

**HENRY GEORGE AND HIS
GOSPEL. SOCIAL
REFORMERS SERIES, NO. 2**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649356874

Henry George and His Gospel. Social Reformers Series, No. 2 by D. C. Pedder

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

D. C. PEDDER

**HENRY GEORGE AND HIS
GOSPEL. SOCIAL
REFORMERS SERIES, NO. 2**

SOCIAL REFORMERS SERIES, No. 2

HENRY GEORGE
AND HIS GOSPEL

"To the invincible conviction, the childlike sincerity, the torrential eloquence of Henry George, English Socialism owes a debt that can never be repaid."—Hubert Bland, in *Lecture on The Faith I hold.*

The first volume in this series is
ROBERT OWEN: SOCIAL PIONEER
By Joseph Clayton. Now ready

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Crown 8vo. 160 pages. Cloth gilt. 2s. 6d. nett

WHERE MEN DECAY

A SURVEY OF
PRESENT RURAL CONDITIONS

By LIEUT.-COL. D. C. PEDDER

"A strong book."—*T.P.'s Weekly*.

"A striking picture of what the land system has done for the farm labourer."—*Christian World*.

"A welcome and timely contribution to the solution of the great agricultural problem. An instructive and luminous work."—*Leicester Daily Post*.

"To get men back to the land you must give them a stake in the land. Tyranny and land monopoly must be broken down, and surely the initial step towards this great ideal is by educating and enlightening public opinion by such sane and uncompromising books as this of Col. Pedder's."—*Reynolds's Newspaper*.

"Neither small holdings nor allotments will work miracles in English social life; but, at any rate, his book is full of deep human interest, and will well repay perusal by all who are interested in modern land and labour problems."—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

"This is a book to make you almost despair of the future of your country. . . . It will help the agitation for a thorough measure of land reform."—A. E. Fletcher, in *The Clarion*.

"He writes well: with insight, with humour, with eloquence. No one could accept this as an impartial picture of English village life, or refuse to recognize that there is another side. But no one could deny that the great central fact of these present discontents is unchallengable. . . . It is a living book, written from the heart of a man. A book to read."—C. F. G. Masterman, M.P., in *Daily News*.

LONDON: A. C. FIFIELD, 44 FLEET STREET, E.C.

0

HENRY GEORGE

AND HIS GOSPEL

By

LIEUT.-COL. D. C. PEDDER

Author of

"Where Men Decay," "The Secret of Rural Depopulation"
Etc.

Social Reformers Series, No. 2

LONDON

A. C. FIFIELD, 44 FLEET STREET, E.C.

1908

Ec. 2307.08.5



Gift of
George C. Beals B

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. <i>Biographical</i>	5
II. <i>The Riddle</i>	26
III. <i>Pros and Cons</i>	33
IV. <i>Reasoning</i>	36
V. <i>Capital</i>	43
VI. <i>Speculation</i>	49
VII. <i>Retrospect</i>	54
VIII. <i>The Answer</i>	55
IX. <i>Objections</i>	60
X. <i>Rights and Wrongs</i>	68
XI. <i>Final Considerations</i>	70
<i>Appendix—The works of Henry George</i>	74

HENRY GEORGE

AND HIS GOSPEL

CHAPTER I.—BIOGRAPHICAL

TO the ordinary Englishman the life of Henry George is full of incredibilities. American novels that deal with middle-class life are deservedly popular among us, and we take this social atmosphere for granted, along with the scenery and decorations. The stupendous corruption of "Coniston" does not interfere with our enjoyment of the domestic drama to which it is a background. We leave probability behind us and enjoy our outing. A story opens with a tramp hunting hungrily for a dollar job or a meal of broken victuals. We sweep over the pages and discover him engaged in æsthetic flirtation with a haughty beauty in the very adytum of New York exclusiveness. Why not? "We do not know the laws of that country," as Charles Lamb said of the supernatural. In a story we are ready to believe anything, and in an American story anything else too. But when it comes to fact incredulity sits up and rubs its eyes.

The life of Henry George is quite outside English experience. The fortunes of the tramp pale in point of improbability before those of the Political Economist.

Here is a boy born as usual of poor but honest parents—the father a clerk in the Custom House of Philadelphia, on £160 a year—apparently in no way distinguished from their neighbours (honesty being seemingly not so distinctive among Americans of the lower middle class as it is in the

upper circles) in any material respect. There is a dash of salt water in his blood, and, after a year or two of schooling, a short interval of errand-boying, casual illumination with the magic lantern and popular scientific lectures, the sort of irregular education in the art of living open to every American lad in a large town, we find him at fifteen a boy "before the mast," in the fo'c'sle of a five hundred ton ship bound for Australia and Calcutta. "In the fo'c'sle!" In England we should say, "And there was an end of him." A twelvemonth at sea under such conditions would impose an ineffaceable stamp of social inferiority. He may rise to be skipper of a coasting schooner. He is practically debarred from competition for the higher prizes of life. Even Charles Dickens did not venture to put Walter Gay "before the mast." No English reader would have tolerated the idea that Florence Dombey could be unconscious of the degradation necessarily entailed by such an experience. He is a supercargo, a cabin clerk. And even to swallow so much as that requires a determined gulping down of genteel prejudice. And the feeling, like most that are pretty general, is not without its justification. If a man is to be a good workman his very nature must be more or less "subdued to what it works in." And in the English merchant service what it works in is, generally, brutality. A lad of sixteen who had spent his last year in intimate association with the fore-mast hands of a merchant ship would not be at home among the decencies of an English middle-class family. Father and mother would probably rather see their son dead than so degraded.

Preconceived ideas of this sort must be got over before we can realize a life like that of Henry George. The boy goes to sea, roughs it along with his fo'c'sle mates, and comes back to his family none the worse in any way. There is no talk of fatted calves or of purgatorial purification before he can be re-admitted to the society of pleasant lads and lasses to which he naturally belongs. But "a sailor's life is a dog's life." Home and a regular trade are better. Henry George's destiny seems to have been decided by the fact that he had an impediment in his *spelling* which nothing but type-setting could cure. So

he was found a place in a printing office, which, in a few months, he left for another. "Union" troubles and strikes hamper his activity. Some ladies of his acquaintance leave Philadelphia for Oregon, and it seems for a while as though there might be an opening for him there as a working printer. A letter to one of them (the "girl friend," who appears multifarious yet alike in her function as character-developer in the hobbledehoyhood of almost every young American) shows already a power of distinct and concise statement utterly incompatible with English notions of what might be expected of a boy fresh from a fo'c'sle. But to get from Philadelphia to Oregon in 1857 required more money than the youngster possessed, or was likely to possess. He was only eighteen, and there were his parents. Nothing more natural than that they should play Pelican in such a difficulty. Here is a difference at the very gate of manhood between the average Briton and the average Yankee. The idea of help from "home" does not even suggest itself to our young hero. I give him the title deliberately, and every incident of his subsequent life only increases his right to bear it. He will work his way out "round the Horn." Meanwhile, as work fails him, he ships in a collier schooner from Philadelphia to Boston. "And what can you do?" asked the skipper, *de haut en bas*. "Handle, reef and steer," says the lad, in the formula that sums up the qualification of an A.B. He could, and he got the pay of an able seaman at the end of the trip. Then he went on board a steamship for California as ship's steward. She all but foundered in a tornado, got yellow fever aboard, and only reached San Francisco, via the Magellan Straits, after a voyage of 155 days. The only thing characteristic of the man in this adventurous antechamber of serious life is the extreme anxiety he shows to keep from the knowledge of the old folks the dangers and hardships he goes through. To him it is all matter of course.

He was not long learning in San Francisco that Oregon held out no hopes for him in his trade. There was no work for him where he was. But the "placer" (surface) gold diggings which had brought a confluence of adventurers