

the sin of landed property is near, that the movement called forth by Henry George was the last birth-throe, and that the birth is on the point of taking place; the liberation of men from the sufferings they have so long borne must now be realized. Besides this, I think (and I would like to contribute to this, in however small a measure) that the removal of this great universal sin—a removal which will form an epoch in the history of mankind—is to be effected precisely by the Russian Slavonian people, who are, by their spiritual and economic character, predestined for this great universal task—that the Russian people should not become proletarians in imitation of the people of Europe and America, but, on the contrary, that they should solve the land question at home by the abolition of landed property, and show other nations the way to a rational, free and happy life, outside industrial, factory, or capitalistic coercion and slavery—that in this lies their great historical calling.

I would like to think that we Russian parasites, reared by and having received leisure for mental work through the people's labor, will understand our sin, and, independently of our personal advantage, in the name of the truth that condemns us, will endeavor to undo it.

## Free Trade and the Engineer

BY HENRY H. HARDINGE

**H**ISTORIANS tell us that the institutions of this country were born of the spirit of freedom and dedicated to liberty. This oft-repeated statement is only half true and the least important half at that. Our political institutions are our own; they largely originated here; they are distinctive, original, excellent; and with the exception of one very important omission, proportional representation, which is the heart and core of real representative government, they have worked very well, remarkably well. They ought to. We have been tinkering with them for a century and a half; and when you consider the myriad of other inventions that have graced this period we would be a lot of political half wits if we did *not* have fairly decent political institutions. But our economic institutions are, for the most part, European, the basic ones wholly so, and vicious,

as all institutions that breed world wars necessarily are. With the exception of entail and primogeniture which the radicals like Jefferson opposed and the Tories championed, we get our economic foundations from ancient Rome, as did England. Our people seem wholly unaware of this very important fact.

The modern engineer is a progressive. He has to be to be a real engineer. Engineering consists in just that. His business consists in improving the physical condition of the world and incidentally its mental and moral condition. Engineering has more virtues and fewer vices than anything I am acquainted with. It is all to the good. The engineer and the industrial chemist, which includes electricity and metallurgy, are the *real revolutionists* because their revolutions are *compulsory*. The other brands of revolutionists, the *anti-capitalist* yawpers are just pikers. Their main purpose in life is to scare timid souls into conniption fits. This has particular reference to our State Department at Washington. The engineer gives us *rapid transit*. Were it not for him, we would still be in the ox-cart stage, where most of our statesmen still are. The real purpose of rapid transit is rapid trade; that is what it is for; that is what it does; that is the major office of the telephone and telegraph. Every advance from the push cart to the flying machine has one main object: to facilitate trade; to make it easier to get all kinds of useful things from everywhere. And if our stupid and ignorant legislators, backed by an uneducated public opinion, did not prevent them from finishing their work, the engineers could and would make this world an earthly paradise. They have the knowledge, the technique, but not the opportunity. The law won't let them. A large part of the human race has been pushed ahead of its natural, normal and slow development so fast by the work of the engineer that it has just about lost its bearings. The old landmarks are all gone, burned up in the world war, and no new ones found yet, and intellectual confusion is the distinguishing mark of the present era.

In olden times, great mountain ranges kept races apart; great oceans separated them, they did not even know of each other's existence. But the engineer has changed all that. He has made the earth very small and every day it grows smaller.

The Protectionist is like the Militarist; *he is afraid*, a savage characteristic. All savages are afraid. Fear is chronic with them. That is one of the big reasons why they are savages. The

Militarist (a half savage) is afraid of a foreign destroyer, and with some reason. He is afraid of being killed. The Protectionist is afraid of a foreign producer and more afraid of him than is the soldier of a foreign destroyer. The soldier has physical courage to stiffen his backbone; the Protectionist lacks it, he sulks behind the law. The engineer makes all trade easier, both foreign and domestic; the Protectionist makes it harder. The engineer believes that trade is a good thing. He deepens harbors, builds great breakwaters, high lighthouses; he charts the oceans, tunnels the mountains, gridirons the deserts with ribbons of steel, spans the rivers and gorges with great steel bridges, crisscrosses the seven seas with high speed steam ferries, does his good and level best to make this world a good, sanitary, wholesome, peaceful, and decent place to live in, and in every way tries to improve the condition of the human race, not in one section of it alone but all of it. He believes that the rainfall and the waterfall were not intended for the benefit of one section of the race alone, and in proof of this he puts Ohio steam shovels in the Katanga copper belt of Africa and a turbo-electric generator on the Zambesi. He builds under a tropic sun a great steel works a hundred and fifty miles north of Calcutta in a jungle, and at an altitude higher than Pikes Peak he delves for copper and gold on a vast scale in the Andes Mountains in Peru in the ancient workings of the departed Incas. He delves for tin in the mines of the straits settlements to camouflage the omnipresent American tin can. He bores a hole in the Andes to get vanadium to strengthen American locomotive frames. And in the far-away isles of the sea, the Malay Archipelago, he grows rubber latex that shipped in huge tanks pours its creamy substance into the vats at Akron so that the American swain and flapper can attend the football game a hundred miles away on a sunny October afternoon on rubber tires. The engineer does all this to improve the conditions of human life throughout the world, and the Protectionist opposes him.

The engineer believes in the greatest good to the greatest number and, if possible, for all. The Protectionist does not. The Free trader believes in equal rights for all and special privilege for none. The Protectionist does not. The Free trader believes in equality before the law. The Protectionist does not. The Free trader has ultimate confidence in freedom as a solvent of the problems that confront the world today. The Protectionist has no use for freedom and he does his level best to stifle it. Civilized

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man lives by commerce; he can live and be civilized no other way, and it is only by tapping the gifts of nature wherever found that he can satisfy his multitudinous and endless desires.

The Free trader believes, and believes not because he has faith only but because he has knowledge, that the way to free man from poverty is to make poverty's only antidote easily produced and easily acquired. *Poverty's only antidote is wealth.* The only possible way to get wealth is to dig it out of the ground; the only possible way to distribute it is by trade; and the freer trade is the easier it will be for those who desire it and deserve it to get it. There is no substitute for freedom, there cannot be, it is the only way.

The *high standard of living* that the Protectionist is so anxious to protect is not due to the stupid foolish laws that needlessly hamper and obstruct trade, but *is due* to the application of power and machinery to industry, to organization, to specialization, and to brains. Subtract these things from the modern world, and the *high standard* about which the Protectionist talks so much and knows so little would immediately disappear.

The notion that labor needs protection comes from the institution of slavery. The slime of it still befouls our thinking. *Labor is society's only protector.* Labor protects even the soldier from starvation while engaged in his unholy mission of destruction and death. The man who thinks that labor needs protection has not the remotest idea of the *true dignity* of it nor the enormously important part it plays in the affairs of man. *Labor is the only thing under heaven that does not need protection.* The notion is purely puerile. The physical obstacles to trade have been and are being swept away; the legal obstacles remain; the lawmaker is the last great obstructionist. The tariff walls around almost every country in the world are the outstanding evidence of a bankrupt statesmanship, the quality that has littered Europe with the skulls of tens of millions of young men under thirty years of age, cluttered it with hapless unfulfilled women, orphaned children, and endless cripples. As an agent for human dismemberment, disagreement and distortion it is without a peer, and this vast mountain range of selfishness, ignorance, short sightedness, and superstition is today more difficult to cross than all the oceans, rivers, mountains, and deserts in the world. The Protectionist has an ox cart mind and it creaks, oh how it creaks, when it moves, even on a good road.