

society life becomes more and more easy for the landed proprietor, more and more difficult for the capitalist properly so called, while for the worker it becomes neither more easy nor more difficult."

Such a social dynamic discloses facts opposed to justice, when progress which should benefit all is to the advantage only of the landholder. This is the essential phenomenon, forming on the one hand the basis of a rational explanation of economic antagonisms and forming on the other the starting point of a doctrine which can be called scientific and which envisages the renovation of society by extirpating unmerited idleness and organizing productive activity in the interest of the working classes. A theory of classes evolves from this "primitive and generative" fact; humanity is divided into two parts, essentially antagonistic to one another; the landed proprietors, "parasites who live on rent," on the one hand, and on the other proletarians, that is all those who do not have land, workers, and even—what may seem somewhat surprising—capitalists, for these unexpected proletarians, even if they do not exert any productive labour, are in the eyes of our author non-workers who have attained their leisure by an exertion of economy and "rest after having worked."

It is necessary therefore to put an end to this inequality which arose in the transition from the "pastoral society" to the "agricultural society" out of a confusion between agriculture and property in land, and which has become aggravated in course of time.

What Ricardo as a pure theorist debarred himself from doing, A. Walras had the courage to accomplish by following his reasoning to its logical conclusion. Outstripping Destutt de Tracy and even the two Mills, he was the forerunner of Henry George. In order to enable each one here below to use all his opportunities in the struggle for existence, to suppress all social handicaps, to achieve in his phrase "equality of conditions" and to give free play to the efforts of individuals to produce "inequality of positions," it is only necessary to assign the land to the State. No doubt it will be necessary to inconvenience its present possessors by requiring them to account for the part of the increased value which they had legally hoped to collect. But the community would soon find the advantage of this; enjoying henceforth a continually increasing land revenue, it would progressively be put in the position of meeting its expenses without having recourse to fiscal impositions. For the rest, the operation of land nationalization could be effected in large measure by means of a tax on rent. In any case from the moment that the object was achieved, society, disencumbered of its parasites and having secured for the working classes the justice they have so long demanded, would at last have realised its salvation.

By Henry George

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HOW FREE TRADE WOULD WORK

To the Editor of "Land & Liberty"

SIR,—What would happen if by the action of some far-seeing statesmanship Great Britain or say the United States were to sweep away entirely all protectionist trade barriers? It affords a fine subject for thought. What would happen if the United States took this lead?

I myself have thought of it in connection with the U.S.A. The opening of this vast market to the goods of all the world would, I think, be a tremendous stimulus to world prices and go far to cure that "cheapness" which our protectionists so fear, but which, I think, is merely the characteristic of "distress" merchandise. If then the expected deluge of foreign goods did materialize, it would call for a corresponding movement of American products abroad to pay for them, for of course you "furriners" are not going to give us your goods free gratis for nothing. We'd corral the lion's share of the world's trade and steal a big march on our fettered competitors, gaining an advantage they could offset only by following our example. I believe any one of the great industrial and commercial nations could do this, even though perhaps not to the same degree or extent as the U.S.A. could.

There's been some "beefing" here over the purchase of Argentine canned beef for our navy, and our new naval bill contains a proviso that only American canned beef shall be bought. There's very little of this to be had, for the beef parts that were formerly corned and canned are now devoted to what have come to be called "hot dogs" (frankfurter sausages), for which we've developed an enormous appetite. Why the protectionist mind is unable to see that a dollar's worth of foreign products imported, far from displacing domestic products, only creates or transfers abroad a demand for a dollar's worth of domestic products exported to pay for it, is something I'd give a lot to understand.

I recall many years ago, when this country was busily engaged in "financing our export trade" by granting large loans and credits abroad, that Congress decided that such loans or credits should be granted only on condition that the credits be spent here. No one in Congress seemed to understand that in the end they could be spent nowhere else. Even though Argentina, for instance, might use such a credit to pay an obligation in Europe, it remained what it was before, a credit to be spent here. A bank of issue might as well stipulate on its notes that they should be redeemed nowhere else.

Yours, etc.,

STEPHEN BELL.

Clifton, New Jersey, U.S.A.

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