

## Single Tax Pellets

IN the consideration of any subject, the main desideratum is the truth. There is in mythology a tale in which an angel passing through space carried in his hand a glass ball. He dropped this glass ball and it fell upon the earth, breaking into a great many pieces. That glass ball was truth. Some of us have found some of the pieces; some of us have apprehended parts of truth. We know that these fragments are truth because they correlate; just as the pieces of a broken ball of glass would fit each into the other. All truth correlates. God is truth.

The great Blackstone says in the second chapter of his first book: "When the Supreme Being formed the universe, and created matter, he impressed certain principles upon that matter, from which it never can depart, and without which it would cease to be. . . . If we further advance, from mere inactive matter to vegetable and animal life, we shall find them still governed by laws, more numerous indeed, but equally fixed and invariable. The whole progress of plants, from the seed to the root, and from thence to the seed again; the method of animal nutrition, digestion, secretion, and all other branches of vital economy, are not left to chance, or the will of the creature itself, but are performed in a wondrous involuntary manner, and guided by unerring rules laid down by the great Creator. . . . This law of nature, being coeval with mankind, and dictated by God Himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original."

In the constitution of nature, ordained by God Himself, is a beautiful regime of truth: in electricity, in mathematics, in chemistry, in political economy and all the sciences. And just as we learn this order of truth, and make our affairs to accord with it, we progress peacefully. As an example I may say that there could have been a great development of radio communication in Adam's time as we now have, had the knowledge of natural physical law, of manufacture and adjustment of parts existed then as now exists. Let us apply this concept to the problems that now confront us, and see where we are led.

Some time ago, I read in a newspaper about a ship on the Atlantic ocean. An accident to its watertank had deprived the crew of drinking water. They put out a distress signal and a passing vessel hailing them asked them what was the trouble. Upon being told of the shortage of drinking water, the passing vessel replied "Dip and drink." It seems that they were at the mouth of the Amazon river which throws its fresh waters hundreds of miles into the ocean, and it was necessary only to "dip and drink."

So it is in these United States. Our natural resources

are so very abundant—God has provided so wonderfully for our needs, in the mines, the soil and the forests, that all that is necessary is the touch of the magic wand of labor to make it into clothes, into automobiles, into everything that will satisfy human wants. This country is flowing with milk and honey. All that it would seem necessary to do is dip and drink.

I know a man who, as it were, dipped up some of this honey. He built a beautiful forty story building; the latest thing in architecture, with all the amenities that contribute to comfort and elegance. This building is now in the hands of a receiver and his money has been taken from him. As he told it to me, he has been "cleaned to his last dollar." If he had been "wise" he would have kept the old shack that encumbered the site, and would have waited until other people built around it. Had he done that, he would be "sitting pretty" now, besides which he would have his money. He is a typical example.

When a man erects a building, employs a lot of idle men, thereby making business good, beautifies the neighborhood, and "makes the world go round," we fine him for doing so, that is, we tax him. If he mistreated his wife we might fine him once, but if he erects a building, and thereby employs idle men, we fine him every year with perfect regularity. But if he holds a lot vacant, raising weeds, cultivating mosquitoes, and holding labor idle, because other people build around his lot and make it more valuable, he can sell it for an increased price; thereby getting money that he has not earned, reaping what he did not sow. And we must remember that if men get wealth without earning it, others must earn it without getting it.

What I have said shows by means of our present arrangements we fine the man who employs labor and reward the man who keeps men idle. We fine the man who makes business good and reward the man who makes business bad. We fine the man who beautifies our city and reward the man who messes up our city with tin cans, dead rats and old rags, weeds and mosquitoes. To expect to have continuous employment and good business by means of such foolishness would be the same as to expect to reap wheat where thistles have been sown.

We Single Taxers propose to reverse this arrangement, to fine the man who keeps labor idle and to reward the man who employs labor. We would fine the man who makes business bad and reward the man who makes business good. We would fine the man who messes up our city and reward the man who beautifies it. We propose to raise all public revenue on the value of land only, by a tax in proportion to its value whether it be improved or not. This would force all valuable land into its best use, creating such vast opportunities for employment that there would not be an idle man who wanted to work in the country. Business would hum continually and a

paradise of joy would obtain, instead of such a vale of tears as it now is to most folks. I am reminded of the Scripture where it says, "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the hearts of men to know what God hath prepared for them that love Him and keep his commandments."

Looking at this subject from another angle, I often speak of the folly of old Father Dearborn. To you who do not read the cartoons in the Chicago newspapers, I must explain that Father Dearborn is the City of Chicago. That old fool Father Dearborn allows a few of his people to rob him blindly, so that frequently he has not enough money left to buy an Irish stew. And then, to recoup himself he robs us. If you build a house, he will rob you of that. If you buy nice furniture to embellish your home and make your family comfortable, and incidentally employ a number of furniture makers, he will rob you of that. Now all that the Single Taxer wants of Father Dearborn is that he shall keep his fingers out of our pockets and keep the other fellow's fingers out of his pockets. Let Father Dearborn confine himself for his revenue to his own wages, his earnings—land values.

When I am talking to the reformers who have a passion for improving mankind I sometimes tell them a tale like this. A tidal wave inundated Miami. A number of fish were stranded in a shallow pool on the beach. The sunshine soon gave the pool a temperature warmer than that to which the fish were accustomed. They scratched each other, killed each other and did not have much to eat. Many of them were dying from lack of food. A certain fermentation was going on at the edges of the pool and some of the fish were getting drunk committing murder. They were in a bad way. There was a little, not much, but a little intelligence among the fish. One school of fish said, "The trouble with us fish is that we don't love the Lord, our troubles would be over if we would only come to Jesus." Those were the religious fish. Another school said, "The trouble is all due to the fact that we drink too much. We must have prohibition before the trouble will be righted." They were the Prohibition fish. Still another school said, "The trouble with us is that we are not properly organized." They believed that if they had a lot of committees and management everything would be lovely. Those were the socialist fish. But among them let us suppose there were one or two sensible fish. Can we not imagine them explaining, perhaps vainly, that, "The trouble with us fish is that we have been separated from our natural element, the great ocean." Those would correspond to the Single Taxers. They said, "If we can only get back to the good old Atlantic Ocean where we could be free, would have plenty to eat and our natural environment, we would not have all of this trouble. And like as the fish are water animals, so men are land animals, and the moral is that to the extent that their access to their natural environment has been interfered with, men are in trouble.

Another analogy: Here is a field of thousands of acres of growing grass and clover. It grows up abundantly every year, fading in the fall. One corner of this field is fenced off, and in this corner are a number of cattle trying to graze and not finding enough food to sustain themselves. Many of them are dying from lack of food. I arrived on the scene in my car and discover a man working himself into a sweat pulling and throwing tufts of grass over the fence to the cattle. The cattle rush for the grass. The horned cattle gore the others, and in the mad scramble much of the grass gets wasted. I say to this man, "Why don't you open the gate so that the cattle can get out and help themselves, the clover is wasted anyway." Now what can I say to this man when he replies, "Aw, quit your Single Tax theorizing and get down here and help me pull grass."

A man with his dog Towser having been lost in a desert after wandering about several days and growing weak thought that before long he must lie down and die. He thought of his dog and decided that it was time to eat. Talking the matter over with the dog, Towser objected to being killed. Some other way must be found. So a compromise was reached. Towser permitted his tail to be cut off. The man found means to make a fire, cooked the tail, and having eaten the flesh, threw the bones to the dog, saying: "Towser, there is charity."

For nearly 2,000 years, all over Christendom, we have been saying the Lord's Prayer. Regularly and without understanding, we have recited the words, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in the earth." And now it seems to me that we have the kingdom of the devil on this earth. If I were asked to write a specification for a hell, I would copy our present scheme in toto. Poverty, destitution and crime stalk through the land. We educate our children, fill them with ambition and deprive them of the opportunity to satisfy their ambition. So it appears that perhaps we have not been praying in the right way. No doubt that our prayer reaches beyond the ceiling. We know that the way to pray for potatoes is to get out in the field and plant the proper seed. You may pray after the fashion of the Methodists, the Catholics, or any of our religious groups and expect that the potatoes will come down through the roof or some other peculiar way, but they will not. The only way to get anything is to do the natural thing necessary to get that which you pray for. The way to pray for the establishment of the kingdom of God on this earth is to learn the natural laws of political economy, to obey them and then the kingdom of God will ensue without further effort.

Jesus was speaking to a hungry crowd on one occasion about high and lofty things that they did not understand. And they said: "Aw, cut it out and give us something to eat." Jesus replied, "Think not of what ye shall eat, or what ye shall wear, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed. Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. See the lily of the field, how it toils not, neither

does it spin, yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." The necessities and comforts of life would come as natural consequences, when you have a kingdom of God on the earth. So, translating that bit of Scripture into the language of Chicago, seeking "the kingdom of God and His righteousness," righteousness would mean the right method of taxation, right governmental arrangements, equal freedom of opportunity. The lily had its roots in the soil, was exposed to the sunshine and enjoying its natural habitat. So, I say, that if men had their roots in the soil, if they had equal rights to God's bounty, they too would blossom into all that men might hope to be, and Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the possibilities for the ordinary working man.

I often am asked "If the Single Tax is as good a proposition as you say it is, why don't the people of culture and education take it up and help to get it adopted?" My reply is to quote a parable. A traveler on his way to Damascus was held up, robbed, and left half dead at the side of the road. A lawyer came along and seeing him, pitied him, but passed on the other side. A priest passed that way and seeing him said, "Poor fellow," but he was too busy to help. But along came a stranger, a man who was despised by the lawyer and the priest as a contemptible foreigner. This fellow stopped, treated the man's wounds, bound them, and took him to an inn and provided for his welfare. So in our society, the workingman has been robbed and is bewildered at the condition he is in. The lawyers and the clergymen express their regret but feel that it is not their problem. They are the product of education and culture fostered by the circumstances of a social arrangement that results in the condition of the workingman. We cannot expect that any folks, except those who are not too deformed by the surrounding culture and schooling, will interest themselves in this matter.

And well meaning folks frequently display an appalling ignorance of economic matters. Some who should know better advocate the protective tariff, as a means of promoting the workingman's interest. To these, I say: "I spent four years in college studying electrical engineering. We got the unanimous opinion of the masters in the science of electricity. In the laboratory we tested all of these opinions by the use of various instruments, and the results of our experiments checked with what we had learned in the classroom. Applying that method to the subject we were discussing—the tariff—let us see what the authorities say on this subject. All of the authorities are free traders, John Stuart Mill, Laughlin, Ely, Fischer, Seligman, Carver and in fact all the political economists. So much for the authorities, now let me submit the tariff to a laboratory test. This may seem difficult but as you shall see, it is not.

Taking first the highest tariff countries of the world and moving by degrees to the freest trade countries, let us observe what are the conditions in each, and we will then to all intents and purposes have gone through a laboratory experiment. The highest tariff country in the world, before the war, was China. They had such a high tariff that it was called the Chinese wall. Not only did they have tariffs around the country to keep goods from coming in, but they also had tariffs between the provinces. A farmer could not take a pig or a bushel of wheat into town without paying a tariff. They were tarified coming and tarified going. Yet China was a most miserable place in which to live. The next highest tariff country was Turkey. They had so much tariff that they had very little foreign trade. The next most highly protected area was the Balkan States, Serbia, Bulgaria, Roumania, and then Italy, then Austria. Following in order came France, Spain, Germany, Russia and Great Britain, and then the United States. The United States is the freest country in the world. I will admit that we have a high tariff against importation into this country from abroad, but in the United States we have the largest absolute free trade area in the world. We have forty-eight nations with free trade between them, and it is the best country in the world, though it could, of course, be a great deal better. Now, I have shown that all of the authorities are free traders, and the laboratory experiment shows that the highest tariff country is the poorest for the ordinary man to live in and that the lowest tariff country is the best to live in.

And it should be so. Some countries are suited for the production of certain things and other countries are suited for the production of other things. It pays the people of a country to produce the things for which it is suited and to trade its surplus products with the people of other countries suited for the production of the things they want. As examples, take N. Dakota which is adapted to the production of wheat and Pennsylvania which is adapted to the production of coal. The people of Pennsylvania cannot eat their coal and the Dakotans cannot burn their wheat advantageously, so they each raise a surplus and then they trade; and it blesses him that gives and him that takes. There is no difference in principle in trade between Pennsylvania and N. Dakota, and trade between the United States and Great Britain, nor between Italy and Germany.

Birds and business ignore boundary lines between nations unless they are interfered with, so if we would remove all our fool tariffs and allow goods to move from where they are plentiful and cheap to where they are scarce and dear, in each case to pay for the goods received; if the various localities of the world would swap their advantages, it would multiply the wealth of the world many times.

I once heard a ridiculous story that illustrates the principle. A pineapple orchard was planted in Greenland,

under a glass roof, and a high tariff instituted to protect the home industry from the cheap pineapples from the south. Also there was an ice plant set up in Bermuda with a high protective tariff to protect the industry from the cheap ice of the north. Some one observed, "Why don't you get your pineapples where God intended them to grow. This hot house stuff is mush and not fit to eat. Why don't you remove that fool tariff and so allow us to make something here to exchange for southern pineapples." Immediately a lot of politicians and pseudo-philosophers held up their hands in holy horror and said, "But see all of the steam fitters, carpenters, glaziers and caretakers that would be out of their jobs if you had free trade in pineapples." I assert that every industry in this country or any other country that needs the support of a tariff is a species of "pineapple orchard in Greenland or an ice plant in Bermuda." That is to say, it is an exotic industry and should be kicked out. We should devote our energies to those industries that are indigenous to the country. Engineers have built bridges, tunneled mountains, constructed steamships, railroads, automobiles, aeroplanes, telegraph, telephone and radio systems, all to facilitate trade—to bring things from where they are plentiful and cheap to where they are needed, and when their work is in good running order, along come a lot of politicians, ignorant statesmen, putting up tariff barriers nullifying, to a large extent, the fine work of our engineers. It often costs more to get goods through a custom house than it does to ship them around the world. So I want to speak out so all may hear, that I am a free trader. I take my stand along with Richard Cobden, John Bright, Robert Peel and Henry George. 'Tis true I am but a humble member of this illustrious company, but I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of honest free traders than to dwell in the tents of wicked protectionists.—GEORGE M. STRACHAN.

## Is This What's the Matter With Him?

**B**EHIND his smile, his quick wit, his winning friendliness are two factors never to be overlooked in his evaluation. First Roosevelt is a Dutch gentleman, reared in the manner and environment of landed aristocracy.—From the *Men Around the President*, in January *Harpers*.

**"H**AVE you any thing better to offer" asks General Johnson of critics of the N.R.A. The question is not original with the General. It was once asked by a notorious quack of a competent physician who criticized his fake "cure for cancer."

"TRIAL and error" as a national policy means severe trials for the people and egregious errors by the government.

## Schalkenbach Foundation Work

**I**F a visitor came to the Foundation office, he might be surprised at the variety and interesting content of the work that comes across the desk. There would be orders for books, (mostly of "Progress and Poverty") from such dealers as Marshall Field, Chicago; John Wanamaker, Philadelphia; University Book Store of Southern California; Clark's Old Book Store, Spokane, Wash.; Womraths, Brentanos, and the American News Company, of New York—to mention a few of the 400 dealers from whom we receive orders for Henry George books. New contacts were made by two recent letters to bookdealers in which part of the jacket of "Progress and Poverty" was enclosed, so that it could be seen that this book was produced in modern, interesting style.

Then our visitor would find that in answer to a letter sent to a special list of Single Taxers who were known to be working actively on tax questions, there would be orders asking for Professor Brown's new book, "The Economic Basis of Tax Reform," which undertakes to answer some of the stock objections to Henry George's proposals and to supply arguments for the more knotty problems raised by opponents.

He would find in the course of preparation a letter to professors and high school teachers which would be sent to a list of about 2,000 names, and, if he came to the office a month later, he would find orders for books, and letters discussing the Georgist viewpoint from professors in such widely separated schools as the following: University of Georgia; Nebraska Wesleyan; Alabama Polytechnic Institute; Camden Commercial College, N. J.; Columbia University; Swarthmore, Penna.; Sioux Falls College; Northfield Schools, Mass.; Kenyon College, O.; Princeton University; University of New Hampshire; Clemson College; San Diego City Schools; Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College; University of Montana; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Drew University.

With the aid of Patterson's Educational Directory, the Foundation now has a list of educational officers and teachers in every State in the Union. The first effort was to circularize teachers and school superintendents in the State of New Jersey. That such circularization is effective is proven by the many new contacts that are made with teachers on these lists. This kind of work requires a large fund. We do not have enough money this year to do each State in the Union. If anyone feels that he would like to have his particular State circularized in this way, and would care to contribute toward it, we would see to it that effective material reached these teaching groups.

Our visitor would find that proof for the Index and front pages of "Social Problems," and also proof for the jacket, were being corrected, and that the book is scheduled for publication on or about April 5. Plans are being made to advertise "Social Problems," and to acquaint book