

can out-smart you—as long as I can pick your pocket whilst defeating your attempt to pick mine. Such is the degree we have reached in I. Q. ratings. As a pioneer State, in culture and cleverness, we still aim to lead.

Patiently, seven leading law firms—such as “Boston’s Best”—are far too busy to be concerned over civic virtue, scientific analysis of both silly and sound theories of taxation, and about the welfare of their fellowmen who, either cannot afford or do not possess knowledge for this sort of tax-abatement “justice.”

Our *modus operandi* is to grab a life-belt and “to hell with the leaks” in the hull of the Ship of State; our ability-to-pay theory is right and, consequently, economic chaos is beyond our control and responsibility; Single Tax is the Utopian vision of impractical dreamers. Oh! Yeah?

THE POWER OF SPOTS

Wonders will never cease.

The most complex problems eventually are solved for us in the most simple manners. Simply stand back and let the high foreheads of our polished professors butt into the jam.

Collegiate intellects again have been clicking.

This time we are engulfed in a scientific, astronomical treatise which bids fair to prove that sun-spots, positively or negatively, may pull us out of our “depression.”

Why not?

There’s power in them thar spots.

Take gravy spots, f’instance. Time out of mind, since the cave wife introduced economy by saving savory juices which formerly splashed in utter abandon around the cave door, spots have put humble husbands “on the spot.” From infantile naivete to four-score-and-ten senility, spots subtly have changed the course of human events.

You remember, do you not, your doting mother’s early morning inspections? Her dulcet tones yet ring and echo in your ears.

“Wallace, wipe the egg spots off your chin before you start for school.”

Again, in the springtime of your manhood, your father’s gruff but idolatrous rumble comes zooming into your day-dreams.

“Sam, the spots on your spats are not compatible with the purpose of spats. Spats aim at tonsorial refinement; spots serve the purpose of emphasizing the lack of culture.”

Yes, indeed, spots can easily plunge us into the veriest depths of mental depressions—spots such as do not readily yield to benzine, gasoline or other active agents.

So why can’t sun-spots do as much with our 1929–1936 spot of economic depression?

There’s power in them thar spots.

Oddly enough, these solaristic negations are said to act contriwise to their positive state—sort of a female-of-the-species attitude.

It’s this way, “At the times of sun-spot maximum the earth’s receipt of heat from the sun increases over normal

and, when the sun-spots are at a minimum, the heat received is below normal.”

But . . . “Increased heat radiation from the sun entails a higher degree of warmth of the earth. High temperatures are, however, conducive of increased evaporation from the water covered areas of the earth with a resulting higher water vapor content of the earth’s atmosphere.”

Furthermore . . . “Both evaporation and rainfall are cooling phenomena.”

It therefore transpires that the sun’s positive spots, acting negatively, teach us that

“A correlation of great human interest is that of sun-spot activity with stock market transactions and with the price of grain, wheat, cotton and other major items of exchange . . . that the stimulating effect of ultra-violet radiation upon humans should have much to do with the periods of prosperity and depression, and with the flux of prices, not only of stocks and bonds, but of staple commodities.”

It’s all so simple, once you see the solution. Of course to get a more comprehensive analysis of the phenomena you should read the Harvardian dissertation involving maxima and minima sun-spots idiosyncracies which send the stimula, resulting in the *Astronomische Mitteilungen* dating back to the year 1610. Also, what sun-spots resulted in Henry George’s writing of “Progress and Poverty” in 1879—and what sun-spots affect our mentality with such a depression as our present one. Then possibly those of us who are denied equal rights to the use of the earth may be induced to fix our eyes on the sun-spots.

“ACCORDING TO EXPERTS”

“According to experts” (in Brainy Boston) real estate is valued at 100 per cent, “whereas other major cities in the country only assess at anywhere from 20 to 50 per cent of the legal value of property.”

Chicago is held up as an outstanding example as to how ability-to-pay advocates know when to apply the disability-to-pay rule. Chicago, it is alleged, assesses property at only 37 per cent of its value.

The experts forget to inform us, however, that Boston real estate is now assessed at full value (in some instances) because the market value has dropped down to the level of the assessed value; the condition has not come about due to any deliberate fixing of assessed values at the original market-value level.

Despite Chicago’s have-a-heart attitude toward real estate owners, that illustrious city’s tax rate is only \$26.34 as against Boston’s rate of \$37.00, but again the Boston experts fail to inform us as to the tax load on other forms of wealth in the mid-west metropolis. Eastern experts, like all other experts who wish to merely move the load on the donkey’s back, have good memories on points they choose to stress, as well as good forgetteries on points which disprove their assertions.

Whilst the landlords are fighting to substitute the disability-to-pay rule for the ability-to-pay principle, the industrialists are winning parliamentary battles in another fight to reduce the tax load on machinery in the State of Massachusetts' Monumental Mentality. "Work for thousands" is promised *if* this machinery tax bill is enacted; foreign manufacturers have packed their factories into their satchels, at their home ports, and are "ready, willin' and waitin'" to sail into Massachusetts where machinery will be practically exempt from taxation.

The experts again forget to remind us that the indirect tax load, formerly carried by Massachusetts' products to all parts of the world under the machinery-tax law of passing-the-buck to the consumer, must be matched by another source of, or additional, taxation upon the remaining wealth in Massachusetts; and the income tax field seems to be the goat in view. With grand gusto, our legislators hail the abolition of taxes on machinery as a most necessary hyperdermic for strangled business; having one-way, one-idea, one-track minds—they give no thought to the thus-shifted burden under the old, vicious order of tax methods. With loud acclaim they cheerfully cut the throats of income-owners so that non-resident operators of machinery may enter our State and profit at the expense of other victims.

Perhaps this is progress; progress by vicarious atonement. Anyway, it's all "according to experts"—experts educated in a university now covered with three hundred years of moss—experts who have been reared on the greatest of brain-food, the sacred cod—experts without ability-to-think who believe in ability-to-pay taxes.

THE SCIENCE OF BEFUDDLING

None but the best is good enough for our "best universities"; accordingly our best-by-far university of these United States has imported the fruits of the best British mind in the matter of text-books on the subject of "The Science of Prices."

"The Science of Prices" is a book replete with revelations. All that one needs is the price of the book. One is then ready to absorb a complete course of instruction in the science of becoming befuddled.

We reach the second paragraph only, on page 1, when we are readily informed that "The principles of economics are now well established, but they have to be applied under conditions which vary from one country to another, and are constantly changing." This professorial pronouncement gives us pause. The principles of economics are now well established, but . . . canteloupes and ice cream, or any other food; breech-cloths versus scanties or other "shorts"; grass huts versus Empire State buildings; in fact, any form of food, clothing or shelter, which are the fruits of human industry, gravely modify the now well-established principles of economics contingent upon which country is under scrutiny. We must therefore enter into the field of economics with our fingers crossed.

The honorable John A. Todd, M.A. (Oxon.), B.L. (Glasgow); principal of the City School of Commerce, Liverpool; sometime lecturer in economics, Balliol College, Oxford; late professor of Economics and Commerce, University College, Nottingham; formerly of the Khedivial School of Law, Cairo; and author of divers books, informs us that his master's expositions (the late Alfred Marshall) "have unfortunately proved very difficult to young students. . . ." hence Prof. Todd's "Science of Prices."

We feel assured that "The Science of Prices" will be plain sailing, though we are advised that notwithstanding that "Economics has been taught as a science or preached as a gospel for at least 150 years, its teachers do not seem even yet to have agreed upon a definition of the science, nor even upon its name, for the old name of Political Economy and the new name Economics or Economic Science seem still to be used indifferently." Todd's master, the late Alfred Marshall, offers the following definition:—

"Political Economy or Economics is a study of man's actions in the ordinary business of life. It enquires how he gets his income and how he uses it."

This definition may account for the house-wifely custom of watching the spouse's weekly pay-envelope and of strictly checking-up on his two-bits spending-money. It is very interesting to learn the origin of housewives' habits which seemingly pass from mother to daughter without effort or intent.

In order to clarify Marshall's definition, Todd informs us that "The subject matter of the science of economics is (elliptically) wealth . . ."

It must be elliptical; not circular, nor square, nor rhomboidical, nor of an icosahedronical form. We shall consider it only elliptically. It is well to cling to simple methods.

As we get fairly into our stride we find that "Money measures human motives." Again the old custom of allowing the spouse two-bits for spending money comes to mind. In fact, Todd uses man and his weekly tobacco to illustrate the money measurement of human motives. "It is impossible to tell *how much* any man wants any particular thing, such as a pound of tobacco . . . but it is comparatively easy to find out how much that man is prepared to *pay* for the tobacco."

Reverting to Marshall's definition of Political Economy—"It enquires how he gets his income and how he uses it"—we find that perhaps the housewife is the original political economist. *She* knows, before the week begins, just how much her spouse is prepared to pay for a pound of tobacco; because not only his tobacco, but his beer and ale, his attendance at the cricket games, his frequenting of the "shifting picture" music halls, as well as all his other boisterous and rioterous extravagances, *must* come out of his two-bits or, we should say, "one bob."

Having thus demonstrated that "Economics becomes