



QUESTION OF LAND.

"THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN."

Alienating the Soil and Taxing Labor—The Laborer a Serf TH Private Property in Land is Abolished—Rent Confiscation.

Appropos of an editorial in the last edition of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE, in which exceptions are taken to the New York Evening Telegram for its reference to "Henry George's theories," it may be interesting to your readers to know how far these theories have been presented to the public before the appearance of Henry George in the literary arena; and that, too, by American publishers.

I have in my possession a work published in the United States in 1851 (about the time that Henry George was ten or twelve years of age, I believe) and evidently written several years prior to that date, with especial reference to the social conditions of England. In this volume the subject of political economy is discussed from every standpoint, but the "land question" crops up at regular intervals in a manner which indicates it to be the basis of the author's propositions. The book is easily read; the language is terse, and no unnecessary phrases obscure the well-taken points.

How completely this volume anticipates in detail, the work of Henry George, may be determined by a careful perusal of the following verbatim extracts:

"These countries (England, Scotland and Ireland) have within themselves an almost indefinite power of creating wealth; and so far from being in danger of a superabundant population, they could in ten years, with a tenth part of the annual expenditures of the kingdom on unnecessary armaments, so outrun the increase of the population that it would be unnecessary to import one single grain of corn. * * * The true reason why the population increases more rapidly than the food is to be found, not in the laws of God, but in the political laws which have made such a disposition of the soil as absolutely prevents it from being turned to account. * * * The laboring population of Britain and Ireland must reap the fruits of a system that first allocates all the soil to thirty or forty thousand proprietors, and then places the heaviest taxation in the world on the mass of the inhabitants.

"The difficulties are neither with the soil, nor the climate, nor the price of produce; they all hinge on the political arrangement which the law has made with regard to the soil and its tenure; and until this arrangement is destroyed, the soil never can produce its maximum. * * * The radical evil, that requires to be corrected, is the alienation of the soil from the nation and the taxation of the labor of the country (pp. 295 to 298).

"The evil is expressed in a few words and, sooner or later, the nation will appreciate it and rectify it. It is 'the alienation of the soil from the State, and the consequent taxation of the industry of the country. * * *

The essential part of this political arrangement is, 'all persons in the nation are forbidden, under pains and penalties to use a certain portion of land (with the exception of the grantor, or by his permission). * * * If we turn to the effects of this arrangement we find that the grantee is in no respect bound to make the land produce. He may

utterly neglect it—at the expense of the nation (p. 315).

"Let the political arrangements be what they may, so long as the aristocracy have all the land and derive the rent of it, the laborer is only a serf; and a serf he will remain until he has uprooted the rights of private landed property. The land is for the nation, not for the aristocracy. * * * Those, therefore, who were born into a country where the land had been accorded to individual proprietors, could obtain their livelihood only by laboring for other men; and as those to whom the land had been accorded could not cultivate it themselves, and as the land was required for the support of the population, the laborers were under the necessity of paying a rent to those who thus procured a vast revenue without labor. * * * What is the equitable disposition of the earth? Is it equitable that any arrangements of past generations should cause one man now to be born heir to a county or half a county, while the other inhabitants of the county are deprived of all right to the soil, and must consequently pay a rent to the one individual, who naturally has not one particle of right to the earth more than they have themselves? * * * The great problem is to discover such a system as shall secure to every man his exact share of the advantages which nature has provided for the race; while at the same time he has full opportunity, without let or hindrance, to exercise his labor, industry and skill, for his own advantage (p. 353).

"The solution we propound is the following, although, of course, there is no supposition that any general solution can be immediately applied. * * * The question is, what system will secure to every individual of these successive generations his portion of the natural advantages? Of this problem there is but one solution possible.

"The earth is the common property of all, no individual being able to exhibit a title to any particular portion of it.

"No rational basis has ever been exhibited to the world on which private right to any particular portion of the earth could possibly be founded. * * * The question then is, 'upon what terms must the earth be possessed by the successive generations. * * * the earth being the perpetual common-property of the race; each succeeding generation to have a full title to a free earth?'

"The actual division of the soil need never be anticipated. Nor would such a division be just, if the divided portions were made the property of individuals. If, then, successive generations of men cannot have their fractional share of the actual soil (including mines, &c.), how can the division of the advantages of the natural earth be effected?

"By the division of its annual value or rent; that is, by making the rent of the soil the common-property of the nation. That is (as the taxation is the common-property of the State) by taking the whole of the taxes out of the rents of the soil, and thereby abolishing ALL OTHER KINDS OF TAXATION WHATSOEVER.

"And thus all industry would be absolutely emancipated from every burden, and every man would reap such natural reward as his skill and industry, or enterprise, rendered legitimately his.

"This, we maintain, to be the only theory that will satisfy the requirements of the problem of natural property" (p. 375 et seq.).

The author continues, through five hundred pages, to demonstrate the validity of his propositions, but lack of space will prevent my going into the details.

Sufficient has been quoted, however, to substantiate the adage that "there is nothing new under the sun"—"Henry George's theories" not excepted. HERBERT EATON. NEW YORK, Feb. 2.

OUR BOYCOTT CASE.

The "Journal and Courier" vs. The Typographical Union.

Last year the *Journal and Courier*, a local "rat" baptalist sheet, whose principal proprietor, John B. Carrington, commenced negotiations with the Typographical Union with a view to making his office a union office. This was immediately after the victory of the printers over the *Morning News* after a vigorous boycott. Carrington did not hold to his agreement with the union representatives, and the result was that a boycott was declared by the Typographical Union, the Trades Council and the Knights of Labor. Carrington succeeded in enlisting the "State" on his side, through a prosecuting attorney, and had four of the members of the union arrested on a charge of criminal conspiracy. He gained his point in the City Court, the Superior Court (against all law and evidence), and the typos appealed to the Supreme Court. One of the accused, however, was acquitted in the Superior Court. Last week, Friday, the arguments were made before the Supreme Court. Prof. Johnson T. Platt, Talcott H. Russell, and James T. Moran, being counsel for the Union, and John W. Alling, counsel for the "State"—that is, Carrington. The ground for the complaint was that working-people were asked to

"Boycott the 'Courier.'"

The venerable gentlemen forming the Supreme Court heard the arguments, and seemed specially interested in the speeches of Prof. Platt and Mr. Russell; but there was a marked lack of interest in Alling's noisy harangue, notwithstanding the ridiculous propositions in his "argument." Alling shouted at the five old gentlemen as if he imagined they were deaf. Notwithstanding the ravings of the lawyer, which were perhaps really intended to satisfy his employer more than to convince the judges, the majority of them apparently enjoyed a quiet nap during his remarks. But when counsel for the defense made their arguments in a quiet, dignified manner, the Court was wide awake and much interested in the remarks of the learned gentlemen. As the Supreme Court is not noted for startling speed in arriving at decisions, it will be time enough to print the main argument of Prof. Platt, as embodied in "Defendants' reply to the Brief for the State," in our next issue. It is a most interesting and important argument.

FACTORY INSPECTION.

To Protect the Toilers in Factories and Workshops.

Last year a bill was brought before the legislature to establish a State inspection of factories, and was favorably reported on by the chairman of the Labor Committee on the part of the House. But it was defeated. Now, again, this bill has been introduced by Representative King, of Naugatuck, and the temper of our legislators will once more be tried on the subject. The bill provides for the appointment of an inspector of factories with power to appoint assistants, whose duty it shall be to see that the owners of factories provide proper safeguards against accident, and have their shops properly ventilated, etc. There is but one reason why this bill will not pass, if defeat is again in store for it, and that is that the employers don't want to go to the expense of complying with its provisions. They no doubt recognize the fact that wage-slaves are cheaper than appliances for their protection. It will be interesting to know just what legislators vote for and against this and similar bills.

THE GREAT STRIKE.

No Material Change Since Last Report.

The great strike of the coal and freight handlers in the vicinity of New York continues unabated as we go to press. Scabs are scarce, and there is an almost complete embargo on freight. The men are determined and hopeful of success.

HOLYOKE WORKERS.

Victory for the Clerks—The Paper-Makers—Scab Cigars—Textilists.

HOLYOKE, MASS., Feb. 3.—The adjourned Paper-Makers' meeting was held on Sunday afternoon; the hall in which they met proved to be too small to accommodate more than half of those who desired to attend.

After a lively and intelligent discussion a committee of five was appointed to obtain the co-operation of all the four workers in the country for the purpose of inducing the manufacturers to shut down the mills at 6 p. m. Saturday and to start at 7 p. m. on Monday. Another meeting in a larger hall will be held on February 15.

The clerks have succeeded; they can now enjoy themselves three nights in the week.

It is a curious fact, but it is a fact nevertheless, that scab cigars are being sold in the place where the Cigarmakers' Union holds its meetings. Now I will not be a bit surprised to hear that workingmen have stopped trading at that place.

The woolen mills have an extensive and elaborate system of fleecing their operatives by fines and peculiar methods of measuring the webs and putting the proceeds into their own pockets. Facts and figures are being secured and will be exhibited in the columns of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE in due time.

The WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE has been of material benefit to the workmen of this place. It has advanced the cause of the paper makers. Its influence was felt in the interests of the clerks. The textile workers and the cigarmakers will ere long find the advantage of having the privilege of a newspaper that will take special notice of all that concerns their welfare and keep every grievance they have before the public until it is abated.

But to make it thoroughly effective the co-operation of those who are to derive the benefit is necessary; to this end a large subscription list is indispensable. There is now quite a respectable list of subscribers from this place, and some additions are being made to it every week, and I trust that workingmen will see how much more desirable it is to have a paper of their own than to depend upon the capitalistic penny trumpets that have nothing better than gibes and jeers for workingmen, and are always prompt to publish every scurrilous and discreditable item that in any way reflects on the workman or his cause.

Names and subscriptions sent to the undersigned will be promptly attended to. ADAM RAJAGE, 136 Oak street.

P. S. The dude on the hill who is, for the time being, running the capitalistic penny trumpet wants to know who will pay the assessments and expenses of the Knights of Labor strikers when all have struck and none are earning wages?

Ah! but how will capitalists pay their bills without "Unpaid Labor"? Let us all stop work for a couple of weeks and see. Why not? A. B.

A BOYCOTT.

A remarkable boycott is in progress in Galveston. A female compositor of that city, a member of the Printers' Union, married a non-union compositor, and then tried to get him to join the order. He refused, and the Union voted a boycott in which the wife participated, having left her husband and begun proceedings for a divorce.—*Craftsman*.

The wife is no doubt sufficiently punished, and if she succeeds in getting a divorce, she will no doubt heed the lesson: "Don't marry a Rat."

TEXTILE WORKERS

AN APPEAL FROM THE PROGRESSIVE UNION.

The Weavers Weaving a New Fabric. But Not for the Bosses—A National Union Proposed—A Large Union Organization Possible.

FELLOW WORKINGMEN:

According to a mutual understanding, the seat of the National Executive Board of the Textile Workers Progressive Union of America has been moved from Holyoke, Mass., to the city of Philadelphia.

Our city being the great centre of textile industry of the country, we expect to be able to enlarge from this central point our young organization, and to extend it all over the country.

Exhorted by the brilliant proceedings of the Trades' Unions Convention at Columbus, Ohio, which led to forming a strong organization under the name "American Federation of Trades," we are sorry to say that we were not represented at said Convention.

We hereby appeal to all textile workers, and especially to every independent union, to join our Central body. Wherever there is no such union we would advise to organize one, and this Executive Board is at any time willing to lend a helping hand to the organization of such open unions.

We hold, that only by a uniform and central organization of our trade, the condition of the textile industry and of those who work at this trade can be bettered.

The attempts made last year by the workingmen of this country to raise wages, have proved that the greatest results are to be expected from the national organization of trades.

Therefore we are quite pleased to see that the different trades belonging to the Knights of Labor, one after the other, asks the General Executive Board of said order to grant them a district, or a national trade charter, in order to be enabled to settle their own affairs in their own way, respectively, by experts of their own choice, and we have seen that the members of the order of the K. of L. themselves adopted this union principle; therefore, one might say, it is but a question of time that all the different trades represented in the Knights of Labor will form separate organizations.

After having given the above views, the Executive Board of the Textile Workers Progressive Union of America begs leave to submit the following propositions, hoping that all textile workers' unions, including the various textile workers' assemblies of the Knights of Labor, will aid us in our efforts. We would suggest:

First: To call a General Textile Workers' Convention for the purpose of forming a national organization, the meeting place and the date of said convention to be fixed hereafter.

Second: the secretaries of the different unions and those who take an interest in this movement, to enter into correspondence with us in order to attend to the further necessary steps.

At the same time we, the Executive Board, declare again our readiness to give whatever information is asked for regarding the organization of the trade; and we would respectfully ask the following named unions to correspond with us, either in English or in German, viz: Rockville, Conn.; Adams, Mass.; Newark, N. J.; Beacon Falls, Conn.; New York city; town of Union, N. J.; Broad Brook, Conn.; Pittsfield, Mass.; Providence, R. I.; Chicago.

Fellow workingmen! Do not hesitate to listen to this appeal! You know that the wages in our trade

are as low as they can be and really average an ordinary laborer's wages; you know that our colleagues in the New England States are yet worse off, because they suffer under the truck and house rent system introduced and kept up by the mill-owners. You should follow the example of other well organized trades, who, by their firm and solidaric co-working have raised their wages to a higher standard, reducing at the same time the daily and weekly hours of labor.

We call, in this respect, your attention to the cigar makers, compositors, furniture workers, carpenters, and many others.

The Textile Workers are really behind time, but by the general movement of all organized workingmen, we are drawn into the struggle for bettering the general condition of life, and it is our duty to use all our energy in order to prevent the further reduction of our wages.

It is in our and our families' interest to put a stop to the robberies of the mill-owners and those factory lords who grow rich by not paying the full value of our work. First, we have to demand higher wages, and to be treated in a decent way; and in the future we have to aim at the abolition of wage slavery by introducing the universal co-operative system of production, which alone secures to the workingman the full amount of pay for his work and abolishes bossism.

Respectfully,
ROBERT HOFFMAN,
Sec'y Executive Board of the Textile Workers' Progressive Union of America, 2744 Fillmore street, Philadelphia, Pa.

A COMMON THEFT.

The Fines System Not Legal in Rhode Island.

The case of Timothy J. Ryan vs. Riverside and Oswego Mills, came before Supreme Court on Tuesday on petition of the defendants for a new trial. Ryan was employed at the Riverside mill as a dresser-tender, and for alleged imperfect work, he was fined and discharged. Ryan objected to the fine and refused to take his wages with the amount of the fine deducted from them. The matter was placed in the hands of George J. West by the Rhode Island Central Labor Union, and when the case came before Judge Blackwood, it was decided in favor of Ryan. The company appealed and took the case before a jury, but were again defeated, and finally, on Tuesday last, as stated above, the company was heard before the Supreme Court on their petition for a new trial on the ground of the alleged disqualification of a juror. The petition was dismissed with costs.—*The People*.

THE P. P. P.

The following resolutions are being circulated for signers by our Danbury friends:

Whereas, A private and irresponsible body of armed men known as the Pinkerton Preventive Patrol have for several years assumed to exercise throughout the United States functions which essentially belong to the police of cities, the militia of States, and the regular army,

And, Whereas, The practice of swearing in as special officers for the preservation of peace and property, men of unknown residence and notorious character, in the pay and under the command of private individuals and corporations, is a glaring imposture in violation of American liberty and fundamental law,

Resolved, That we demand of the Connecticut Legislature the immediate enactment of a law forbidding the employment as special officers of men who are not citizens of the State and have not resided three years at least in the county where they are to be so employed; all such special officers to be in the exclusive service and pay of the proper authorities, under pain of fine and imprisonment for receiving any salary or reward from individuals or corporations.

Good. But it is hard on the corporations, and the legislature has always been soft on corporations. So we can't expect much in this line.