



ECONOMIC
PRINCIPLES

OR

HOW WEALTH IS PRODUCED

AND

HOW IT IS DISTRIBUTED

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BY ✓

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PREFACE.

This little book was written for the purpose of interesting those who have neither the time nor strength for a study of that great work, *Progress and Poverty*. The author hopes, especially, to interest women in the economic and ethical principles which are so lucidly set forth in that book; to show the chief cause of poverty and its remedy; to arouse in the hearts of noble women a keen sense of the mighty issues which underlie the great question of taxation; and to show the far-reaching importance of the labor question, which presses so imperiously and ominously for solution, in the closing years of this century.

ELIZA STOWE TWITCHELL.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the fifteenth century man began to study the globe upon which he lived. Kings pawned their crowns; princes exhausted their resources in fitting out ships to explore distant lands.

Gold and silver were then supposed to be the only form of wealth; and so, wild dreams of discovering a golden El Dorado, with inexhaustible treasures, fired the heart; and this zeal, coupled with a religious enthusiasm, gave the movement the impetus of a new crusade.

The sixteenth century was devoted to colonizing, or taking possession of these newly discovered countries. Meeting with little resistance among the natives, the greed of each nation culminated in wars for the possession of land; each demanding it in the name of their king or pope; planting the cross of Christ in the wilderness, not as a symbol of human brotherhood and dependence upon a common Father, but as a symbol of *might*, in the hands of the few; who, in His name, plundered, conquered and took possession.

Much as a farmer owns his farm, and is lord over his possessions, so the king owned the land and the people upon it, which his lords were allowed to control and govern, as his agents. Civil liberty rested only in the hands of the few. The many were born with backs upon which the few were born to ride.

In the seventeenth century man began studying more closely his relations to his Creator. Speculations over salvation, faith, election, the state of the damned, engaged the minds of some of the deepest thinkers: while others, students of the ancient classics, not only questioned the very existence of God, but of the external world about them. Meanwhile, the great mass of mankind lived on unconscious of these speculations and the tremendous bearing they had upon everyday life and the evolution of society. Here, again, was seen

the doctrine that the good things of life were intended only for the few. Salvation was free, but by election only a few could be saved.

In the eighteenth century man began to study nature. To find a force in steam that could be utilized; to analyze substances; learn the composition of plants; of his own body; and, as his knowledge of nature advanced, to find that, within a certain range, he was lord of it and could use, mold, re-fashion at will.

In the nineteenth century a passion for the study of nature disclosed law, order, unity, harmony everywhere. It was discovered that gravitation, working throughout space, upholds all things; evolution, working throughout time, has created all things. What need was there for Spirit? Nature was cold, cruel, relentless, permitting only a survival of the fittest. Faith alone kept alive a reliance upon wisdom and love, because of man's unsatisfied need and hope in a glorious hereafter.

Whoever will look back fifty years will be astonished at the evolution of ideas, in science, government, industry, philosophy and religion. Earth, air, sea, sky, remote stars, language, ancient ruins, religions, historical events, every animate and inanimate thing has been searched and its secret wrung from its silent lips, until sufficient data has been obtained and classified, and the result is, such a flood of light has been thrown upon all things great and small, near and remote, that it has transformed the thinking of mankind, and added, almost beyond computing, to the possible comfort and happiness of every human being.

People no longer believe that kings and princes rule by divine right; though it is still imagined that only a few are born with brains, who, by that divine right, ought to rule the many, failing to see that the progress of civilization depends upon the steady uplifting of the lowest class in society, and that this progress has been in the past and will be in the future, dependent upon and in proportion to their civil, religious and industrial *liberty*.

People no longer believe in the salvation of only a few. The door to divine love has widened until there is some danger that knowledge of sin and its deadly consequences may be forgotten under devout forms and ceremonies.

The age is not only a scientific, but an industrial one; and

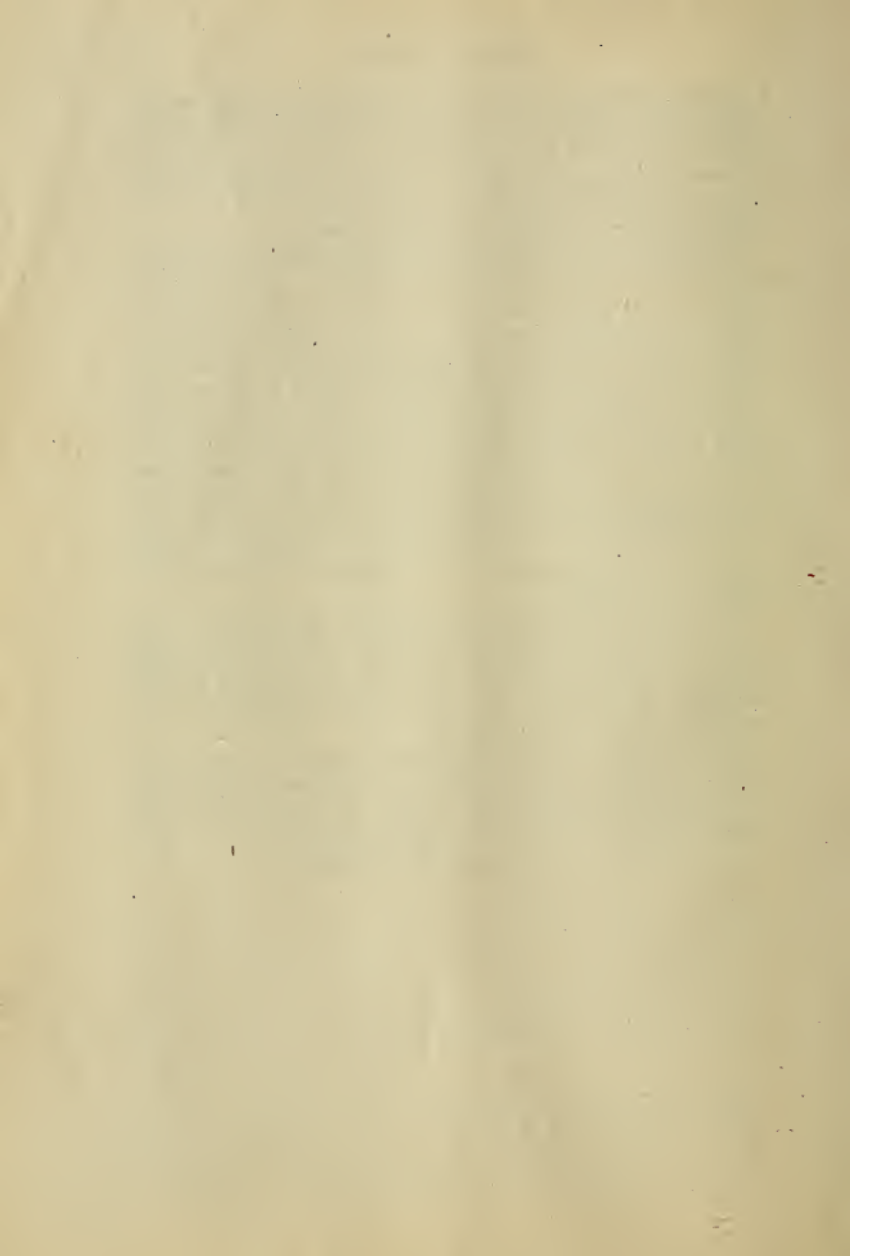
because the advance in the science of political economy has not kept pace with its sister sciences, the world still believes that the many were born to labor for the few who only have the brains to get and to keep. "The poor ye have always with you," they cry, and though the many are granted civil and religious liberty, yet they are industrial slaves.

In political economy the same fundamental principles are taught in our schools today as fifty years ago. Since Ricardo discovered the great "law of rent" there has hardly been a change, until Henry George, by his thorough review of the whole field of economic thought, proved that the laws of wages and interest correlate with the law of rent; breathed new life into the cold, dismal science; showed not only the great cause of poverty, but its remedy, and proved that the spectacle of want in the midst of plenty is but a maladjustment of forces at our command, which, if rightly used, would give abundance to all who are willing to labor. But the debt of gratitude we owe to one who has solved this problem, great as it is, is slight compared to the light these truths throw upon those of religion.

As gravitation reveals God's power throughout space; as evolution reveals His wisdom throughout time; so these social laws reveal His love and care for mankind, bringing us suddenly into the Presence—not of a cruel, relentless force, but of wisdom, benevolence and love.

Materialistic thought has reached flood-tide. These new truths, like a revelation of God's love, will turn back the age of skepticism, and the next century is sure to be one of spiritual advance, as well as of industrial liberty.

May God hasten the day lest many perish!



ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER I.

PRODUCTION.

What is production? A man with a sharp stick is digging clams on the beach. He is producing clams. The *beach*, his *labor*, and the *stick* are the three factors in production. This most simple mode in no way differs in principle from the most complex form of production, with its boss, its army of wage earners and its modern machinery. Each has three, and only three, factors: Land, labor and capital.

In the first example, the stick, though a rude instrument, may be termed capital. In the second, though the workers are many, they are all (including the boss) laborers. Though the machinery is complex, it is capital. Though the material used may be wool, tin, cotton or glass, yet all come from land; and the wages of all are, or should be, all that they produce.

Does the laborer dig clams for the sake of the labor, or for the clams? For the clams, certainly. They satisfy his desire for food and, inasmuch as they do this, they are his *wealth*. When he produces more than he needs for his immediate wants, he has accumulated some wealth.

Take a more complex form of production: Ten men are engaged in the industry of fishing. Some prepare the boats; others the nets and bait; women cook for all to eat. Here is a division of labor, in which many more fish are caught, and that, too, with less labor than when each man prepares his own boat, bait, net and food. Less boats, etc., are required, and much labor is saved. All who assist in performing any of this labor (including the women) as truly catch the fish as those who pull them from the water.

Take a still more complex form of producing wealth: the manufacturing of calico or woollen dress goods. In the Southern States some are growing and preparing the cotton; others, in California or Australia, the wool; some in Asia, the madder; in Africa, the indigo; while in England, the cotton or wool is being spun and woven by elaborate machinery, which others have invented, and still others built at great cost. This machinery is made of iron, wood, steel, copper, zinc, which men in distant parts have produced from the earth; moreover, this machinery must constantly be fed by coal.

Meanwhile, each of the many combined and distant workers must eat, be clothed, housed, etc. Some grow or prepare all or parts of their own food, make all or parts of their own clothing; while others do only some one thing, and by so doing, obtain their food of the distant farmers and their clothing ready made.

Some do nothing all day long but shovel coal into furnaces; others keep accounts; some plow, reap, make butter; others teach, write books, paint, gather news for others to arrange in newspapers.

When a man produces one thing alone—as the digging of the clams—we recognize, easily, that the result of his labor—the clams—are his wages. Now, when he produces any one (or parts of any one) of these million things, the reward for his labor is either a part of the things he produces, or else a money equivalent, which he can use in exchanging his labor for the labor of others, who may be near or remote.

When he receives the equivalent for his labor in money, the transaction is only half completed; for money will satisfy no desire and therefore is not wealth. It must be exchanged for food, clothing, shelter, luxuries, before the transaction is completed; for men do not labor for money, but for what money will buy; for something that will satisfy human desires;—*wealth*, which is always some substance from Mother Earth, upon which some labor value has been impressed, so as to fit it to satisfy some want. Money, though playing an important part in production, is simply a convenience—a labor saving machine—which acts, first, as a measure of values, and, second, as a medium of exchange.

It is the same with the capitalist. Labor value is first given to him, then wages are paid, and this process may go on, week after week, month after month, before the capitalist

is able to turn the finished product into money; yet labor is constantly adding value, which always equals, often far exceeds, the wages paid; moreover, labor advances value before it is paid for by capital.*

When the capitalist turns the finished product into money, the transaction is only half completed, for with him, as with the wage-earner, money is not wealth, only a representative of wealth, which he at once re-invests in fresh materials, and fresh labor value; thus by going round and round, the real wealth increases at every point—not just at the one point where it is measured in money—but all the time that labor is adding value.

But the farmers, the merchants and the manufacturers are laborers as well as the wage-earners. It can truly be said of each that in producing, or helping to produce, any one thing (or parts of one thing) that can be exchanged for money, each has produced everything that his money will buy in the market; for he who eats potatoes, drinks coffee or reads newspapers as truly produces them (if they are bought by the results of his labor) as the farmer, the Arabian or the news-gatherer. It is his demand for these things that causes them to be brought into being. Moreover, anything that interferes with this free exchange of the results of each man's labor infringes upon his rights. To freely exchange that which one's own right arm produces is as much his right as the free use of the arm itself.

It is this natural co-operation, this subdivision of labor, that makes civilization possible. How few comforts would we possess, today, were each to produce his own food, clothing, shelter, etc.! Most people would be living in huts, eating out of wooden bowls, clothed in hand-knit garments. What government could so nationalize all industries, like this natural growth, into greater and still greater subdivisions of labor, where each is free and yet dependent?

To promote this growth, three things are necessary: peace, liberty and a knowledge that each in working for his own highest interest is working for all—a sense of brotherly dependence and also of independence, fraternity and liberty.

*The only exception to this is when wages are paid for personal services; then, although labor value is given, it is not used by the employer to sell again, but to be consumed by him, using it for his comfort or happiness; such wages are not paid out of capital, but out of wealth.

Up to a certain point, the natural desire to look out for self is right. Should each one think it necessary to supply the wants of another, instead of his own, and all did the same, few real wants would be satisfied. Each can best look after his own interests, knows what kind of labor he is best fitted to perform, and what products are best suited to his soil and climate.

The important thing to notice here is, the more workers and more complex the subdivisions of labor are, and also the freer and broader the exchanges, the easier and more abundant will be the wealth produced; and if this ever increasing wealth could be distributed to the producers in proportion to their labor, then, the more laborers, the higher would be their wages; whereas, now, the more laborers, the lower the average wages, because some have power to control distribution.

CHAPTER II.

PRODUCTION; CLASSIFICATION.

The last chapter was intended to show production as a whole; how, by the subdivisions of employments, by a natural growth in co-operation, if each individual was free to do as he pleased, secure in all his natural rights, his labor would result in both conferring and receiving benefits.

This picture is only partially true today, because all governments more or less interfere with the free flow of exchanges. In some countries the hand of excessive and burdensome taxation is so heavy as to almost stop production.

This tax upon trade is called a "tariff" to soften it, and when particularly excessive, is called "protection"—to sweeten it. The gullibility of the unthinking is in proportion to the vast sums annually wrung from labor by those who are benefited by the game, and is one great cause why production is not more equitably distributed.

In this way vast sums are collected annually from the people, over one million dollars a day in this country, one-third only of which goes into the public treasury to be used for the benefit of all, and the other two-thirds into the pockets of

those who are ready to affirm by all that is great and high that there is nothing outside of religion so good for a poor man as to allow the rich to "*protect him.*"

There is, today, not a college or a text-book in our land, of any repute, but declares the tariff upon an article to be a tax upon that article; and that the tax is paid by the one who consumes the article; and that "protection" is only a more burdensome tax. Cobden settled this question in the repeal of the corn laws. Herbert Spencer has shown most clearly that such governmental interference with trade is an infringement upon human rights. Trade is one of the greatest promoters of peace and wealth, uniting hostile nations in friendly intercourse.

There are four modes of production: Adapting, growing, transporting and exchanging. In each of these, labor adds some value to earth's substances. By adapting; as when a tree is turned into boards, doors, chairs; sand made into glass; iron ore into stoves; granite into houses or bridges; copper into wire, kettles, lamps; clay into china, etc. By growing; as when man adds the forces of nature to his labor, and raises cattle, fruit, grains, etc.

But the grain in the barn, boards at the mill, cattle on the plain, glass at the factory, are produced *only* for those near enough to make use of them to satisfy their desires. They are not yet produced for those living at a distance, until transported, and perhaps exchanged. Just as the first producer adds a value to the raw material by his labor, so the transporter adds a value by carrying it to those in need; and the exchanger, by keeping constantly on hand a fresh supply. Wherever one can purchase of the first producer and so do his own transporting and exchanging, at less cost to himself than the added value of the transporter and exchanger, he usually does so; for each one seeks to satisfy his desires by the least exertion. But if he has no time, nor conveniences for so doing, his labor spent in other directions will easiest pay the added price.

Subdivisions of labor generally make it easier for all. But the wealth produced by exchanging is far greater than the simple convenience of retail, or saving by wholesale.

The transporters and exchangers are the great agents that facilitate the divisions of labor, and thus advance civilization, adding greatly to the power of each man's labor.

Herein lies the mistake of the Grangers, in considering the middle-man a non-producer; whereas wealth is produced more rapidly by exchange than by any other mode, else each man would be limited to the work of his own hands, and fruits of his own soil and climate.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE PARTS.

Everything in nature seems a confused jumble until some scientist discovers, amid the thousand substances looking so unlike, that there is some one important property each has in common. He then classes all these under one division; another group under another division, until, at last, all the animals in the world are under four grand divisions; all the plants under two. When any subject, however great, is thus simplified, the mind can easily grasp it. Both the clearness of a subject and its conclusions depend upon correct classification.

In political economy the following is the most natural arrangement and the one adopted by Henry George:

First: All things created by God, such as natural resources, the earth, sea, mineral deposits, winds, tides, every force of nature—all these may be called *land*—God's gift to man.

The second class includes the useful exertion of all mankind, whether wage-earners or employers, workers with brain or muscle. This broad class is called *labor*.

The third class includes all the things which labor has produced from land (or the products of land) to satisfy human desires. This class is termed *wealth*.

There are, then, strictly, but two divisions, land and labor. But since man is a tool-using animal, he no sooner produces wealth than he takes some of it to assist him in producing more. To distinguish this wealth from that which is being consumed (or used) to satisfy desires, it is called *capital*.

A loaf of bread in a bake-shop is capital, for it is being used to produce more wealth by exchange. On the table it is wealth, for it is being consumed. A sewing-machine used to make garments for sale is capital; used to make garments for the family it is wealth, for the machine thus used is being consumed (worn out) to satisfy needs or desires.

It will be seen, then, that capital is easily turned into wealth, and *vice versa*. But these two terms, *capital* and

wealth, should never be confused with *land* and *labor*; for land and labor are but the two parts, which taken together produce wealth. To call either wealth would be the same as saying a part is equal to the whole.

Herein lies the chief mistake of the Nationalists or Socialists, in wrong classification. When they use the term *land*, they mean the same as described above. But the word *labor*, with them, means only the wage-earner, *i. e.* some men, not *all* men. But their worst confusion lies in their use of the term *capital*. By it they mean, *some* men (*i. e.* capitalists), some wealth and some land. They have, then, only one clear, distinct factor—land—and even this they constantly confuse with capital.

Hence, the labor question with them is: How shall some men, with some wealth and some land (capital), be prevented from overreaching some other men, with no wealth and no land?

This, at first sight, seems just what we wish to know; but it takes for granted two things, neither of which is true: First—that the present condition is a natural one, and hence nature's methods might be improved upon by governmental interference; and, second—that labor is a poor, weak thing, needing either capital or government to employ it, and were it not for capital, could obtain no work. Present conditions do differentiate a capitalist class and a wage earning class; but a natural condition would develop a growth toward co-operation, in which, more and more, each man would become his own employer, possessing capital. Socialists are right in condemning present methods; but before we undertake to build up elaborate governmental industries, let us be sure we understand nature's social laws—their simplicity and justice.

The study of the relation of *some* men to other men is not political economy, for economics knows no classes, but deals only with fundamental principles that apply alike to all men.

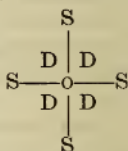
We seek to discover what *power* there is in each of the three factors that produce all wealth, land, labor and capital, or what is their relation to each other. Should it be found that one controls a certain power, strong enough to enslave the other, the way out will be to take from *all* men such power; not passing laws against the rich for the benefit of the poor, but treating all men alike before the law; giving no one a chance to reap where he does not sow, and likewise, no one

sowing where he cannot surely and easily reap the full reward of his labor.

CHAPTER III.

PRODUCTION; RELATION OF THE PARTS.

The last chapter gave such a picture of constantly increasing wealth, and that, too, with an ever decreasing effort, that the question might be asked, Is not the supply of nature exhaustible? Certainly not, for no force, or matter, is ever lost. Man himself being an emphasized part of these, subject to the same constant round of transformations, yet becomes more and more capable of controlling these changes, as his knowledge of himself and the material and psychical world about him increases.



In the above diagram let the lines represent nature's supplies and the spaces the demands of mankind, each of which is supposed to stretch out to infinity. Place man at the center at birth, where the supply is greater than the demand. This natural condition is but the first indication of God's care for mankind. With growth, demand increases. Then, between demand and supply, God has set exertion; before material wealth, labor; before spiritual peace, prayerful seeking; before intellectual culture, study; before moral virtue, resisting temptation.

As the supply is infinite, so should the demand be also. As civilization advances, if liberty, fraternity and equity be preserved, this very growth of individual character and of the social organism will make it increasingly easier for each succeeding generation to overcome resistance, until demand, resistance and supply become the keenest of pleasures—God's method in the evolution of society; but one which man himself can assist or retard. For, behold! this social organism already seems to possess a body, with cities for its ganglionic nerve centers, connected by rail and telegraph for bones, nerves and muscles. It has a body, but not consciousness.

Let us examine the relation or function of its parts, remembering the broad classifications. The function of land is

to furnish forces, standing room and materials for labor to work into wealth. The function of capital is to assist labor in the four modes of production: In adapting, by furnishing him with tools, machinery, factories, etc. In growing, by furnishing tools, seed, cattle, fences, drains, barns, etc. In exchanging, by furnishing stores and supplies, also tools. In transporting, by furnishing him means to take advantage of horse power, winds, streams, oceans, steam and electricity. Capital, then, is but little more than the multiplication of the powers of labor—called by some “stored up labor.” The steam engine, alone, is daily performing more work for man than one thousand million men could do, and electricity will, in the near future, do vastly more.

The function of labor is to direct the whole; simply to move, change, transform. Labor, then, is not out of employment because there is not capital enough to employ it; for capital is also out of employment, and is turned into wealth for the time being; but were there a quick market, it would soon reappear as capital, ready for labor to employ it—for it is labor that employs capital, and not the opposite—since capital is the child of land and labor. Neither does capital maintain laborers; they maintain themselves by selling their labor and by consuming their wages.

Neither does capital furnish labor with materials for work—they are furnished by land, and were all men permitted equal access to land, there would be no limit to work until all wants were supplied.

Wealth, then, is the result of the power labor has obtained over the resistance of matter. Value measures that power; and money measures value. To illustrate: If labor possessed some fairy’s wand, which, by waving it in the air, trees, stones, sand, iron ore, etc., could be made to turn themselves into proper shape, and then, by another wave of the wand, these materials should form themselves into a house of any size or shape labor wills, we could easily see that the house (or wealth) was the result of the power labor had obtained over the resistance of matter so as to fit it to satisfy human desires. That is exactly what labor has done, but by a slower process. What is the value of that house? The labor power it will require to make another like it—measured in money, perhaps one thousand dollars. Mr. A. has on hand a thousand dollars, which sum represents the stored up labor value of his

own, or his father's exertion. He hands it to B. and B. gives him possession of the house.

But, it will be asked, did not the material cost something? Yes, but the cost of material is also a labor value, but one showing itself under an entirely different form, viz., in the value of the land from which it is drawn. Where the land has no value, this material costs nothing. The value of land depends upon the number of laborers competing for its use, rising as those numbers increase; while the value of such things as are properly termed wealth, falls as laborers increase, because the labor cost of producing them is lessened. So long as there is a demand for wealth there will be no limit to the supply, till the limit of land is reached. There is really no limit to land; but as all land does not yield equally of these natural materials—that yielding the best being limited—the competition of labor for these advantageous places fixes the price of land, and this, in turn, fixes the rate of wages and of interest, as we shall see more clearly in the next chapter.

What must be especially noted now is, that the value of land is also a labor value. Were there no laborers competing for its use, land would possess no marketable value, even though it contained fertile plains, deposits of gold, or safe harbors.

Neither would laborers compete for its use, except that each one, in seeking to satisfy his desires by the least exertion, naturally seeks the land which will yield him the most for the least effort. Since all do the same, the price of land becomes a thermometer which shows the labor saved in producing a certain amount of wealth upon different locations. The same law holds, whether this wealth is produced by adapting, growing, transporting or exchanging. Let an oil well suddenly burst forth from land where there is a large population or within easy reach of such. The ease with which wealth is suddenly produced upon this land is at once reflected in the price of it. Labor gets about the same wages and capital about the same interest.

The same result would follow were a gold, coal or copper mine discovered, or if a large factory containing important labor saving machinery should suddenly be erected in a populous district, or if a new railroad were run into a quiet, sleepy town. Fresh facilities for transportation causes a land boom. This also explains why land in great cities, where wealth is

rapidly being produced by exchange, is of such high value; for such land is, in its way, exceedingly productive; also why rich farming land lying a long distance from market is often of less value than poorer soil lying nearer a market; and also why the worn out lands of New England, which today possess neither fertility nor advantages of market, have so decreased in value, while prairie lands in touch with the world's markets, by growing towns and increase of railroad and steamboat facilities, possess a high value.

This explains why wages and interest are but little higher than they were fifty years ago, when compared with land. Yet labor produces certainly eleven times more wealth, generally, and in special industries many thousand times more; yet neither wages nor interest are eleven times higher; but the price of land is much higher. This increase in the production of wealth, under present conditions, will not flow to wages or interest, but results in raising the price of land, or *economic rent*, as it is termed. The market value of land in this country has increased enormously during the last fifty years, not all equally, but in proportion to its wealth producing capacity. Some farming lands have decreased in value, yet choice spots can be found in all our great cities valued at the rate of from four to fifteen million dollars per acre.

To recapitulate: The value of all such things as are termed wealth (things produced by labor), is a labor value, while the value of land is a labor saving value, which increases as population increases.

Is it not clear that labor is not a poor weak thing, that must beg of capital for a chance to work, or be fed by charity; but is rather the creator of all value; the employer of all capital; the producer of all wealth?

CHAPTER IV.

DISTRIBUTION.

Is the value of one's land, his horse, or his day's labor worth about so much because that is the price he has set upon it, or is its value fixed by some great natural law beyond his control? Were each one to receive the price he asks for his

land, labor, or capital, it would be much like making wishes horses for each one to ride. God has created the world on no such haphazard plan as that.

The laws of rent and of wages are as fixed and stable as the law of gravitation. This, at first sight, seems cruel, just as it seems hard that men may drown if shipwrecked, or receive injuries if they fall from high places. Were the laws of nature not uniform, everything would be chance or guess work. When these laws are once understood the forces that control them are no longer our masters, but like winds, tides, steam and electricity, become man's servants. Then the question of how to abolish undeserved poverty will be as practical and certain as the laying of the ocean cable or engineering Brooklyn bridge.

* As in production there are three terms, so in distribution there must be three to correspond. The earnings of capital are called interest; of labor, wages; of land, rent. A man's profits may be made up of only one or of all three of these. The term interest means something more than the price given for the use of money in the open market; for that depends much upon the risk it takes, though the average rate of interest on money is a fair gauge of the average earnings of capital. When such rate is low, capital, generally, is earning but little; unless it takes great risks or controls some monopoly. As wages are the earnings of labor, so interest is the earnings of capital. Their laws are the same, since they are but subdivisions of the same thing. Whatever helps or injures one, helps or injures the other.

The term rent is more important. Wishing to distinguish between the annual interest on the value of capital (*i. e.*, things produced by man's labor) and the annual interest on the value of land (*i. e.*, nature's resources wherever and whenever they begin to have a marketable value) we distinguish them by calling the first interest and the second rent. Often the value of bare land is spoken of in round numbers as so much economic rent, having no reference whatever to houses, barns, fences, drains, or anything labor has produced; all such being capital.

To *whom* rent is distributed will be considered later. Our question still is the relation of *all* men to the earth; and we seek to learn by what natural law value is distributed between rent, wages and interest. Is it always divided equally, or

does one get the lion's share; and if so, when and how? No matter how fertile land is, whether it contains gold, copper, oil, lumber, or diamonds, it will have no marketable value until men begin to compete with each other for its use. Then its price will not be fixed by what is asked, nor by the amount of wealth it will produce, but by the abundance or scarcity of such land; or, (what means the same thing) by the number of laborers competing for its use.

It is the demand for land, together with the supply, that fixes its price; and this price of land fixes the price of wages, and of interest thus: The lowest earnings of labor (wages) will be what labor can make off land having no value (*i. e.*, no rent or purchase price). If this land is fertile, or lies near a good market, it will be quite productive, and so the earnings (or wages) of labor will be high. Since no rent or purchase price is paid, all that is produced will go to wages and interest. This fixes the price of wages upon better land that is rent-paying. For labor and capital will work nowhere for less than they can make upon land freely open to them. So long as there is plenty of good, productive land freely open to labor, the competition for the best land will not be strong enough to raise its value very high; nevertheless, the difference between the wealth produced upon the best land and that upon the poorest (by the same amount of labor) will not go to wages nor interest, but will go to rent, fixing the price of rent at this difference. Because labor and capital can move about, while land cannot, wages and interest, therefore, remain about the same, everywhere, while competition for the easiest wealth producing places gives all to rent above that which labor and capital can make upon the poorest land freely open to them.

This is Ricardo's law of rent, about which there is no dispute among economists of repute. It is generally stated in these words: "*The rent of land is determined by the excess of the produce it will yield over that which the same application can obtain from the least productive land in use.*" But people who have never heard of Ricardo understand this law, because they see it in daily practical application about them, in land booming towns, or in the greed to own more land than can be profitably used, because increasing population will soon double or triple its value. This explains why wages and interest are always fully as high in new countries, where land is cheap, as in old, where rents are high.

The wealth that was produced annually, in this country, fifty years ago, might be illustrated by a small diagram divided into three parts representing rent, wages and interest. As most land then had little or no value, the part going to rent would be small compared with wages and interest.

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| Rent. | Wages. | Interest. | | Rent. | Wages. | Interest. |
|-------|--------|-----------|--|-------|--------|-----------|

Let the wealth which is now produced annually be represented by a much larger diagram. The value of land has increased enormously during the last fifty years, the part that goes to rent being far more than is here represented. But note, though wages and interest are larger than fifty years ago, they receive far less in proportion to the wealth they produce. This is caused by a natural law and by the greed to own more land than can be profitably used. Should production increase a thousandfold, the average wages and interest would still be fixed at the amount labor and capital could earn on land freely open to them.

Fifty years ago the land that was freely open to labor in this country was so vast and so productive in its varied natural resources that it seemed inexhaustible. At that time the whole country was poorer, far, than today, yet we had no tramps, professional burglars nor army of unemployed; likewise, no millionaire class—twenty-five thousand of them today owning over half the wealth of this country.

When the blood of the body is congested in one part, unless relief is obtained, a long chronic illness is the result; for if one member suffers, all suffer. But if the congestion becomes too severe, if the strain put upon the life forces that hold all together be too great, the end is dissolution.

Only twenty-six years ago, when Charles Dickens was in this country, he expressed great surprise that he saw no beggars in Boston; no visible signs of cruel poverty. But we need not go back twenty-six years; the changed condition of the farmers during the last five years is sufficient to satisfy the most skeptical. The great mass of people already feel keenly and cruelly the drift of this downward movement.

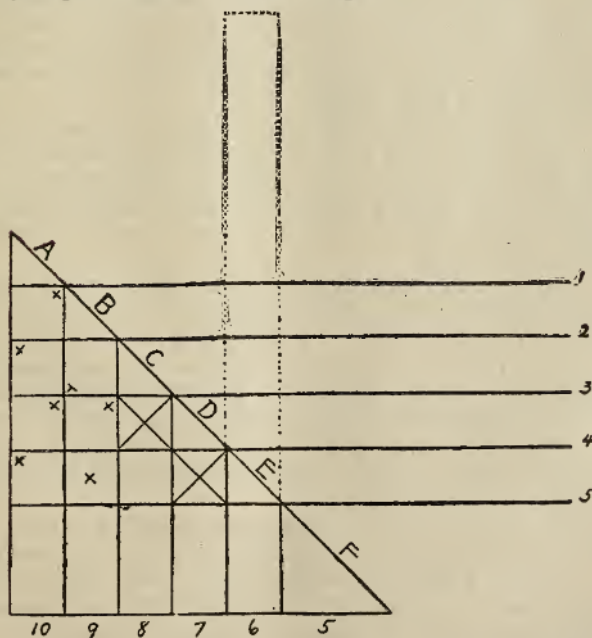
It is the duty of every woman who loves humanity to take an earnest and intelligent interest in these problems, which

are problems of the heart rather than the head; for they are questions of right and wrong, of man's relation to the earth, his indefeasible right to the property his own labor creates; and, also, the absolute justice of giving all men an equal chance to obtain a livelihood by their labor.

CHAPTER V.

DISTRIBUTION.

The law of rent is so important, the more it is studied the more light is thrown upon existing conditions. A diagram may help to a clearer understanding:*



Let the above diagram represent land possessing different

*The author wishes to acknowledge her indebtedness to Professor Thomas E. Will; for it was his use of a similar diagram, in explaining the law of rent, that aided her in writing this chapter.

degrees of productiveness. All land lying in column A may be said to yield 10 per cent wealth by a given amount of labor. Land in B yields 9, in C 8, in D 7, in E 6, in F 5.

In settling upon this land, people naturally settle first upon A—the best. When this is all taken, the overflowing population must settle upon B. But the same amount of labor on B will yield only 9 per cent wealth, while those owning land in A have 10. The A's have now an advantage of 1 over the B's. Here is a beginning of unequal opportunities. For the B's surely were not to blame for being born ten years later, or from families that had not the good fortune to obtain the best land when it was freely open for settlement. The fact that the A's have an advantage of 1 over the B's fixes the rent line at 1. All above goes to rent; all below to wages and interest. For, since those living in B can make but 9, they will be as well off if they live in A and pay 1 for rent; they will then have 9 left. This competition for land in A fixes the average wages of all in A and B alike.

Soon B is full and people are crowded to C. Here the same amount of labor will produce only 8 per cent wealth. The C's may as well live in A and make 8, paying 2 for rent; or live in B and make 8, paying 1 for rent. This competition fixes the rent line at 2. All above goes to rent, all below to wages and interest.

People owning land in A can now begin to live without labor on their rents, while the average price of wages and interest is pressed down to 8. Everything in the end comes out of labor; the more rent receives, the less will wages and interest receive. Many begin to see how things are going and so take up land in C or purchase what they can afford in B and A. The effect of this is to press population out to D, which will give only 7 per cent wealth with the same labor, and presses the rent line down to 3.

Again, an increasing population, and more land is held out of use, and the rent line drops down to 4, and so on down to 5. All above this line now goes to rent; while below, labor and capital are fighting each other in a life and death struggle, combining against each other, not seeing the real cause of their trouble.

The land that is now freely open to labor and capital (in F) is poor and unproductive. What labor can make off this land fixes the average rate of wages and interest in A, B, C, D and

E; for all above line 5 goes to rent. Capital, being hard pressed, cuts down wages. Laborers, being poor, cannot buy what they need; this gives a dull market. At last one or two heavy failures occur, and there is a panic. Then both labor and capital stand idle, until on every street you see signs, "To Let," "To Let." By this you know that rents have fallen, *i. e.*, the rent line 5 is pushed up a little, so that labor and capital can now begin again on easier terms, and there is another eight or ten years' rush of good business. But with every recurring panic they grow more and more severe.

Now suppose in E there should suddenly be discovered a coal mine or oil well, or a thriving city should spring up. In each of these cases the land would be exceedingly productive and its value rise in proportion, which is here represented by the dotted lines. Labor and capital would rush here and for a time receive higher wages and profits: but all above line 5 would soon go to rent, and laborers would work as they now do in the coal mines of Pennsylvania for sixty-five cents a day.

Political economy is called the dismal science, because it is one of the saddest things to realize that, this rent line pressing down as it does upon all alike, till it reaches the poorest men with land freely open to them, is controlled by a law of nature which cannot be changed. At first sight it seems a cruel one. It is God's plummet line of justice let down, forcing all to suffer in proportion as human rights are trampled upon. For the right of the lowest ones in the community to an equal share of the earth is as sacred in God's sight as the right of the highest.

But this picture, dark as it is, does not tell the whole story; for not only does this excessive weight of rent rest upon labor and capital, but they are also burdened with many and grievous taxations, pressing down so heavily that the wheels of industry almost stop; and in the midst of plenty there is starvation. The last census discloses the fact that the land of this country is owned by ten per cent of the population, leaving ninety per cent landless, or, what amounts to the same, mortgaged to the full value of their land.

Look at the chart once more, and note how unequally this rent is now distributed—those owning land in A receiving 5, in B 4, and so on, while all those living in A, B, C, D and E, who own no land, are as badly off as those pressed out to F. That wealth which labor produces should go to labor in the

form of wages; and that which capital produces should go to capital in interest; and that which land values produce, should it not also go to them who produce it, and not to landlords? Landlords do not produce this value. It is produced socially, as we have seen, by the growth of the community. This is a fact; and, moreover, one upon which all economists are agreed. The only point where we disagree from the old school is, to whom does this rent belong—to *all* who produce it, or to only ten per cent of them?

Supposing there could be discovered a method by which all of this rent, above line 5, could be fairly collected, and then equally distributed to all. The effect would be like loosening iron bands of pressure about the body which threatened convulsions, bringing almost instant relief. The first effect would be to make it unprofitable to hold land out of use, and at the same time more profitable for all users of land. The result would be that those squares in the diagram now marked with crosses, representing land held out of use, would be again open to labor and capital. population would flow to this land, and the rent line would rise to 3, or, in other words, rents would fall. Then the emigrant wagons would be seen coming home, for no one would care to live beyond civilization when better land was freely open to them: and even in the midst of great cities there would be plenty of land—for each family a home. The building industry would receive an impetus, and with this, all other allied industries would soon feel the rush: wages and interest would both rise, and there would be no end to the increasing production of wealth until there was an end to human wants. Rent which now acts as a barrier, checking production and increasing the gulf between classes, would then be the strongest of forces, both in the production of wealth and in promoting more equal conditions in life.

CHAPTER VI.

DISTRIBUTION—THE SINGLE TAX.

The previous chapters have emphasized two facts. First, the more laborers, and also the wider and freer the exchanges are, the cheaper and more abundantly will wealth be pro-

duced; and were this wealth justly distributed, the tendency would be toward more equal conditions among laborers, which, in turn, would bring about a closer association, purifying public morals, advancing refinements, knowledge and culture. Did nothing interfere to prevent this natural growth toward equality and freedom the amount of wealth that would be produced annually, even with present methods of production, would astonish the most incredulous. Present methods would soon give place to new inventions, and greater subdivisions of labor, till, not only wealth, but what are now termed luxuries, would be within the reach of all.

The second fact is the opposite of this. As numbers increase, as labor-saving machines multiply and cheapen production, the value of land rises; moreover, this value fairly represents the benefits of co-operation to each member of the community. This enormous privilege now goes to a few. Could it be enjoyed by all equally, benefits conferred by each to society, and benefits received by each from society, would be equal. Land values would then operate in adding the strongest force possible, both in the production of wealth and in its equitable distribution. But going as it now does to about ten per cent of the population, the effect is to not only check production enormously, but to broaden the gulf between classes, resulting in such contradictions as too much vacant land and too many people; too much poverty and too much wealth.

Had the Creator fashioned the earth entirely uniform, the same soil, surface, climate, products, everywhere, one place had been as advantageous to man as another. And then, had He formed man without the social instinct, since he could obtain his food as well in one place as another, mankind would now be scattered, solitarily, over the whole earth, elevated but little above the brute; for it is by the added powers that come to man by association that progress is chiefly made.

These two divine laws—social instinct and diversity of soil and climate—are the chief cause of rent, which now acts as a barrier to further progress; creating inequalities and preventing association, enslaving the masses, and blinding the few to their perilous condition. As nature provides the newborn infant with food from the overflowing breast, so nature has provided this growing organism, Society; with a fund—*land values*—which is always sufficient for its growing needs,

What more clear than the fact that when this fund is not put to its divinely intended purpose, the result in both cases is the same—congestion, disease, decay, starvation? Does this not show that the Creator took thought not only of man's individual needs, but of his social wants also, and included society and government in His divinely intended plan that—

‘There are no classes or races, but one human brotherhood?’

The question of questions, of importance alike to rich as well as poor, is How shall this fund be distributed equally to all? For if it is right and just, there must be a way, and whatever is right must benefit not a few only, but all. To do this is easy. We already collect, annually, some of this economic rent to defray public expenses, wherever taxes are levied upon bare land according to its value. We have only to remove all taxes from labor and capital, placing instead, one single tax upon land values, to collect this economic rent for public uses in which all will share equally.

But we must accustom ourselves to look upon taxation in a new light, as a payment of each to the community, for only such benefits as are received by each, and so is no tax. Our present system of taxation is a relic of barbarous ages, which endeavors to tax each citizen in proportion to his wealth and consumption, to squeeze out of each as much as possible. It is nowhere fairly or justly levied, but savors of robbery, breeds corruption and fraud; for it puts a premium upon lying and evasion.

The proposed new method is as much an improvement upon the old as the art of printing is over that of making books by the slow process of writing them out with a pen. And the train of improvements which will follow its introduction will not be short of the blessings humanity has received from the invention of printing. Since all men are equally entitled to the use and enjoyment of God's bounties, and also to what is gained by the general growth and improvement of the community, which their presence has created, no one should be permitted to hold such special privileges without giving to the whole a fair return for so doing.

The value of the land in every community exactly represents such privilege. *Not the privileges of the past, but of the present.* Farmers living where land has little or no value, would pay little or no tax. But should one man, or a few

men, choose to own all the rich coal fields of a state, another, the oil lands; should railroad corporations own, as they now do, land enough to make six large states the size of Iowa; or foreign syndicates own nearly as much of American soil; in short, should one man desire to own the whole round globe, there would be no objections, *provided*, he paid the inhabitants of the world the full market price for such special privilege of appropriating their inheritance. This is the only way in which God's bounties, and that value which is created by the progress of society, can be equally distributed and enjoyed by all.

Land values have been compared to the drifts of snow after a blustering storm, the value being represented by the depth. The single tax would shovel all this snow (economic rent) annually into one pile (the public treasury), and then distribute it equally by using it for public revenue. We would do this, first, because it is just, but more especially to break the power of monopoly in land values—the one great monopoly upon which all others rest, making it forever impossible for idleness to produce a scarcity by force, when there is no scarcity in nature; thus placing the farmers and honest mechanics at the mercy of monopolists—honest labor begging for employment as a boon, labor idle and capital idle, till people everywhere forget that if labor had its rights it could not only take care of itself, but would keep the wheels of industry and capital constantly and profitably employed.

The labor question? It is far more than a question of rents, or of wages; of the gulf between the millionaires and the slums! It is a question of human rights! the contempt of which has led to present conditions. "But if, while there is yet time, we turn to Justice and obey her; if we trust Liberty and follow her, the dangers that now threaten will disappear."

A PICTURE OF THE FUTURE.

Imagine for a moment the single tax in full operation. The value of land is highest in great cities, and where all such industries exist as are now monopolies, such as mines, railroads, telephones, telegraphs, gas, electric roads, power, light and heat. This value alone (without taxing capital or anything labor has produced) would be sufficient for most public expenses, beside keeping all steam and electric railroad beds,

electric wires, telegraphs and telephone lines in good working order, and as open and free to the public as our country roads now are; yes, far more than that—sufficient to extend electric car lines, light, power and telephone service freely to every fair-sized town in the country, knitting them all together by easy and cheap access, uniting city, town and country in one pleasant society, with advantages for all. Steam and electricity would thus relieve man and horse alike from severe drudgery.

The next highest land values are in manufacturing centers. These would tend toward co-operation, each laborer either owning some share in the mills; or, electric power being distributed throughout the town to each house, work would be done at home and paid for by the piece. The tenement house, as now known, would disappear, for the crowded city would flow out to the pleasant country, filling it with life and cheer.

Farming lands have the next highest value. This industry would also tend toward co-operation, for more and more machinery would be used. The homes would be built along the great highways (the farms lying in the rear), where every advantage of electric light, power, car and telephone service would be so cheap as to be nearly free to all, and thus bring farmers into neighborly proximity to all social advantages, such as village or city schools, libraries, museums, churches, concerts, and deep lesson of life from works of art and plays by great masters. The life of the farmer would be no longer isolated, but easy, pleasant and attractive, with leisure for culture and travel. Such a state of society, where freedom and increasing sociability abound, would promote morality and culture. Would not even the present millionaires make a good bargain, to give half their wealth for citizenship in such a state?

And this picture is by no means a fanciful one. It is a faint representation of what would follow the right use of God's bounties to all; just as now the wrong use breeds injustice and misery, poverty and crime. A young mother with a child at her breast is a picture which inspires the most tender emotions; for it represents unselfish love, trust and repose. A society in which all shared equally in the bounties of a Heavenly Father would soon develop a most unselfish spirit and brotherly love among its members as well as an unflinching trust and repose in the Divine goodness that had

rescued and redeemed it. The way there is certain! but the road is steep. Who will lend a hand?

CHAPTER VII.

THE SINGLE TAX VIEWED PRACTICALLY.

But it will be asked, "What shall one do to lend a hand?" Study the subject. Read the works of Henry George, or the single tax national organ, a sample of which can be obtained by addressing a postal card to The Single Tax Courier, 810 Olive street, St. Louis, Mo. This paper aims to show the progress of the movement and to propagate its doctrines, the farreaching truths of which, once clearly apprehended, there will be found enough to do; for justice will cry aloud, and the cause of such painful contrasts as unearned wealth with undeserved poverty will be revealed.

For what can be more unjust than that this ever increasing sum—rent--which reflects the growth of population, as well as the social advantage of every improvement and invention, should go almost exclusively to the landlords; and, moreover, to them so unequally? Or what can be more unjust than to permit a few citizens to own the larger part of the earth upon which all must live, and from which all wealth is drawn, and by this means be enabled to dwell in luxurious idleness upon the toil of others, making toil and want seem a disgrace, and even unearned wealth an honor?

What more monstrously unjust than that one man must pay a brother for the right to live and work upon God's earth--for the right to use that which the labor of neither has created?

Such a system is, in fact, if not in form, as wrong as chattel slavery; for it takes from the producer a part of the results of his labor, without giving to him any return, and leaves the lowest wage-earner but a bare living for all his toil.

To divide ground rent equally among all is, in fact, to enable all to share equally in the value of the land; a scheme far in advance of owning land in common. By this method the land itself—its fertility of soil and advantages of site and location—becomes possessed more securely by the user than

under the present system, by which the one who owns the mortgage really owns the land, and the sum annually paid to him, though called interest, is in fact rent.

Viewed thus broadly, the labor question ceases to be merely a strife between capital and labor—a war between classes—but a question of human rights; one in which every lover of humanity and freedom, be he landlord, capitalist or wage-earner, must rise above party or class, and behold in it a transcendent opportunity for good; one in which every earnest woman, every mother, must feel a keen interest, for it touches life on every side, materially, intellectually, morally and spiritually.

Moreover, the battle is now on. It is the old one of the rights of the people against the might of the few; and it is for us—children of the present generation—to say whether civilization shall go forward with leaps and bounds as yet undreamed of, aided by the most important discoveries and inventions the world has ever known, or whether a night of gathering, thickening despotism shall set in, lulling us to sleep with soft words of protection and glittering promises.

The Joshuas of New Zealand have somewhat turned the course of the sun in that bright land, and the result is their threatening night has been changed to a rising morn, full of promise and sign to us.

But it will be urged: "All this is theory. Show us something practical. How is the single tax to be brought about? And when in operation, what will be its effect upon me?"

In Hyattsville, Md., the single tax was partially tested for one year. Taxes were taken off all improvements and only increased upon land values from fifteen cents to twenty-five cents upon one hundred dollars; yet a much larger revenue was raised than under the old system, for the reason that all land was assessed at its true value. Many who most strenuously opposed the new system were surprised to find their tax bills so much lessened.

To illustrate: It is said that improved land in the state of Illinois is assessed at the rate of \$11.18 per acre; while unimproved land, of the same value, is assessed at \$4.03 per acre. We would add these sums and divide by two, which would result in assessing all land, having the same value, at \$7.60 per acre. In cities the contrast is still more striking; land worth

sixty dollars a square foot is frequently assessed for only six dollars a foot.

In Michigan there are thousands of acres of mining land, containing millions of dollars' worth of ore, practically paying no tax; yet the mineral lands of Minnesota, which belong to the public school fund, yield, in rents, a yearly revenue of forty thousand dollars. The single tax would distribute all land values equally, whether such value is wrapped up in country acres, mining, coal or oil lands, railroad or electric power franchises, or valuable foot frontage of corner city lots, the bare land of which sometimes yields a yearly rental revenue at the rate of fifty thousand dollars per acre.

Contrast this with the annual yield per acre of farming land, on which no labor is applied, and see if the single tax would not be an immense gain to farmers over the present system. Were all land values distributed equally, the farmer would own his land, as now; but his share in the land value of his town or state would be far greater than at present and it would be returned to him, yearly, in two ways. first, by greatly lessening his direct taxes and doing away with all indirect taxes, and second, by giving to him social advantages and benefits now hardly dreamed of.

In 1892 Hon. Tom L. Johnson made an investigation of land values in Washington, D. C. employing six of the best real estate experts. It was found that, starting from the center of the city, the land used for business purposes was worth about twice the value of improvements. Land lying beyond, where were located the best residences, was about equal to the improvements; while beyond this circle, where were the homes of the middle class, land was worth about half the improvements: proving that if taxes were raised on land values alone, the great majority of the people would pay far less than at present, yet a much larger revenue be obtained. for two reasons: First, non-property owners, who now pay no direct tax, but who do pay ground rents into private pockets, would then pay their ground rents into the public treasury; second, all lands, including vacant lots, would be assessed at their true value. The assessed land value of Washington was then about seventy-six millions, but its real value was over three hundred millions.

But the greatest blessing which the single tax will bring, when carried to its full realization, will come from that

which, at first view, would seem the most cruel part of it, viz., gradually increasing the tax on land values, until by absorbing most of the ground rent, the selling value of land would be nearly eliminated. For to tax this value away from each, individually, is not to destroy the value, but to own it collectively; a method by which each one would share equally. Moreover, to tax the selling value of a man's lot or farm away from him would affect him so little he would hardly be aware of it until he wished to sell, and then, as the selling value of all land would be alike reduced, it would work him no injury, provided he wished to purchase again.

If he were a farmer and wanted farms for his boys; or a merchant and wished to settle his children near him in homes of their own, the ease with which he could do this would be in proportion to the cheapness and abundance of land about him.

Were he an Astor, or one whose income was derived chiefly from ground rents, he would always retain the rents received from his houses (which, strictly speaking, are interest on capital), and as the ground rent was gradually taken from him, where it injured his interests as a landlord, it would help him, both as a capitalist and laborer. The only class to whom the single tax would prove a real hardship would be those who now perform no labor.

By taxing the value of land away from the individual and giving it to the community it becomes no longer profitable to hold land out of use; so plenty of good productive land could be obtained by paying a nominal sum to the owner, and the annual rent to the community. Labor would seize such opportunities quickly. There would be land enough for all, and work enough for all, and that, too, at good wages. Labor would thus become free, and capital the servant, though a useful and helpful one. The masses would hardly feel the change, at first, except to wonder at the cause of good times, just as now they wonder at the cause of stagnation in business.

All indirect taxes would then be abolished—taxes which now rest so heavily (even though unconsciously) upon the masses, the weight of which each one can compute for himself; for, according to Thomas G. Shearman—one of the best authorities on the subject of tariffs and taxation—each laborer's indirect taxes amount, on an average, to at least seven-

teen per cent of his yearly income; which sum, under the single tax, would go to purchase added comforts.

But, it may be asked, is it not confiscation to tax rents away from those who now enjoy them? Not if they are enjoying them unjustly. The landlord who labors upon his land has almost disappeared from American soil, and we have become a nation of landlords and tenants. Such landlords never have, and never will, add a farthing to the wealth of the world. Their office is merely a privilege to collect toll from wealth producers. They produce neither the land nor the rent. Moreover, rents are created annually. "Next year's rental value will be entirely produced by next year's people." Should the people cease to labor, or should they vacate the land, rental value would vanish.

Many wealthy landlords, understanding this and beholding the injustice of the present system, have become earnest advocates of the single tax. They are ready and willing to take their stand on the side of right, trusting God that it prove, in the end, best for all.

The single tax, which seems so easy and so simple, contains a mighty truth and a farreaching power. It restores to every child born upon this planet, not only its God-given birthright in the land, but also gives to it a rightful share in that rich inheritance from the past, of wealth, of knowledge, science, art, virtue and religion, to be held as a sacred trust and handed on, increasingly, to posterity, until there shall exist a state wherein the principles of that inspired Declaration of Independence and the sublime teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ shall become the cornerstone of the Church, the Forum, the Market, and be engraven on the hearts and manifested in the lives of the people.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SINGLE TAX POLITICALLY AND MORALLY CONSIDERED.

One hundred years ago the world was split into factions over religious creeds and dogmas, mistaking minor points of difference for important truths. Today, blind allegiance to party, or a bigoted distrust of everything outside the teach-

ings of one's own newspaper, exaggerate differences in economic thought and obscure fundamental relations until the "political pot" seems a boiling, seething mass of unending talk and contention—a hopeless, unsolvable riddle to the great majority of people—except, perhaps, editors and politicians. Beneath the surface it is simple enough. There are but three schools of economic thought—all others are subdivisions; and the principles they advocate are not new, but as old as government and questions of human rights; though they continually present themselves under new forms and crystallize about new ideas, which are to mold the social organism.

The socialistic school may be described as believers in the omnipotence and omniscience of human law, whether the power to make such law rests in the hands of a despotic monarch or in a supposed majority of a republic; in either case, this power becomes king and undertakes to rule the doing and almost the thinking of the whole people with either open or tacit assumption of infallibility.

Formerly, this power was directed to the building up of the state; latterly, for the correction, support and guidance of the individual.

If an abuse is discovered, well-worded petitions, supported by a most formidable array of signers, invoke honorable bodies to pass a law removing it; which honorable bodies proceed to do, or not to do, according as they view its effect upon their personal political prosperity. Should the law pass the third reading and become duly engrossed, the petitioners (including the signers who really took some interest in the bill), sleep soundly, imagining the law will execute itself; but too often this is but the beginning of trouble; for the law begets bribery, and bribery begets perjury, and perjury begets costly litigation, until a whole army of political parasites are able to live and thrive upon the slime and corruption that ooze from abuse and crime; all being supported by the honest, overburdened taxpayer. Nevertheless, this ancient fetich—omnipotence in human law and omniscience of legislators—still lives; and many honest, public spirited citizens still put their trust in reform by repressive measures, believing that somehow, somewhere, legislators must grow suddenly wiser, after election than before, and are thus enabled to regulate trade, raise wages; put a stop to strikes; shorten the hours of labor; turn off or on the needed supply of gold or silver; abolish the

sweater, and the employer of child labor; close the saloon; reform the drunkard; purify morals, and emancipate woman; all this without seeking to discover and remove the causes that have produced these excrescences upon our civilization; without interfering with the conditions that have made repressive measures necessary; without seeing that, in nine cases out of ten, the need of governmental interference is to modify, or counteract, some previous unjust legislation.

This school of thought has, today, fresh advocates, whose noble enthusiasm for a better, brighter day for humanity, tempts them to far bolder schemes of governmental regulation; from the modest demands for the exploitation of all monopolies, to the absorption, by government, of all capital, and the abolition of competition, interest and wages. The socialists behold clearly one side of the shield—man as a social being.

The extreme opposite of this school behold only the other side of the shield—man as an individual being. These apostles of liberty have also high hopes for a better day for the world. Almost worshipers of the two grand words, liberty and fraternity, they are yet unable to see that man possesses any natural rights, and the divine laws of nature, acting upon and through society, are to them so many circumstances, or conditions; not God's commands, which ought to regulate and mold social institutions.

Extremists of this school justify attack; for they hold that all government stands in the way of liberty and progress.

Occupying a middle ground between these two schools of thought, where they command, as it were, both sides of the shield—man's social relations as well as his individual claims—stand the advocates of the single tax. Their position is not a compromise between the two, as if, one side of the shield being white and the other black, they declared both sides to be gray; for this would be farther from the truth than either of the two extremes. Their position shows them that the socialist and the *philosophical* anarchist each behold a half truth, both of which must be reconciled and harmonized with each other before they can be useful to mankind. This the single tax will do; for it secures to each his liberty, by restoring to him his natural rights, and also, by equalizing opportunities, it promotes a normal growth toward co-operation, until soci-

ety must assume control of her rights and perform her social duties.

They believe that the state is as much a part of the divine scheme as marriage, life, growth or death; that "there is in human affairs one order which is the best. That order is not always the one which exists; but it is the order which should exist for the greatest good of humanity. God knows it and wills it; man's duty it is to discover and establish it."

They believe that this order is founded upon liberty and justice, and that all attempts at reform, either in human government or in society, until these are established, are but structures built upon the sand; for the justice of God laughs at man's vain attempt to escape it.

Until all learn that whenever a moral law of the universe is broken it is as sure to bring its own punishment as when a physical law is broken, and so each learns to become ruler of his own conduct—loyally obeying the moral law—until this is accomplished, government must restrain the vicious from injuring others. But it is not the office of government to watch each individual member of the community that he fall not into the fire, or call him in when it rains; but to protect him in his rights, or rather to restore to him his liberties, which the majority, in the name of law, have taken from him.

More and more, people are coming to see that governments and political parties exist for the well-being of the individual, and not for the state. For example: Formerly protective tariffs were encouraged to diversify industries for the benefit of the state; but today, when individual interests are to be subserved, it is seen that if the wage earners are to be protected, it were better to protect them directly, and not their masters; and also that to tax the many for the benefit of the few is a violation of human rights, though done by the power of law. "How shallow we are!" exclaimed William Lloyd Garrison, in a recent speech. "How we worship makeshifts, and lose the proportion of the permanent in our destructive habit of magnifying the transient! Always the surface, never the depths, until we discover we are sinking."

It is not claimed that the single tax is a panacea for all human ills; but though simple—as truth and right always are—like them, too, the result of its adoption would strike a blow directly or indirectly at every falsehood and wrong; for out of the monstrous assertion—the right of a few to own

the soil and usurp the benefits which society creates—has arisen such false doctrines as that money, trade, and competition are, in themselves, evils to be abolished; that interest is robbery and wages ignoble.

One might as well abolish railroads because they occasion destruction to life and limb, as to attempt to reform trade by abolishing money; for money, like railroads, is a great labor saving tool, which assists in the exchange of wealth; and without exchange—or trade—man would lapse again into barbarism.

Both parties are benefited in every free exchange. It is because one party is not free today that has given rise to the belief that trade is robbery.

And interest? Yes, many things termed interest are robbery, but true interest—the wages of capital—is as legitimate as are the wages of labor; and that fierce cutthroat monster called Competition is not competition, but its death struggle, under the iron hand of monopoly.

Of the six indirect causes of monopoly, the single tax will strike a death blow at four of them. First, that gigantic monopoly—land values—upon which all others rest. Second, all special privileges, or trusts, built up and fostered by protective tariffs. Third, all franchises, upon which rests the monopoly found in railroads, street railways, gas, water, electric power, etc. Fourth, land mortgages; for the mortgagee is a joint owner of the land, and what he receives, though called interest, is really rent.

The two monopolies left are patents and money. While it is important that the inventor be protected in his property of ideas, as the law is now administered, the benefit goes rather to large corporations than to him, thus creating monopolies.

Money is not wealth, only a representative of value; yet the importance of reform regarding it need not be obscured in order to show the still greater importance of at once restoring to all men an equal right to the soil, from which all wealth is extracted.

Oppressive monopolies and repressive governments once overthrown, these will clear the way for such great reforms as temperance, woman suffrage and purity.

When the burden of hard times, unjust taxation and industrial slavery, which now rests with double weight upon woman, is lifted from her who has so long borne far more

than her share of the dreary toil, wrongs and anguish of this world, then it will be seen that man's wrongs are woman's wrongs, and man's rights woman's rights. Then questions of equal pay for equal work will disappear, for labor everywhere will receive its full reward.

Then woman, freed from the relic of oriental ideas, will be able to perform her full duty, first to herself and then to society. Then will she fully realize her own true dignity and worth; then will be appreciated her power to elevate and transmute the common daily life to poetry and song.

Under a quickened public conscience, a keener regard for the rights of others, it will be possible for society, co-operatively, to assume responsibilities and duties which today would be dangerous to liberty.

"We have a faith," says Henry George, "that our Father in Heaven did not decree poverty, but that it exists because of the violation of His law. We have a belief that poverty can be abolished by conforming human laws and institutions to the great principles of equal justice. And having this faith, and having this belief, we have a destiny. That destiny is to abolish poverty in the United States of America, and in doing so to fire a beacon that will light the whole world!"

If every earnest man and woman in our country, rising above party, without leaving his or her particular reform, would unite for this one end, we might realize, even in our own day, the fulfillment of that prophecy of Isaiah:

"For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

"Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward."











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