there are also limits. A person pursuing what we regard as a "bad" goal might have a success up to a point. But if he is doing things that interfere too drastically with the harmony and balance ordained by nature, forces will be set up that will backfire. "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad," is an old saying. When one is pursuing a path of unlimited ambition, there comes a point when he loses his sense of proportion, his balance, and thinks he can do anything. He then makes one fatal mistake after another, and usually succeeds in ruining himself.

(c) No, Natural Law cannot work for a purpose that is contrary to Nature. Everything that works must be inferred to be somehow in accordance with Nature. The great social evils that occur are a result of the law of consequences. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." A Harvest of social disorder does not spring up by itself, but is a result of sowing the seeds of injustice, corruption and contempt of human right. Usually, it is a long process. Nature is patient, and gives us one chance after another, but if we persistently ignore the warnings, the consequences will strike. Attila the Hun was once asked, when he entered Europe, where he was going, and he replied, "To those with whom God is angry." Indeed, he became known as "the scourge of God," as though the people of that time realized that this chastisement was the result of long evils.

2. What is happiness?

Have a round robin on this, asking each student in turn to give his answer. Sum up the answers, and draw out the conclusion that happiness is not a thing that can be attained, but a subjective condition of harmony between the inner and outer worlds.

3. What sort of goals must be sought in order to attain durable happiness? Why?

Spiritual goals. Because this is a spiritual universe. Read, from bottom of p. 60 (both English and Spanish), beginning, "If this is a spiritual existence.." ("Si esta es una existencia espiritual,") to"...may be safely trod." ("con paso seguro.")

4. Using the law of achievement as a guide, how would you account for a failure even when the intention appears to be firm (E.G., in Maugham's "Of Human Bondage," Philip Carey tried to become an artist and failed.)

The intention is not as firm as it appears. We may think we have made a firm resolve, but the test of it is when we meet obstacles. Many times, our resolve is no more than day-dreaming. There are a lot of things we "would like to do" - if only we had the time, if only we had the money - if - if. We really do the things we want to do. One of the most common obstacles to overcome is the ridicule or disapproval of the people around us. Many people give up a goal for this reason - because what they really want is to get along with the people around them. Many of the great achievers of history (perhaps most - and one might even say all) have risked unpopularity and ridicule for the sake of attaing their goals.

For the Philip Carey case, see Marshall Crane's answer.

5. In order to develop a personal character in tune with Unity, what are some of the qualities that need to be developed, and what are others that need to be overcome?

Read from p. 61 to end of chapter, "To develop a spiritual character..." ("Para desarrollar el caracter espiritual...") Why are these characteristics in accordance with Unity? Because they are a reaching out, a development of awareness of other people and of the universe. It is an enlargement of the Self in the right direction. The Hindus speak of the "self" with a small s, and the "Self" with a large S. The "self" is narrow and isolated, and too much pandering to its cravings leads to a low-level person. The "Self" is the larger entity that feels itself connected to the human family and the universe. Development of this Self is the right direction. Swedenborg said, "Hell is love of self." We say a person is in his own "private hell" when he is all wrapped up in his own worries, always thinking of nothing but himself - and such a person is never satisfied, always feels wronged, never sees the other person's point of view, and is in constant torment. This surely is in the wrong direction.

6. How did Oscar Geiger make out applying the law of achievement in founding the Henry George School? Why did he have so many difficulties?

He really applied the law. Every one who sets out to achieve something runs into difficulties. In fact we might say that achievement is in proportion to the difficulties. If things came easy, we could hardly call it "achievement."

Why do difficulties arise? Because the world and society is set upon a certain course, and it requires a great force to change it. It is the "law of inertia" at work. A determined individual may start the new force that will eventually change society, but it is a long slow process. However, we need not regard the universe as hostile to our ideals. There is a good reason why things are so hard to change. We ourselves would not want to live in a world that changed constantly in response to the slightest whims and ideas. We want to feel a measure of stability in things. A fundamental change has to be earned by fundamental action on its behalf.

Next week - another aspect of individual life - survival of the soul of man.

Lesson VIII - The Soul of Man Assignment - Chapter 6

This part of Geiger's philosophy is perhaps the most controversial. Many who go along with him on other phases balk at this. Understandably so, because the question of whether we survive after death is one that affects us all profoundly, and it is difficult to be objective about it. However, we should try to be philosophical about this as with the other subjects dealt with - if we want to merit the name "Philosopher." Perhaps one reason for people reacting against the idea of the survival of the soul after death is that it is "too good to be true." (But so do people react against the single tax for the same reason.)

Geiger's approach: 1, Deduction from philosophic principles; 2, historical evidence; 3, first-hand evidence.

1. How does Geiger deduce the immortality of man's soul from his philosophical concepts?

The Universe is basically spiritual in nature. Man is essentially a spiritual being. Spirit expresses itself through the aggregate of "matter" that is man. After this aggregation of matter starts to disintegrate (death), there is still the spirit-form to be accounted for. The spirit idea must have a more basic existence than the matter that gave it form, that clothed it. It must therefore continue its existence in some other form. "Man is a soul with a body, not a body with a soul ." The feeling, thinking part of man, the conscious identity, is the soul part. This is more than just an expression of the universal Ether through a material form. The soul part is already an individualized local expression of universal spirit. Hence this soul part has a more fundamental existence than its outer garment, the body.

2. The question of survival after death has often been consigned by philosophers to the "unknowable" How does Geiger justify making it "knowable?"

"There are some things," he said, "about which we should be able to say 'I know' rather than merely 'I believe.'" Survival of the soul was one of these things to him. Everything that is available to man's understanding, investigation, experimentation, is in the realm of the knowable. We cannot set the limits of man's knowledge - and ought not try. It is neither a scientific nor a philosophic attitude to say that we shouldn't try to find out this or that. All advances were made in the face of such taboos. People tend to stay with what is known, they feel more comfortable with it - and when something unknown is broached, they say that it is not worth knowing, or cannot be known, or should not be known. This is simply inertia. (When the first airplanes flew, people said, "if God intended us to fly, he would have given us wings." What is wrong with this argument? The answer is that God gave us a mind and the possibility of flying if we discovered the right natural laws.) Most religions preach immortality, yet are opposed to an empiric investigation into the subject. It seems to be "safer" when it's only a matter of faith. Yet one authentic "voice from the beyond" is worth a thousand sermons on the subject.

3. What are the limits of man's knowledge on any subject, including the question of survival?

The limits are the data and laws available to man's reason and perception. Beyond that, it is not knowledge, but only conjecture. On the question of survival, we can really only discuss survival and not immortality. The idea of "living forever" is beyond our ken. "The finite mind cannot grasp the infinite." We may be able to determine whether the soul of man survives (for any length of time) the death of the body - but strictly speaking, we cannot determine "immortality."

4. How would a belief in immortality (i.e., survival) be reconciled with the concept of Unity, as opposed to "supernaturalism"? (or dualism)

If man's soul survives, it is a natural phenomenon, not supernatural. Man's soul is an entity within the realm of Unity, and his survival is within Unity. A soul that is living after the death of the body may not be evident to our perception, but there are also many other phenomena which we consider entirely natural which we do not perceive - e.g., the very air we breathe. One hypothesis is that the soul continues its life in a more refined body than the earthly body, composed of atoms in a higher state of vibration, not readily apparent to our earthly senses but requiring a more sensitive attuning.

5. What movement of modern times did Geiger turn to for evidence of survival, and what is its current standing in the world of science?

Geiger turned to Spiritualism. Some account of his experiences as given in Part I, at the end of Chapter 5 (this part might be read in class). Spiritualism is a doctrine which teaches the spiritual nature of the universe and the survival of the soul after death. It also teaches the possibility of communication between those on earth and those in the life beyond. The usual method of communication is with persons known as "mediums" - sensitively attuned people who can contact souls in the beyond. There are different types of medium, the most frequent being the "message medium" who offers to contact some one in the beyond belonging to some one still on earth, and give a message, or be the "go-between" for a conversation. Naturally, this is open to fraud, as Geiger well understood, but it also offers the means for honest scientific investigation. Spiritualism may be called a scientific theory, in that it states a hypothesis and proposes the means for it to be tested. Its standing in the scientific world is mixed. Some scientists are interested and do investigate. Many are opposed. It is interesting to note, however, that most of the opposition to spiritualism in the "scientific" world is due to a prejudice against the subject-matter rather than a result of any investigation - a very unscientific attitude! However, enough are interested to cause psychic research to go on. There are several groups working on it, notably the American Society for Psychical Research, and Dr. Rhine of Duke University.

6. Can you cite a case (in personal experience, or in reading or hearing about the experience of others) that might be seriously considered in weighing the evidence for survival?

Some historical cases are cited in Ch. 6. The story of the witch of Endor in the Bible is very interesting, because it so much resembles the seance of modern spiritualism. (I Samuel, ch. 28. This is called I Kings in the Catholic Bible.) The spirit voices of St. Joan of Arc. Cases in Spiritism by G. H. Estabrooks may be cited. See Chapter VI, read aloud first case, pp. 92-93. The phenomenon of "messages" is very common, and more widespread than people are likely to admit. Most people, at least once in their lives, have had an experience of getting a message from a loved one who has departed.

What of "reincarnation"? Geiger said of it that there is no way to prove it - thus it is not a scientific hypothesis.

We have been discussing man as an individual - but he is also a social animal. In the next lesson we consider him as such.

Lesson IX - Social Philosophy Assignment - Chapters 7,8 & 9

We have been studying man as an individual. He is also a social animal. Geiger's social philosophy is essentially that of Henry George; but he had his own approach to the subject which is worth noting.

We have covered some aspects of individual life, including man's relation to the universe. What of his relation to other men? The basic social problem is to find the right relation between the individual and society. How much can the individual act as an individual in society, and how much must he act as a member of society? Where do the rights of the individual begin and end, where do the rights of society begin and end?

1. "Am I my brother's keeper"? Oscar Geiger says yes, Louis F. Post says no. Discuss a reconciliation of the two viewpoints.

The question refers to the story told in Genesis, Ch. 4, verses 1 - 10, where Cain kills his brother Abel. (This might be read aloud, or narrated, in class.) Man is not a "keeper" in the sense of master, or jailer, or even guardian. Cain was guilty and was hiding behind this sense. But there is another sense in which Geiger understands the question - and that is, not just refraining from doing evil to others, but being concerned with the rights of others. Where there is wrong-doing, w we cannot close our eyes to the evil being done to others and say "It's none of my business.". We are part of the same society, and wrong done to others sooner or later affects us. In Geiger's sense, "keeper" means being actively concerned with conserving your brother's rights. With this sense, of course, Louis F. Post would agree. This concern is also posed in the first chapter of George's "Social Problems." It must lead to something more fundamental than "charity" or "Social work." It also does not mean meddlesome interfering for the sake of the "welfare" of others (or the welfare as interpreted by the "do-gooder.") It must lead to a study, understanding and application of the natural laws that govern social well-being. Without this concern, there cannot be social advance, but retrogression.

2. "He who would be served must serve." Geiger considers this to be a natural law of society. How would you build up a case for this?

By a study of consequences. We know natural law by consequences. If service is not rendered for service received (or vice versa), an imbalance is built up. In the world of physics, for every quantum of energy received, a quantum of energy must be emitted. It is similarly so in the socio-economic world. But since there is more permissiveness on the human level, it is possible for imbalances to be built up. If these are only temporary, or not serious, or corrected and balanced as time goes by, and are not widespread, there is no great danger. A persistent widespread imbalance which is injustice - leads to disastrous social consequences. The social structure simply cannot last if one class is permanently exploiting another class. Forces are set up that lead to chaos and overthrow. It may be pointed out, however, that this is a social phenomenon - that is, it is possible for one individual to cheat another - the first individual may get away with it, and the second individual may never get what is coming to him - but on a social scale, society suffers from such behavior. Thus, a natural law of society is in question here.

3. Geiger calls land value a "subjective value." Explain.

As society grows land value grows. Geiger uses "subjective" in the sense of "unconscious." He points out that people are objectively (or consciously) producing value when they produce wealth - and while they are doing this, land value grows subjectively (or unconsciously).

4. Land value rises, and the price of labor products falls, as society grow - and vice versa as society disappears. Describe in more detail how this happens.

Let students work this out - they might be helped with questioning. It should be brought out that as society grows, the division of labor enables more wealth to be produced more efficiently per capita - and therefore the price of labor products falls. This same process - many people working together - conspires to raise the value of land, because land becomes more valuable where there are more economies and efficiencies. As society breaks up, the reverse process sets in. This trend might be noted in context with the Story of the Savannah (Progress and Poverty, Book IV.)

5. Land values and communal expenses both grow with the growth of the community. If it were said that this is merely a coincidence, how would you reply to support the natural-law relationship that Geiger sees in it?

To see whether it is more than coincidental, we might try the Canons of Induction. If we persistently see high land values and high communal expenses - and low land values and low communal expenses - and proportional variations in between: and if we see these same relationships under a variety of conditions, so that other possible factors may be eliminated - then we can assume the relationship is more than coincidental. Land value expresses the value that men place upon the community. The more the community renders, the higher the land value. Thus it is the natural source of public revenue.

6. It is quite a large statement to say that the fate of civilization depends on whether society collects land rent (as Geiger says). Show that this is basic enough to affect civilization.

The land rent question has to do with man's relation to the land - and there is no more fundamental question of society than the land on which society must live, work and have its being. If the man-land relationship is not sound, civilization is not on a sound basis. The rent question has also to do with the law posed in question 2, "he who would be served must serve." If we permit the private collection of rent, we are permitting some, who own land, to collect tribute from others without rendering service in return. This injustice is compounded by taxing people on their earned income to pay for social services - and landlords reap the benefit. As Geiger points out in "Natural Law in the Economic World," justice requires that we render to the individual what belongs to the individual - what he produces - and render to society what belongs to society - what it produces, the rent of land. Failing this, we have social injustice on a large scale, with all the consequences we may expect from it - including the decline of civilization. Proof is provided by many examples from history as well as current events.

Students should be encouraged to read the writings of Oscar Geiger. It can be seen that his basic approach was from the viewpoint of ethics. The establishment of justice and liberty was the goal, economics was the means. Most Georgists are inclined that way, as was Henry George himself, as summed up in the title of one of his pamphlets, "Justice the Object, Taxation the Means."

Lesson X - Summary and Evaluation

The lesson sheet has two questions, each question taking a page:

A. Summary
On this page, summarize what you consider to be the important points in Oscar Geiger's philosophy. Present your summary as a linked chain of thought.

B. Evaluation
On this page, write your own evaluation of Geiger's philosophy. If you disagree with any points, include your reasons. Comment freely according to your own thinking.

This session may be conducted as a round robin. Ask each student to present his answers to the above. He is to give B right after A, but should distinguish when he is doing the one and when the other. Keep each student short enough so that every one gets a chance. The teacher may take brief notes, or mental notes, and summarize when all the students are through. It will be interesting to compare not only the evaluations, but also the summaries, as each student will undoubtedly stress one point or another.

There will undoubtedly be some agreements, some disagreements - and perhaps some points on which students are not clear, or have misunderstood. But it is best to refrain from making corrections (unless they are very brief), as this could lead into distracting discussions and not leave enough time to finish. Let every one say his piece first. (Some may have written down their A's and B's, but even if not, they should be invited to say something.)

After summarizing what the students have said, the teacher may then present his own summary and evaluation - this time, on a personal level, like one of the students, as to what he got out of Geiger's philosophy.

The balance of the time may be spent in discussing or clarifying some point which may have been misunderstood, or which requires further elaboration.

In closing the class, students should be advised that philosophy is never "finished." It is a life-time process. Students should keep their minds ever open and keep learning - bearing in mind the necessity of observation and right thinking.

If there is interest in pursuing a study of philosophy, a good follow up would be Readings in Philosophy by Randall, Buchler & Shirk (Barnes & Noble), either as a text for a class or for personal reading.