

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF DAVID A. WELLS.

We are permitted to print for the first time the following letter from the late David A. Wells. Mr. Wells, as is known to many of our readers, was one of the most eminent of the old free traders. The perception of true economic doctrines came to him only by degrees, for he began as a protectionist, from which by successive steps he came to realize the impolicy of all protective duties, and finally to the position of an advocate of a tax upon real estate in lieu, practically, of all taxes now levied. It is now as certain as most things unfulfilled can be that Mr. Wells would finally have landed in the Single Tax camp, for he was a man of great abilities, an indefatigable student of the problems of taxation, profoundly conversant with its incidence, and possessed of fine scruples. It is something to know that even at the time of writing he was not antagonistic to our movement and had a word to say in its favor.

This letter of Mr. Wells is in reply to a definition of free trade made by a well known Single Taxer, E. C. Clark, of Syracuse, Nebraska. It will be observed that this definition of Mr. Clark's, endorsed by Mr. Wells, includes the Single Tax, as indeed any definition of free trade must. Following is Mr. Clark's luminous definition:

"Trade," in the economic sense, is any vocation or calling in which persons engage as a means of life maintenance.

"Free-Trade," is that condition of production and sale or exchange that admits of no tax, fine, assessment or amercement, or of condition precedent in the sale or exchange of things produced, either at home or abroad. To manufacture or transport a thing is a part of production.

Note—This, of course, involves "Free Land." A Single Tax on land, or site values, independent of all improvements, is the only means of obtaining free land—Free-Trade and free land are economic twins.

To this Mr. Wells makes the following reply, in which the expression of confidence in Mr. Cleveland is of interest just now:

Norwich, Conn., Jan. 11th, 1893.

My dear Sir:—

At this late day I desire to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of some weeks since. Your definition of free trade is the best I have ever seen and I am going to adopt it when I need a definition of the term.

I cannot discuss with you *now* the Single Tax. I am going to try and bring out this year a book for which I have been gathering material for 25 years in which I mean to discuss this question fully. Do not understand me as wholly antagonizing the Single Tax. Its great merit is simplicity, the element which taxation most needs.

I think it will please you to know that we are going to have thorough tariff reform and that the best system ever devised in this country will be ready—for Mr. Cleveland to endorse and make an administration measure, whenever he decides on the time.

I happen to have an article in the *Forum* for Feb. out about the 22nd of January, which will discuss this matter and will contain some statements that the American people have not as yet had presented to them.

Again thanking you for your letter, I remain,
Yours most cordially,

DAVID A. WELLS.

P. S. I will add that I believe Mr. Cleveland is in entire unison with the leading advocates of tariff reform and will not fail us in action.

THE BURIAL OF HENRY GEORGE

(For the Review)

Bury the noble dead!
No blood-stained fields were his.
His sword—his mighty pen,
His victories—Freedom, Peace.
He sought nor fame nor power,
Yet his are power and fame.
He moves the world this hour,
And millions bless his name.
The millions yet to be
Shall see the truth he taught;
Their great prosperity
Shall by that truth be brought.
He saw, where sages failed,
Men's equal rights to earth
Are with their right to life
By virtue of their birth.
He taught the rights of men,
He taught men more. He taught
How right must be obtained,
How justice must be wrought.
His great, warm heart beat true
For earth's oppressed and poor;
His glad evangel lives
Deliverance to ensure.
Bury the noble dead!
Upon his honored grave
The tears of millions shed
Attest his power to save.
Bury the noble dead!
His doctrine will endure,
Earth's golden age shall dawn—
There shall be no more poor!

SAMUEL BRAZIER.