

case there will be an absolute gain. For the increase in production will be so great that labor and capital will gain much more than will be lost to private land ownership, while in these gains, and in the greater ones involved in a more healthy social condition, the whole community, including the land owners themselves, will share.

The farmer would be a great gainer by the Single Tax, because the taxation of land values would fall with greatest weight, not upon the agricultural districts, where land values are comparatively small, but upon towns and cities where land values are high. In sparsely settled districts there would be hardly any taxes at all for the farmer to pay.

The Single Tax would have a great beneficial effect upon social ideals. Poverty, the relentless hell, which lies beneath civilized society would disappear along with all of its degrading consequences. Give labor a free field, and take for the benefit of the whole community that fund which the growth of the community creates, and want and fear of want would be gone. The springs of production would be set free, and the enormous increase of wealth with a more equal distribution would give the poorest ample comfort. Men would no more worry about finding employment. The progress of science, the march of invention, the diffusion of knowledge, would bring their benefits to all. Equal privilege would be given to all and special privilege to none.

YOU are holding a tract of land out of use on speculation. A long continued depression finally makes you despair of getting your price. You decide to accept a much lower offer from a man who would employ others in using this land. You are about to close the deal when you hear from what you believe a reliable source that "better times are coming next week." Will not your natural reaction be to call off the deal unless next week's price—or what you believe to be next week's price—be paid? And will not the probable effect of this be to prevent the sale and leave the men who were about to be employed in the jobless ranks? Then are such pollyanna predictions as led you to stop the sale a good or bad thing for business? When believed are they likely to bring better times or postpone them? Would it not help more to face the truth and admit it?

PITY our poor statesmen and professional economists who have to face the terrible problem of how to feed the unemployed. What makes it particularly hard to solve is that at the same time the country is suffering from "overproduction." And then on top of all comes the news that farmers are still raising immense crops of wheat and the question of what to do with this wheat is piled on them before they have found a way to feed the starving. How can any group possibly have brains enough to solve all these knotty problems?

Alexander Hamilton In British Columbia

EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS BY HIM BEFORE
THE HENRY GEORGE SOCIETY OF
VICTORIA, B. C., JUNE 19, 1931

IHAVE recently returned from a visit to Eugene, Ore. I addressed a meeting in the Congregational Church Forum there on the partial application of Henry George's principles in British Columbia. I also spoke in Portland and in Seattle, at the Commonwealth Club, the Lyel Club, and to the Municipal League.

Eugene, the capital of Lane County, Ore., is a fine city of 20,000 people, situated in the upper Willamette Valley. Many of the streets are paved, beautifully boulevarded and planted with shade trees. There has been no snow all winter and flowers have been blooming gayly. The chief industries of the neighborhood are farming, fruit growing and lumbering. Being a university city and having some liberal churches with forums, one can listen at any time to addresses on social, psychological, scientific, economic, religious and kindred subjects. * * * Prices of commodities average much less than on the Canadian side of the line, so that Eugene may be quite truly called a city of cheap living and high thinking, and altogether a most desirable place in which to live.

The Oregonians have an advantage over us in the matter of keeping their politicians in order. They have a referendum law that works; we have one that is unworkable. Eight per cent. of the voters may demand a referendum. Here we require 25 per cent. If their representatives attempt to raise their own salaries or give undue privileges to corporations or such like, the referendum can easily be invoked to head them off, while we have to take that sort of thing lying down. When direct legislation became law too many questions were "referred" for settlement at each election and cluttered up the ballot, but the measure is now considered well past the experimental stage.

I have referred to the fact that living is cheaper on the south side of the international boundary. Protectionists, of course, claim that this, like all other good things, is to be credited to the policy of high tariff. It will be news to some people to hear that free trade is the actual cause, but such is undoubtedly the case. It is true that Americans have a very high tariff wall against the outside world, but here is a world within itself. Forty-eight great commonwealths, many of them large and prosperous enough to be classed as nations, unlimited natural resources, variety of climate and products, 120,000,000 progressive, inventive and hustling people and unrestricted reciprocity—absolute free trade across all boundary lines. Trade is free coming and free going. * * *

The United States of America constitutes within herself the greatest experiment in free trade the world has ever seen. I do not say they would not benefit immensely

by free trade with the outside world. Let them adopt even a "revenue" policy and overnight almost her flag would be seen on every sea and in every harbor on earth.

What I do say is that while so great a nation may rub along in spite of a protective policy, the same policy practiced by such a country with only a twelfth of the population would be quite suicidal. * * *

All trade is at bottom barter—the exchange of commodities for commodities. Therefore, as Canada has unlimited commodities of a limited variety to sell, her only trade policy is to remove obstructions to the inflow of commodities. Added to other advantages this would lower the cost of commodities and lessen the endless outflowing tide of Canadians seeking enlarged opportunities and cheaper living conditions in the United States.

It may be asked: If the United States grew and became great under protection, why cannot Canada do likewise? The answer is that the United States was great before her tariff wall was built so high as it is today. Her tariff has only been high since Civil War times. * * *

The greatest mistake made by both the United States and Canada was in alienating most of their land and natural resources to a few monopolists. Nothing would have been more disastrous. Even the benefits of free trade like all other benefits, must ultimately be absorbed by those who hold the key to nature's bounties—the landlords. The words of Henry George in his lecture on "Moses" still fit as well as they did in the year 1884:

"Yet the great concern of Moses was with the duty that lay plainly before him: the effort to lay the foundations of a social state in which deep poverty and degrading want should be unknown—where men released from the meaner struggles that waste human energy should have opportunity for intellectual and moral development.

"Here stands out the greatness of the man. What was the wisdom and stretch of forethought that in the desert sought to guard in advance against the dangers of a settled state, let the present speak.

"In the full blaze of the nineteenth century, when every child in our schools may know as common truths things of which the Egyptian sages never dreamed, when the earth has been mapped and the stars have been weighed, when steam and electricity have been pressed into service and science is wresting from nature secret after secret—it is but natural to look back upon the wisdom of three thousand years ago as the man looks back upon the learning of the child.

"And yet, for all this wonderful increase of knowledge, for all this enormous gain of productive power, where is the country in the civilized world in which today there is not want and suffering—where the masses are not condemned to toil that gives no leisure, and all classes are not pursued by a greed of gain that makes life an ignoble struggle to get and to keep. Three thousand years of advance, and still the moan goes up 'They have made our lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and brick, and in all manner of service'! Three thousand years of advance! and the piteous voices of little children are in the moan.

"We progress and we progress, we girdle continents with iron roads and knit cities together with the mesh of telegraph wires, each day brings some new invention, each year marks a fresh advance—the power of production increased and the avenues of exchange cleared and broadened, yet the complaint of 'hard times' is louder and louder; everywhere men are harassed by care and haunted by the fear of want. With swift, steady strides and prodigious leaps the power of human

hands to satisfy human wants advances and advances, is multiplied and multiplied. Yet the struggle for mere existence is more and more intense and human labor is becoming the cheapest of commodities. Beside glutted warehouses human beings grow faint with hunger and shiver with cold; under the shadow of churches festers the vice that is born of want.

"Trace to their root the causes that are thus producing want in the midst of plenty, ignorance in the midst of intelligence, aristocracy in democracy, weakness in strength—that are giving to our civilization a one-sided and unstable development, and you will find it something which this Hebrew statesman three thousand years ago perceived and guarded against. Moses saw that the real cause of enslavement of the masses of Egypt was, what has everywhere produced enslavement—the possession by a class of the land upon which and from which the whole people must live. He saw that to permit in land the same unqualified ownership that by natural right attaches to things produced by labor would be inevitably to separate the people into the very rich and the very poor—inevitably to enslave labor—to make the few masters of the many, no matter what the political forms, to bring vice and degradation no matter what the religion.

"And with the foresight of the philosophic statesman who legislated not for the needs of a day, but for all the future, he sought, in way suited to his times and conditions, to guard against this error. Everywhere in the Mosaic institutions is the land treated as the gift of the Creator to His common creatures, which no one has the right to monopolize. Everywhere it is, not your estate or your property, not the land which you bought or the land which you conquered, but 'the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee!—the land which the Lord lendeth thee. And the practical legislation, by regulations to which he gave the highest sanctions, he tried to guard against the wrong that converted ancient civilizations into despotisms—the wrong that in after centuries ate out the heart of Rome, that produced the inbruting serfdom of Poland and the gaunt misery of Ireland."

In the forty-seven years since the above eloquent words were spoken larger fortunes than ever have been rolled up; ground rent (the community value) has enormously increased and is still pocketed by a few, and unemployment has become chronic. Conditions are becoming more intolerable and menacing. The cause being fundamental no superficial remedy can avail. The axe must be laid to the root of the tree.

It is startling to note the similarity between Rome in her decline and the world in its present plight. She also had her unemployment problem, the dole and miles of tables to feed the starving. It is plain that a system based on injustice cannot endure. We must avoid Rome's fatal error or take the consequences. Public values must be appropriated for public purposes, and privately produced values be sacredly left to the producer.

Civilizations have risen and fallen—fallen, no doubt, because of the uneven distribution of wealth and power, selfishness on the one hand and ignorance on the other. History tells us that "land monopoly ruined Rome," and it is clear and plain to those who are capable of ordinary observation that the same evil is rapidly ruining Anglo-Saxon civilization. Men in the mass, locked out from natural opportunities, invariably become as helpless chattel slaves.

Science tells us that for the next million years or more this globe may be doing duty in the same old orbit, and

human life and human comfort and wellbeing, as far as natural law is concerned, be as possible as ever.

The question is, Shall we go on treading in the footsteps of Rome, assuredly to meet Rome's fate, or shall we be wise enough to abolish monopoly and privilege by discarding Rome's quiritary system of land tenure and secure for countless future generations the right to liberty, fair play and equal opportunity as envisioned by the nineteenth century "Prophet of San Francisco"?

The Tax Cannot Be Shifted

SOME disappointment may be felt at the fact that the tax will not begin to operate until two years hence, but it is evident that the Chancellor has made up his mind to have actually in existence an effective valuation of the land before the tax begins to be collected. It may be observed also that the mere anticipation of it is already beginning to have an economic effect. A few days after the Budget statement, I met a prominent London Estate agent, who complained bitterly about the Land Value Tax and how it was going to raise rents. In the next breath he told me that he was dealing with a site for which owners had been asking £800,000 and that the Budget had knocked £50,000 off its value. I suggested to him that if the purchaser paid so much less he would not require to charge any higher rent in spite of the Land Tax value, and in fact would not be able to do so.

Alderman F. C. R. DOUGLAS in *London News*.

Land Value Taxation In Britain

IN fulfilment of his oft-repeated promises Mr. Snowden provided, in his recent budget proposals, for land values taxation. The proposal, 1d in the £, is very small indeed, but it touches the "Ark of the Covenant," and will create a firstclass row. If any one has doubts about the fact of the Land Question being at the root of all social problems, the very tap root of Privilege, let him ponder on the rumpus that will take place on these taxes, and ask why the whole of the agencies of privilege should lash themselves into such fury over 1d in the £ on land values. They will rumble and growl for a little while, but they will swallow any other taxes. But not so with land value taxes. Tax the people's food and clothing and any other vital necessities, and the privileged classes will shout hooray. But crape a paring off their privileges and they will have paroxysms of frenzy, during which they will resort to anything to retain their grip. We may expect shortly to hear of another Zinovieff letter, or something of that nature. However, if the privileged classes want fight the "land for the people" and "publicly-created values for public purposes" is a first-class issue for a Labor party and a Liberal party to take to the country. Later on we shall be able to supply information to our readers on the great issue, free from the Tory taint of cabled news and the distorted views of special correspondents of the Tory press.

Sydney, (N. S. W.), *Standard*.

Causes of Depressions

BY CHARLES G. MERRELL

A FEW weeks ago, at a druggists' meeting, one of the members finished his talk for the day with a rather sad picture of the unemployed during the last year. Here we are, in a land of plenty, of natural resources and of accumulated wealth beyond the dreams of our forefathers, and yet we have on all sides distress that, if it were laid bare for all to see in its fullness, would shock the hearts of the strongest men. And yet, when he came to a consideration of what was to be done about it, he threw up his hands in utter despair and knew not even what to suggest.

The noted economist Roger Babson, at about the same time, evidently felt a depression of mind and spirit and tried to express it by copying in one of his reports a few verses by Marion L. Ulmer, originally published in *The Congregationalist*:

THE UNEMPLOYED

His thin face haunted me—my mind said "Why?"

Yet something in my heart made me ashamed

That I was warmed and fed and safely housed,

While he, disheartened, cheerless, sought a "job."

The unemployed—but we are not to blame.

Or are we not? Aye, well we know our guilt

Is strong upon our soul, that any man,

Wanting and willing, hungers still and needs.

Lay on our hearts, O Father Life of All,

The burden of these men, until we feel

Their helpless wings abeat 'gainst prison walls

The greatness of our social structure raised.

For not in any canting words of creed

But in the fibre of our life we feel

The pain of every sick, disheartened soul—

The price and glory of our brotherhood!

And yet in all of his reports I have yet to see from Babson, or any other economist of note, an explanation of the situation, or a remedy for it. He does warn against increasing the load of taxation, but how to bring this about with decreasing returns from the usual sources and increasing needs for relief work is something he does not attempt to answer.

"OVERPRODUCTION" VS. "OVERPREDICTION"

We hear on the one hand that overproduction is the cause of our present difficulties, and on the other hand that the demonetization of silver in India and other countries, together with the scarcity of gold or its proper distribution, is somehow the explanation of all the trouble. In between these major causes (as explained by our publicists) are numerous other explanations for the greatest depression in the history of our country and the unemployment situation that is a disgrace to those who attempt to guide the destinies of this great nation.

Will Rogers once made the pertinent remark that what this country was suffering from was not overproduction but "overprediction," and so I am not going to add to the