

## UNITED STATES PEACE AFTER THE WAR

BY LOUIS F. POST in *The PUBLIC*, New York,  
December 28th, 1917

The solution internationally is that upon which Henri Lambert, the Belgian manufacturer, lays stress in his *PAX ECONOMICA*.\* "Force cannot solve international problems," writes Mr. Lambert, "any more than other problems, cannot make the world more secure in the future than it has made it in the past, cannot establish a peace worthy to be lived, cannot save civilization." This is obvious. Obvious also, but for bad national habits, would be Mr. Lambert's assertion that "tariff restrictions are the worst obstacles to the advent of that true civilization which will be marked by peace with disarmament," a peace which "will be possible only under the conditions of economic justice and security that will result from free trade."

We of this country have developed, through the manipulation of our politics by monopolistic business interests, a feeling toward free trade not unlike that of the Puritans toward witchcraft. Yet it is free trade between our States that has made us a homogeneous nation. Here is the most conspicuous exemplification of Lambert's statement that "it is the adoption of free trade within a nation's own borders, that, by consolidating and unifying its economic interests, furnishes the real support and solid foundation of national concord and unity." As he rightly infers "it will be the adoption of free trade between nations that will have to accomplish the same work in the wider international sphere." Our nation is not committed to free trade between its constituent States because it is a national unit; it is a national unit because its constituent States are welded together by free trade between them. It would be so with international free trade. Every nation would be to every other instinctively a friend, as our States are friends, feeling a common interest instead of a hostile interest, and being so associated in goodwill that military organizations would be as harmless as a museum of barbaric war weapons†.

Lambert's permanent peace proposal does not necessarily contemplate immediate and complete establishment of international free trade, but progress toward it. As he puts the matter‡ "a final adjustment that will make for permanent peace, involves, in the first place, agreements sanctioning the removal of tariff restrictions between belligerent countries—or at any rate the gradual lowering of tariffs with a guarantee to all of equal and reciprocal treatment." This is a detail. It were better to establish universal free trade at once in order to enable the world to recover promptly from the destructive economic effects

\* *PAX ECONOMICA*: FREEDOM OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE THE SOLE METHOD FOR THE UNIVERSAL ABOLITION OF WAR. By Henri Lambert. New York: John C. Rankin Company, 26, William Street, August, 1917.

† "If it is civilisation that we wish to spread, if the progress of the world is our object, we have only to become universal free traders instead of imperialistic freebooters. Here is the choice. Free trade with the olive branch of peace and the horn of general plenty; or imperialism with the destructive implements and the demoralising influences of war. Which shall it be?" Post's *ETHICS OF DEMOCRACY*, 3rd ed., p. 314. Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis. See also Henry George's *PROTECTION OR FREE TRADE*.

‡ *PAX ECONOMICA*, p. 18.

of the war; but if private and national blindness or greed make this impracticable, a gradual lowering of tariffs for free trade reasons would be better than renewal of the war. To shift the tendency from more and more to less and less tariff obstruction would be an immeasurable gain for international goodwill and permanent peace. It would at least look toward a system of equal rights for all peoples "to participate upon fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world"; it would be an earnest of that enduring peace which "must be based upon justice and fairness and the common rights of mankind." In its tendencies it would be a democratic and not a tory peace.

Let the war be settled on free trade principles, and Alsace and Lorraine will cease to be a problem. There will be no colonial problems, no problem of free seas; and agreements for disarmament and arbitration will execute themselves. For free trade means for all the world that freedom of exchange which flourishes in the United States. Our own nationality is rooted in free trade between our States. Internationality can exist only on the same basis. Let the people of the world freely trade, and there will be no wars between the nations of the world. There would be nothing to go to war about. It is true, as Mr. Lambert further says, that "division of labour and exchange is the origin and the means of all economic progress"; that "the moral importance of this phenomenon is not secondary to its economic importance"; that "the necessary and sufficient foundation of human intercourse is furnished by freedom to produce and to render mutual services"; that "it is so within the nation"; and "will be equally so between nations"; and that "militarism, international quarrels, bellicose spirit, armaments and even 'race hatred' are in our day, and particularly amongst the Great European nations, merely effects, of which the cause is to be sought in antagonism of economic interests, due in the great majority of cases to protection."

Free trade means the world unbound. It is part of that liberty which "secures and safeguards all growth, all development," which contains them in itself "as the oak is contained in the acorn," which "can never become obsolete because it is a material manifestation of spiritual impulses." And "the spiritual can no more do without the material than the material can do without the spiritual."\* Free trade is to liberty what good works are to faith: without it liberty is dead. It is the golden rule of international relationships, the economic law of national love of the neighbour.

There are indispensable conditions of peace besides free trade, but without this freedom other freedoms will wither. Again to quote Henri Lambert, "all other reforms that are the objects of legitimate national hopes or interests must, in order to be profitable, be the consequences or corollaries of this equitable economic adjustment."† To international life it is what food is to individual life. Let the terms of permanent peace be never so perfect in every item, they will nevertheless not preserve a world peace permanently if free trade be not among them. Let them be never so imperfect, if free trade be of their number the others will be vitalized by it and permanent peace will bloom like flowers in congenial soil.

\* *EUROPE UNBOUND*. By Lee Marche Phillips. London: Duckworth & Co.

† *PAX ECONOMICA*, p. 18.

In the passing of Mr. C. B. Fillebrown which occurred at Boston, Mass., on December 2nd, the Single Tax movement in the U.S.A. lost one of its greatest and most conspicuous figures.

Friend of Henry George and contemporary as well of Thomas G. Shearman, Father McGlynn and the rest of the galaxy of early American Single Taxers, his services to the cause was continuous, indefatigable and highly intelligent. Leaving to others the political and oratorical methods of propaganda, Mr. Fillebrown held steadily to his chosen task of establishing the Single Tax as a reasoned philosophy capable of illustration and demonstration. The printing press was his vehicle, and while through its aid he addressed the reading public generally his favourite appeal was to educators. He sought and obtained the ear of the economists and the college professors, among whom he numbered many friends and counsellors. All his writings are marked by clearness of thought and aptness of illustration which entrances the reader and interests him in the most complex argument. His principal work, *THE A B C OF TAXATION*, is known in most parts of the world, and his output of lesser publications was considerable in volume and influential in effect.

Personally Mr. Fillebrown was quite exceptional. Tall and imposing in appearance and courtly in manner, he was one of the most modest and lovable of men. At the same time no one could be more immovable than he when a matter of conviction or of principle was involved. Sound and logical as a thinker, a patient investigator and an accurate writer he was to his last day on earth both an indomitable protagonist of the Single Tax and a type of the gentleman, *sans peur et sans reproche*.

### "THE LANDLORD OR HIS AGENT."

Alderman W. H. Lander, retiring President, presided at the annual meeting at Shrewsbury on Saturday, January 26th, of the Shropshire Chamber of Agriculture, when Mr. E. B. Fielden, of Condoval Hall, was elected President.

The report showed that the membership was 414, and the receipts were £330.

Mr. Alfred Mansell, Secretary of the Chamber, read a paper on after-war problems affecting agriculture. He said that Agricultural War Executives had revealed to many who did not know or shut their eyes to facts that there were far too many holdings not producing what they were capable of producing; others not producing half their quota, and a very considerable number producing little or nothing. Answering the question who was primarily responsible for that state of things, Mr. Mansell said in many cases it must be the landlord or his agent. He was Radical enough to say boldly that the time had arrived when it must be clearly understood that landowners held their property as trustees for the nation. The majority of landlords did their duty, but there was a large number of farms where the house and buildings were in a disgraceful state of disrepair, and he did not think any self-respecting tenant should be called on to put up with that state of things. — *"Birmingham Daily Post,"* January 28th.

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### TOWN PLANNING IN SCOTLAND

The present position of town planning in Scotland is that the Local Government Board have received 32 applications from Local Authorities for authority to prepare schemes. The Board have authorised the preparation of 20 of these schemes; and of these, 3 schemes have been submitted to them for approval. The list of Scottish authorities who have made applications for authority to prepare town-planning schemes is encouraging as indicating that many Local Authorities—especially of the more populous districts—have already shown an appreciation of the benefits which the Act confers.

We regret to note that no schemes have yet been finally approved. A good many have been prepared, as we have said, but for one reason or another no scheme has yet reached the stage of being sanctioned by the Local Government Board. Conditions have, of course, been entirely abnormal (during the war), and consequently the progress of the last three years cannot be taken as a criterion. Even so, however, we think there is a desirability, indeed necessity, for a speeding-up of the framing of schemes by Local Authorities and the consideration of these by the Central Authority. It is very essential that schemes should be ready so that building progress may be made immediately the war is over, and therefore town planning is an eminently fit subject to engage the attention of both the Local Authorities and the Central Authority during the war. . . .

Under section 58 (2) of the Act of 1909, no person is entitled to obtain compensation on account of any building erected on or contract made with respect to land included in the scheme after the time at which the application for authority to prepare a scheme is made, or after such other time as the Local Government Board may fix for the purpose. The Local Government Board have exercised this power to assist Local Authorities. In these cases they have fixed a date anterior to that from which claims for compensation would have ceased under the provisions of the statute. The result of the provision in the Act is that any person who desires to erect buildings of any description within a town-planning area must do so always subject to the risk of having to demolish these buildings at a later date without any compensation. That, of course, is a very serious aspect, and does tend to prevent the erection even of workmen's dwellings, which are at present a clamant necessity. A town-planning scheme may get through its various stages within twelve months, but under existing conditions (including the fact that the staff of the Local Government Board have been called upon to undertake work in connection with the war, and town-planning work has in great measure had to be suspended) land has been sterilised for a period of several years. Indeed, it became necessary, so far as the Rosyth area of Dunfermline was concerned, to pass an Emergency Act in 1915 by which it became possible to erect with safety dwellings for Government employees within the town-planning area, pending the approval of the town-planning scheme.—*From the Report of the Scottish Housing Commission.*

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