

it needs. That the simple and yet sufficient thing to do is to exempt from taxation all personal property, improvements on land, incomes and occupations, and let all taxation fall on land (including franchises) on the basis of value.

Does it not seem that a taxing system must be bad fundamentally that has so many bad features? I shall be glad to have the advantages of the income tax pointed out.

ADDRESS BY HENRY WARE ALLEN

AT THE DINNER OF THE AMERICAN FREE TRADE LEAGUE.

The American Free Trade League is to be congratulated upon the advocacy of an idea clearly defined, economically sound, and about which there can be neither equivocation nor misunderstanding—this organization having many years ago passed through the kindergarten stage of tariff reform.

The establishment of any fundamental reform involves not the building up of new and complicated structures such for example as are suggested by socialism, but, instead, the abolition of that which is wrong in the existing system. Reforms of this nature are, therefore, regarded as negative in character and so lack the glamour of novelty with which pseudo-reforms appeal to the imagination. Hence the antipathy, derision and contempt exhibited toward anti-slavery, anti-imperialism, or an anti-tariff crusade. This question, as all questions in political economy, must be tested and settled on ethical grounds. Considerations of expediency are of secondary importance, and must follow. Fortunately that which is ethically sound will invariably be found to be expedient and practicable. What is good in theory is good in practice. To place expediency before ethics is to put the cart before the horse, and generally leads, sooner or later, to trouble. The idealist, the "dreamer," is in reality the practical man, for standing on higher ground he sees beyond the environment of selfish interests—and the so-called "practical man" who has no use for the lode-star of ethics is, after all, a dangerous pilot for the ship of state.

What is truly radical is truly conservative. To be radical is simply going to the root of the matter and holding on to—conserving—that which is good. Free trade is a conservative proposition. It would prevent confiscation of the individual's wealth. Protection, on the other hand is essentially socialistic in its theory of helping the nation and a favored few at the expense of individuals, and socialists are generally protectionists. It behooves us all, therefore, to reflect that if radical reforms are not permitted to relieve strained conditions a rising tide of unrest may carry us to those extremes to which protection naturally leads.

Free traders would simply conform to natural law by restoring to men

their God-given right to exchange without hindrance the product of their toil. The exercise of this primeval right gave man his onward start to civilization, has ever acted as the most potent factor for civilization, and it may be stated that the degree of commerce which a nation enjoys today is an index to its civilization. All sense of justice rebels at the tariff's interference with personal rights, an interference which long custom alone has made respectable.

Tariff reform has had its day. It has had a fair trial, has been a miserable failure, and should be relegated to oblivion in the political graveyard with its ponderous progenitor and sponsor. For tariff reform is a delusion and a mockery. It is a subterfuge, a nonentity, a mere shibboleth. It is all things to all men, having neither definite meaning nor character. It may mean the adding to or it may mean the lowering of tariff duties according to one's fancy. When Grover Cleveland called for tariff reform he got quickest response and strongest support from free traders all over the country, led by Henry George, who believed that Cleveland would lead the Democratic party away from the childishness of tariff reform to the mature conclusions of free trade. The platform declared that protection was robbery, the Democratic party had found an issue and the issue was a popular one. There were misgivings, however, that Cleveland was annoyed at the free trade tendency of the party, and that he was in sympathy with the slogan of the previous campaign,

"Don't, don't, don't be afraid,
Tariff reform is not free trade."

This suspicion was confirmed after the inauguration when failure to call a special session of Congress to carry out the people's will was followed by long months of silence. When at last a tariff reform measure, the Wilson Bill was passed, it was found that tariff beneficiaries had been given ample time to fix the important schedules to suit themselves. And the result was just what, in the nature of the case, was to have been expected. Reform of the tariff will always be more strenuously resisted than its abolition would be, for reform means a redistribution of spoils among the jackals who are bidden to the feast, while abolition would put them all in the same class. Tariff reform is made a convenient football for politicians, business is unsettled, and manufacturers prevented from making calculations for the future. A stiff tariff maintained at a steady reliable level, as in Mexico, is infinitely preferable to the uncertainty of tariff reform. Just as the Missouri compromise failed to settle the slavery question so tariff reform has been and in the nature of the case ever must be, a failure. The compromiser, the temporizer, is essentially a man without ideals. Imagine if you can Thomas Jefferson voicing the sentiment that all men are created *nearly* equal, or that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the colonial governor. Imagine, if you can, Garrison declaring to the world that slavery must be modified, or Henry George demanding not free trade but tariff reform!

The thing is impossible. These men hitched their wagons to stars; they became great because they placed ethics above expediency and were true to lofty ideals.

The growing sentiment for peace, particularly strong at this time, is an important factor for free trade. Aside from moral considerations commerce provides the strongest influence against war, and every consistent advocate of international peace must become a free trader. Of Cobden it is said that "when he returned from the continent he addressed himself to what seemed to him the logical complement of free trade, namely, the promotion of peace and the reduction of naval and military armaments. His abhorrence of war amounted to a passion. Throughout his long labors in behalf of unrestricted commerce he never lost sight of this, as being the most precious result of the work in which he was engaged; its tendency to bring the nations of the world into closer and more 'lasting relations of peace and friendship with each other.'"

And this was the predominant spirit of Henry George. Spurning the commonly accepted patriotism which is prejudice against foreigners, he was conspicuously a citizen of the world—a believer in the practical recognition of the brotherhood of man.

In 1890 I listened to an address by Mr. George, who in speaking of agitation such as we are engaged in said: "The minute a man commences investigation of economic subjects he places himself on a greased plank that will ultimately land him in the Single Tax camp." Mr. George with his honest heart and logical mind, could see no alternative to the natural progression: revenue reform, tariff reform, tariff for revenue only, free trade, and the Single Tax.

In closing I desire to emphasize the necessity of rounding out our free trade program by including its natural and necessary corollary the Single Tax. The revenue lost by the abolition of tariff taxes must be provided from some other source. The Single Tax on land values is the only tax justified by ethics and expediency, irrefragible in logic and demonstrably sufficient for the expenses of government. As a matter of fact the only free traders today are Single Taxers, and they are radiating centres of free trade principles, not only in every city and town of the United States, but all over the civilized world. George's book, "Protection or Free Trade," has been for many years and is today our most effective agent.

Cobden, like George, realized the insufficiency of free trade by itself, and the importance of the land question. Said he, "You who shall liberate the land will do more for your country than we have done in the liberation of its trade."

THE only way to make a man free is to free the land on which he stands.