

# THE NEW UTOPIA;

OR,

PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

**I**N "Looking Backward" Mr. Edward Bellamy has opened the eyes of the world to speculations about the grand possibilities that lie before us in the future. The picture he presents, however, though fascinating in every respect, is too finely drawn and too highly coloured to be received as a portrayal of reforms that are, as yet, within our reach. We must attain a much higher level of social, moral, and political development before the plane on which he elevates humanity will appear to lie within the bounds of possibility. For this reason, whilst viewing it with admiration and delight, we are compelled to acknowledge with a sigh that his picture is too good for us, as we are at present, to hope for its attainment. Our minds cannot frame any possible intermediate steps by which to climb so great a height, and though we cherish a fond memory of the glimpse of heavenly beauty we have seen in "Looking Backward," we sadly wish the author had shown us "the how and the why,"

that we might set to work on even a forlorn hope of realising for ourselves some at least of the beauties of his dream.

In the following pages an attempt is made to show how we may attain, not all that Mr. Bellamy has described, but a much nearer approach to his ideal than is practicable under any political system at present existing in the world. If we content ourselves with what is demonstrably within our reach we may perhaps elevate ourselves, step by step, to a plane from which the means of reaching even a better state than he has imagined for us may at length become apparent.

Mr. Henry George has indicated the lines of a reform which may serve for the first step upwards, but his great indignation against the wrongs, the poverty, and the suffering resulting from the abuse of a privilege our laws confer on all, has begotten in him a feeling that savours of animosity against landowners, who are innocent enough of any deliberate intent to wrong others by acquiring possession of land. Their doing so is in accordance with all our old ideas of right, and we ourselves make them landowners, by making the laws under which they not only *may*, but *must*, become landowners. It is therefore quite clear that no man is blameworthy for being a landowner, any more than Queen Victoria is to blame for being Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India, or Mr. Harrison for being President of the United States.

The landowner is guilty of no wrong who uses his land for its legitimate purpose, and expends his labour or capital in making it productive. He injures the rest of the community only when his land is not made to produce that of which it is capable; which is equivalent to withholding that product from those who stand in need of it. By not making this distinction, and by advocating "State resumption," Mr. George has needlessly aroused opposition to the "Single Tax," a remedy by which all the evils of land monopoly may be removed without interfering with the land tenure, or "repudiating State contracts," or attacking any landowner, whether he does or does not use his land.

But Mr. George's "Single Tax" is not a *single* tax in fact, even when all Custom House taxes are abolished, for there still remains the heaviest of all taxes, the most preventive of production, and therefore the most injurious to the welfare of a civilised people, *the charge for the carriage of goods and passengers by railway.*

There are besides a great number of other taxes to be got rid of before we reach the Single Tax, or move on toward the realisation of the beatific vision of Mr. Bellamy's "Looking Backward." By ridding ourselves first of the most injurious and obstructive taxes, namely, those on goods, and those on railway traffic, and next imposing a tax upon the annual value of land, we can most expeditiously attain a condition

which will render possible the abolition of all other taxes and many reforms which are at present impossible. When that condition has been attained the tax on land values will become the Single Tax in reality as well as in name, and we will have achieved the first great step towards a national purification which may yet upraise mankind to heights unscaled by Imagination's boldest flights.

To those who will be satisfied with nothing less than proof plain, absolute, and irrefutable, the Appendix to Chapter VI. will possess an attraction of its own. While the whole matter depended upon exactness of logical perception and ability to form a just and true estimate of consequences from given causes, there was always room for doubt; but when process of pure reasoning had brought out certain conclusions, it removes all doubt, and is the grandest confirmation of the truth of those conclusions to find them sustained in their integrity by an example previously unknown, and supported by testimony of a witness beyond suspicion, whose own opinions are to some extent opposed to those he involuntarily and unknowingly confirmed.

---