

The Baroque



"A throat, mouthpiece, spout." Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily endorsed by the Henry George School.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

IT'S A GRAND OLD SEASON --
MAY THE CUSTOM NEVER END
OF WISHING HAPPINESS TO ALL --
AS FRIEND REMEMBERS FRIEND.

WHEN SHALL ALL MEN'S GOOD BE
EACH MAN'S RULE, AND UNIVERSAL
PEACE BE LIKE A SHAFT OF LIGHT
ACROSS THE LAND. Tennyson

IT WAS A WONDERFUL CLAMBAKE!

Well, not exactly - but it was a darn good party. We are speaking of the Dedication of the new Headquarters of the HGS-NJ on Sunday November 17th. A goodly representation from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania were here. The reception, formal program including excellent professional entertainment and the dinner following at the adjoining Hotel Suburban enabled N.J. school to mark up another good one.

AFTERNOON DISCUSSION GROUP

Mrs. Grossman started something when she added a surprise party to celebrate Mr. Grossman's birthday at the afternoon discussion group in Oct. Another cake was to have been present for Mrs. Diekorn for her birthday in Nov. but the weather was such the meeting had to be called off. However with the cooperation of the elements COME SEE - TUESDAY, Dec. 10th at one-thirty. All invited.

"LIFE AND DEATH OF THE WELFARE STATE" - Henry Hazlitt

"All these schemes are unsound. The truth is that no solution of the monetary problem, national or international will be possible until inflation is stopped, and that it will not be stopped as long as we have the welfare state."

"Though this aspect of progressive income taxation receives practically no attention today, its menace was recognized as early as 1899 by W.E.H. Lecky: 'Highly graduated taxation realizes most completely the supreme danger of democracy, creating a state of things in which one class imposes on another burdens which it is not asked to share, and impels the State into vast schemes of extravagance, under the belief that the whole costs will be thrown upon others.'

"The solution to our problems is not more paternalism, laws, decrees, and controls, but the restoration of liberty and free enterprise, the restoration of incentives, to let loose the tremendous constructive energies of 200 million Americans." (Well worth reading - this little book.)

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WORD THINKERS

Recently, I read the statement that humans perceive the external world and think in three different ways, by sound, (music, noise) by pictures, (dreams, mental images) and by words.

Those who perceive and think in words include the highly literate, and many not so literate, who read when moving their lips as though reading aloud.

When I read the above statement, I sat back and asked myself in which group I fitted, I knew the answer before propounding the question.

I am a word perceiver and thinker. From boyhood on, I have been an avid reader and enjoy a fairly extensive reading vocabulary. Whatever I see or hear or touch or think of, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs pop into my consciousness. I cannot stand, enthralled by a magnificent sunset without mentally attaching adjectives to my enjoyment.

Words, not the sound of them, nor the sight of them are my mental tools and from extensive reading, I have a multitude of such tools. But I am the kind that seeks purposely to increase my vocabulary. I don't stop reading when I reach an unfamiliar word and rush to a dictionary to establish its precise meaning. I satisfy myself with the connotations of the word gathered from the context in which it is used.

I remember distinctly reading the word "dichotomy" for the first time without the comprehension of its meaning. I was too lazy to find it in a dictionary or too engrossed in the article I was reading to desist reading on. But soon thereafter I read the word "dichotomy" again, but this time the author linked the word to a reference to Janus, the two headed Roman god who looked forward and backward at the same time. Our month "January" is named for the god and January marks the end of the year just past and the beginning of a new year, as though reminded of the god who faced forward and backwards at the same time. Then I knew what "dichotomy" meant.

Numerous times since the word jumped into my consciousness when I was confronted with a situation which presents two opposite problems or solutions.

Word thinkers need not be handicapped by lack of formal education. One of the best educated men I ever knew was a grade school graduate but he read and spoke five languages and was thoroughly familiar with the Old and New Testament and with the classics in several languages. His curio-

sity and extensive reading and the vocabulary he amassed make him a literate writer and speaker.

It has been noted by many philosophical writers that civilization came into being and has advanced by the ideas of a single person or a small group and illustrations are readily available in the influence on mankind (our beliefs, our thinking, and our actions), such as Jesus, Socrates, and a host of other individuals.

Words are but symbols to aid human communication. One need not have a college-earned, or extensive vocabulary to effectively motivate others. The Decolgue contains simple language, easily understood by educated as well as uneducated people. Its ethos, the commandments for human conduct are credited as being the blueprint for civilized society.

But if words are tools to aid human communication, the greater their number and the efficient use of such tools (using preferable concrete rather than abstract words as advocated by general-semanticists) the better able the user is to inculcate his ideas.

When I first read Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" more than thirty five years ago, I was impressed with his logic, his ability to present his ideas in such clarity and sequential order that I was unaware that many of his words and his allusions to antiquity and to classics were unfamiliar to me. He was one who had a multitude of word-tools to communicate his ideas, and his effectiveness is evidenced by the circulation of the book all over the world.

Subsequently, when I re-read the book, I was compelled, at times, to stop reading to admire the author's felicitous use of a word or phrase to convey a precise meaning to enable me and all other readers to know precisely what idea George was conveying.

Henry George was a master purveyor of ideas and he had the sharp tools (vocabulary) to accomplish his purpose.

The complaint is sometimes made that "Progress and Poverty" is hard reading. Most of us are conditioned to "news-paper style" condensation of writing which was not the style of Victorian era writers. It is the unfamiliarity of writing that seems hard-to-read. But to word thinkers, Progress and Poverty can be likened to a flower lover being shown a large, well-tended variegated flower garden (such as the Butchard Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia).

Yes, Henry George's writings and he, the lecturer were the vogue some seventy years ago, but his ideas, like those others who have influenced modern life are again emerging in greater force, now that Western Civilization is at the cross-roads of its very existence in the future, when international, nationally and locally men are snarling at each other and problems seem insurmountable of solution.

Yes, Henry George dreamed the "impossible dream" of mankind living in harmony with the universe and with his fellow-man, and the influence of the master of words and ideas may yet save us from a holocaust.

Alexander M. Goloffinger

THE GENTLE MAN

When each short day is succeeded by a shorter, when the cold wind really bites, and when the graceful skeletal outlines of the trees etch themselves starkly against the sky, you become only too aware that another year is racing to a close. The year may have been one of placid calm, of wearying frustration, of splendid accomplishment, or of discouraging defeat. But no matter what the past has been, you cannot help feeling as if each year ends with a harbinger of hope for the future for the close of every year coincides with the celebration of the birthday of a Gentle Man.

A birthday is always the beginning of new life, new dreams and new hopes. This special birthday signifies not only the possibility of new and richer life, but the hope that the charity, the humanness, and the goodness which He represents will become more deeply imbedded in the consciousness and lives of all men.

John Stuart Mill in his autobiography stated that during a period of his life when he was in the gravest of despondency, he came out of it with the knowledge that while happiness is the end for which all men strive, yet if they keep their eyes only on that as a target, somehow it eludes them. Happiness is attained only indirectly by such means as attempting to make others happy, to try to improve mankind, or to engage in some worthwhile art or pursuit. "Treat not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life", said he.

And if you review the life of the Gentle Man, do you not read of a happy man? He strove to create a world in which men would be free to attain their potential based on a simple message--that of love and charity to all. And in spreading His gospel, he paid the supreme penalty for it, we sense that his life was a happy one.

In a way it seems strange that his message is gaining greater prominence today than ever before in the history of our generation because the young

seem to have understood more fully his fundamental thesis of the value and necessity of love toward one another. And yet, in another way, it is not so surprising. After all it is a message of hope, and the young are always more hopeful and cheerful than the old. And the Gentle Man was a young man, living a bare thirty-odd years. Probably, those of us who are older should listen more carefully to what the young are trying to say than to watch so disdainfully their dress and mannerisms. After all, some of our hearts soften only once a year when His birthday rolls around. The young, more logically, are attempting to practice his doctrine of **JOY** the year round.

They are not discouraged by the disappointment and lack of understanding of many of the older folk. They are happy in the goals they are trying to reach. And those of us who are trying to make the world a better place in which to live should also not be discouraged at the realization that none of us will see our goal attained. In seeking them, we will be able to live a rich and happy life.

Finally, we should also recognize that, as Mill pointed out, even if our dreams of creating a Utopia are realized, even if our vision of having free men living on free land is finally a fact, while in accomplishing such goals we would be happy, other men would not necessarily be so unless they, too, had some goals other than happiness itself. And what greater goals could they seek than those of the Gentle Man's?

So let us remember that Christmas brings with it once again the hope that if over external conditions are those of justice, and if men abide by His message, then some day it may truly be said of them that they are happy for theirs is a world in which there is Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men.

Oscar B. Johansson

At this Season - The Henry George School of N.J., and THE GARCOYLE extend to ALL - HAPPY HANUKKAH-MERRY CHRISTMAS - PROSPEROUS 1969!

And - to start off well in 1969 The Basic Course: "A Different Way to View Economics" will be extended from 10 to 20 weeks permitting guest Lecturers and cover SCIENCE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY. Classes begin in East Orange Tuesday, January 21st at 8 p.m.

Inform your friends of starting time. Those who completed the 10 week basic course in the past but who have not taken the Science course may contact the school office to be informed both of the start of Science and Guest Lecturers they are welcome to hear. No charge - No obligation.

SENSE & NONSENSE

Despite the fact of Malthus' contention that population, when unchecked, tends to increase at a faster rate than the means of subsistence has never been substantiated, it is again becoming dogma of those who presume to call themselves intellectuals. The latest proponent of Malthusianism is C.P.Snow, British novelist, who in a recent lecture stated he is moved to despair for he foresees large-scale famine.

He is accepting without question the demographers' assumptions that the world's population may double by the end of the 20th century. The history of demography is the history of erroneous assumptions and this is just another one.

The trouble with all these apostles of gloom is that few of them are economists. They only see the human side of the problem; they do not see the inhuman side--i.e. the land side. Henry George pointed out in PROGRESS & POVERTY over 70 years ago that Malthus's ideas of geometric progression in the growth of population vs arithmetical progression in the food supply was nonsense. But it apparently is good doctrine today.

If some of these men as Mr. Snow would take the time to study the world's system of land tenure, they will come closer to the real problem. The apparent over-population is due to the under-utilization of land. If a thousand people on a small island were forced to huddle in one small area of the island while the rest of the island had signs on it "Private Property, No Trespassing", and these people never bothered to think about all that land lying idle, no doubt they, too, would think the island was over-populated.

It isn't only the ignorant who spout nonsense--the intellectuals are not far behind.

The WALL STREET JOURNAL in an article a short time ago, pointed out that Chile is now attempting to institute an agrarian plan to relieve the terrible poverty there. Under laws recently enacted, farms judged to be unproductively utilized or abandoned may be expropriated despite their size. Also all land consisting of more than 200 acres may be expropriated. The land taken is held by the government for a three year period during which the workers on the land are trained in the administration and handling of the land. At the end of the period, they, by vote, decide whether they wish to continue farming the land as a cooperative or to divide up the land among themselves.

As of now some 3 million acres on 688 farms has been expropriated and about 99-0 families have been resettled on 291 farms. This is a drop in the bucket, of course. It is estimated that 5626 landlords own 73% of the land in Chile.

The government so far has moved only against weak landlords, not against the big powerful ones. The agrarian program is popular with the workers, of course, but not with the landlords. The elections of 1970 will give the world the clue whether the experiment is continued or whether it is stopped as the landlords are uniting to put over their candidate while the more radical are striving to put over a left-wing radical. No matter who wins, the result may be an explosion.

Of course, dividing up the land is only an expedient. If successful, it will relieve some of the tensions in Chile; it will help a large number of the people, but still leave many landless and in poverty. It will also probably make it more difficult to institute land value taxation as with more landlords, the opposition will undoubtedly be greater.

What is significant, though, is the recognition in South America that the land must be allocated on a more just basis if economic conditions are to improve. This is something we in the United States don't know yet!

SALT OF THE EARTH

The difference between a poor man and a millionaire is that one worries over his next meal and the other over his last.

Those who are made jittery by the roar of jetliners overhead should relax. The time to get nervous is if the roar stops.

An economist spoke on the whys and wherefores of our economic system. He spoke for an hour and covered the subject well. Following him, the toastmaster at the banquet added, "Ladies and gentlemen, what our speaker has been telling you is that if your output exceeds your income, then your output will be your downfall."

What's so new about finding marriage partners with a computer? In time past, a girl always had a calculator called Mother.

The politician beamed at his assorted audience. "I'm happy to see such a dense crowd here tonight". "Don't be too pleased," said a voice in the rear, "we're not all dense."

Bore: The man in a rut who thinks he's in the groove.