

The Kaiser's government gives the people better railway service, better postal service, better telegraph service, better trolley and tram-car service, and above all furnishes a national express or "parcels post" very much more efficient than anything we know in America, and at about one-tenth the cost in this country. These are all a species of partnership between the Government and the people. The list could be lengthened to include most admirably conducted municipal markets, municipal laundries, municipal street-lighting and in fact nearly every form of enterprise which with us tends to become a trust or monopoly very profitable to a few, but unjustly burdensome to the people at large. The spirit of Henry George is abroad throughout Germany and while we are not of those hero-worshippers who look for salvation to any one man alone we yet recognize the propriety of giving credit to Napoleon for the French Code which bears his name. We cordially assent when the venerable William I. is called "the founder of the German Empire," and therefore, to the same degree, we deem it right that in any future record of the phenomenal progress made in our times by humanitarian ideas such as those for which Henry George lived in poverty and died in the agony of social crucifixion—I repeat that if credit is due to any one man for progress if not revolutionary legislation, precious in the highest degree to the man in the workshop and on the farm, that man is the one who now rules over the most scientifically governed State of modern times.

LAND HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES.

(For the Review.)

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CHAPTER III (Continued).

But what were the beneficial effects of this land division upon New England society? Was the results such as we should emulate at this time when the enormous holdings of the Weyerhaeusers and Morgans and Guggenheims and Rockefellers and Millers and Ryans and Hills with all their vast corporations and syndicates, are crumbling the last vestige of freedom inherited from these sturdy sons of liberty? Had these shrewd forefathers possessed a keener insight into the serious defect in their land transfer plan and less of religious intolerance they would have prohibited the private sale of lands and introduced some such system as is in vogue in New Zealand to-day. Evidently their hearts and purposes were right and sound, but as with many zealous peoples who have earnestly sought a panacea for poverty and its attendant evils, this long approved custom of private ownership prevailed in a modified form and to them seemed to forbode no ills to society.

To this system can be accorded, first, the triumph of a citizenship of

splendid character and high principles of honor. Impelled quite as much by a lofty sentiment as by a deep conviction, they wielded the ballot as a sacred and exalted privilege from that day down to the time of Lincoln; also with such uprightness of purpose that New England could claim the honor of being the hope of the nation. This people professed a belief in equality of opportunity and by founding a state in which this belief was enacted into a fact, they amazed philosophy and confounded precedent. Weeden observes that their land system "formed a social compact, a genuine neighborliness, and developed in the highest degree the sense of mutual protection." It gave everyone the ideals of social intercourse, and "the sympathy and power of common interest." It freed men and women by loosening the bonds of service that prevailed under the old European land tenure, and at the same time bound every citizen by a closer mutual dependence."

Therefore in considering the lowest political unit of these people, the Town Meeting, the place in every settlement where all the males to whom land had been allotted, gathered to thrash out questions even of the most trivial nature, we find that the essential force was in the character of those who met. For the purity of their government, for the absence of fraud, bribery, intrigue, and corrupt officials (the commonest by-words in this age of political graft), the historian says credit must be given three elements that made the Town; namely, "freehold land, a meeting expressing the religious and family culture, and a representative democratic gathering."

The duties of citizenship weighed heavily upon these men. Penalties carefully elaborated forced every one to act. Fines for absence from Town Meetings were universal, and they were enforced. There was an intense desire to make everyone do his part. Office was given, not sought, and must be taken. Freedom and liberty meant to these men the working out of a life soberly, restrained by the will of the majority. Their rule was the seeking the greatest good to the greatest number. There was no estrangement and hatred of one class against another in State affairs. They all stood as a unit, for the reason that there was nothing in their distribution of wealth or policy of government to provoke dissensions or to tempt them to commit perjury or offer bribes or commit any breach of public trust. In Virginia, on the contrary, venality and corruption in public office, the exorbitant salaries the Assemblymen voted for themselves, and the loss of their vote because they were landless. Virginia was ruled by the landlord class. In no part of New England history do we find any general discontent expressed by the people. There were no paupers to speak of, and the "few existing under the favorable conditions of life in their towns were made comfortable and supported carefully at the public expense." Corruption in office and burdensome oppression were unknown, and every man not a servant or apprentice had a vote.

In every New England town a special plot of ground was set aside for a school, and beside the regular day schools, much like our public schools of today, they had industrial schools where children could learn to spin flax and the mother to weave it into cloth. In some cases the town loaned money to in-

dividuals to enable them to start the manufacture of some article of pressing public need. This was done to get wool-carding wire made in this country. The New Englander did not indulge in luxuries. He made most of the necessities at home, and even supplied Virginia and other colonies with his manufactured products; therefore he did not allow his wealth to flow to England in buying imports of silks and liquors as was so extensively done in the southern colonies.

Another beneficent outcome that can be traced to the equal-opportunity land system of these people, stimulating thrift and industry, is the notable fact that chattel-slavery found a poor soil in which to grow. While the sea-faring traders of the cities were induced to engage in the slave trade because of the immense fortunes the English were making by the traffic, they were not successful in selling the captives to the farmers of New England. The first argument used was that "the capital of a community was diminished in buying a slave, while it might be increased by a free servant coming in owning himself." There was wisdom in this argument, since slaves sold for from \$150 to \$400 each in the latter part of the seventeenth century and somewhat higher in the eighteenth. But it must be noticed that it was not conscientious scruples that prevented chattel slavery being generally introduced. "The Winthrops and other Puritan colonists received Indian captives for slaves as freely as any partisan went for loot or plunder." Cotton Mather, the great preacher of his day, "employed his black servant, showing as little regard for the rights of man as the Boston merchant quoting negroes like any other merchandise."

What little slavery there was, they managed as humanely as such a system could be managed. "Negroes were not confined absolutely to the work of their masters, but could work part of the time for themselves, and in some cases "scraped together" 200 or 300 pounds, and went back to Africa to live in comfort!" "Slavery was a small factor in New England, because economic laws forbade its growth." This simply means that the division of land, giving all who wanted to make an honest living the opportunity, created a thrifty and industrious people who found more happiness in working the soil with their own hands, even as Governor Winthrop did, than by sitting in the shade with glove-covered hands watching and directing the untrained labor of a negro. The only place where negroes were employed was in the cities where marine wealth was accumulating. Its introduction dates also from the time (1720) when the three-story brick mansions of colonial architecture began to appear, due to the wealth of such men as Peter Faneuil, who had at one time forty vessels engaged in the coasting trade, and consisting in large part of slaves from Africa. Faneuil Hall, built by him in 1740 (in the same spirit as Mr. Carnegie in recent years built libraries as a salve to conscience), was not only the "Cradle of our Liberty," but a monument to the wealth derived from the iniquity of the slave trade.

While John Adams said that the reason why Massachusetts abolished what little slavery she had, "was the multiplication of laboring white people who would no longer suffer the rich to employ these sable rivals," the true cause is

found in the rapid advance of values in lands in this settled commonwealth. Chattel slavery is possible only where lands are so cheap that they have little or no rental value, as in regions but sparsely settled. As soon as they acquire a rental value to the profit made on the slave labor spent upon them, the process of renting land begins and chattel slavery ends. It ceases to be as profitable as the renting system. Had the North and South possessed the foresight to wait a score or more years, till the population of the South had increased, land values instead of bullets and a proclamation, would have killed chattel slavery. Contrary to the ideas of those who do but little thinking, chattel slavery has existed upon but small areas of the globe at a time; and its effects upon society have been trivial as compared with the rent-form of slavery, such as Helotism in ancient Greece, Villainage during the Feudal period in Europe, Serfdom from the middle of the sixteenth century down even to the present time in Russia and scattered parts of Europe and in India, and the Rent-system employed in this and every leading nation of the globe except in parts of Australia, in several German cities, part of British Columbia, and in that bright star of the far east—New Zealand. The rent taking process by private individuals from those who wish to use the earth for legitimate production is but an evolutionary step toward the emancipation of labor. The evils of rent-taking are so glaringly evident that even the most obtuse mind can perceive them; and the day is dawning when the voice of labor will declare that to receive land rent privately is as grave a crime as to hold a man of weaker race in bondage.

Another significant difference between Puritanic New England and aristocratic Virginia is to be found in the home life and its environment. This is especially true of the dress and in the architecture of the home. The dignity and manhood of every New Englander growing out of the consciousness of his being a proprietor of land on an equality with his fellows, demanded equality of homes, of home furnishings and of dress. Doubtless it was this incentive that directed the New Englander in the legislative assembly to vote that houses shall not be larger than 16 by 20 feet, shall be plainly furnished, and that everyone shall dress according to the one established custom. Consequently, there were no large mansions in any of the settlements having beside them a "cluster of cheerless hovels of the poor and debased laborers" under the bidding of a task-master. There were no families who wore prodigal apparel of silks and costly lace made after the fashions of London, or whose parlors were bedecked with imported mahoganies and massive gilded frames or whose boards groaned under the weight of foreign wines and luxuries.

In Virginia the legislative Assembly was dominated by the landed aristocracy similar to Feudal Lords; while in New England every citizen was planted in the soil and had an equal voice with his neighbor in the Town Meetings. In each case legislation was enacted for the interests of those in the assemblies; in the first, for the few, in the latter, for the many. Which type of legislative body do we have to-day? Take an invoice of the holdings of men in our legislative halls from county to State and State to nation and then answer. Every-

one will admit that we are ruled by the landlords and as corrupt practices as ever stained the pages of colonial Virginia.

Strange as it may seem, with all the exactitude and sagacity displayed by these practical State-makers in the regulation of lands, houses, dress, Sabbath, profanity, dancing, card-playing, and every detail of public and private affairs, they made such a medley of their taxes. Their economy made no difference in a tax levied on servants, cider, household goods, farm animals, mills, lands, and on individuals in the form of a lottery. The same is true to-day. Many of our public officials who exercise the power of regulating and levying public revenues—the most important and far-reaching of public functions—are as hopelessly entangled in the jungle of crazy practices as were these self-denying, serious-faced people. As seen in this colony, custom has much to do with the acts of officials. Change in public affairs is slow and difficult, however unjust and obsolete an old law or practice may be. A long period of grinding injustice seems a part of the evolutionary process that leads up to correcting public evils. A case in hand is the lottery method of raising public funds. In the early part of the eighteenth century Great Britain, under the stimulus of great wealth obtained from the slave-trade and rents from lands, plunged into a whirl-pool of gambling schemes. The stock market was deluged with every conceivable project that might have the proper hypnotic influence over the maniacal, get-rich-quick victims. All day long, history tells us, the hungry stood in line each awaiting his turn to invest in the magic of transmuting gold that their wildest dreams of untold riches could be realized. In the soil of such excitement and intoxication, lotteries naturally flourished, especially after the law had legitimized them. The gambling-craze rolled across the old Atlantic and seemed to hold even the pious Puritan entranced by the magic of its allurements of wealth. Lotteries were commonly adopted by the New England towns to raise money for public purposes. "When a road or bridge was to be built, a street paved or some public building was wanted, lottery tickets flew plenty and fast." "Debts were lifted, fire losses liquidated, and every kind of public indulgence was granted by this 'snare laid for the people.'" Faneuil Hall, burnt in 1761, was rebuilt by a lottery.

The most notable weakness in their system of taxation is that they did not discover that while they were taxing their farm products and servants, and imposing a voluntary poll-tax by the lottery, they allowed their city brethren to go virtually untaxed on the great values added to their lands. These values grew so enormously that the heirs of the city monopolists, a century later, were able, with the large rents obtained, to buy up so much of the lands of the State as to feudalize it and thus destroy the settlement system these thrifty farmers established. Had they been wiser and seen that thrift and industry were to be encouraged by placing no tax on labor products or servants, and resorted to a tax on the site values of the cities, their peasant farm system would be in vogue to-day.

Another serious mistake made by these people of sterling character was their attempt to regulate wages by law. They reasoned that it was just to both

employed and employer to know previous to making contracts what was to be received and paid. In theory, or without a deeper investigation into the natural law of wages, this seemed like rendering to everyone his due. But let us see how these justice-loving people strove to establish a fixed wage, how utterly the plan failed and the reasons assigned by Governor Winthrop for its failure. The General Court in 1633 had stipulated the wages of every craft and the penalties against both givers and receivers of unlawful wages. Also with this law-fixed wage were other subsidiary provisions and requirements. There must be no idleness under penalty. In case of disagreement as to the rate of wages, the town appointed three men to adjust the difference; thus establishing the principles of arbitration. No sooner was the rate of wages established by law, than it was found that laborers refused to work for the wage laid down for each craft. Meetings were called, in which workmen were urged to abide by the law. A few accepted the law-made wage, but numbers moved to new settlements on the frontier to engage in the more lucrative occupations of farming, lumbering, and stone quarrying. The manual trades suffered for scarcity of laborers, and these natural conditions broke down the artificial wage and employers were finally allowed to offer enough more to entice labor back to the trades. Governor Winthrop at that time wrote to friends in England: "Our children and our children's children will be unable to hire servants for the low wages of England, as they all find their way to the frontier where they doth make a comfortable living."

There is no better example in American history than this New England land system to demonstrate the natural law of wages or reward for labor. As stated tersely by Henry George the law is: "Wages depend upon the product which labor can obtain at the highest point of natural productiveness open to it without the payment of rent." To apply this law to this case it should be understood that during the period of 150 years in which the Puritan land system was in force, there was an ever receding frontier that was constantly being settled by the town method. This borderland zone commanded no rent, therefore the total product of labor in that zone is what determined the wages of the lowest paid labor throughout the whole colony; and as this was higher than the law-fixed wage, it is natural that labor, guided by self-interest, found its way to this zone, "the highest point of natural productiveness open to it without the payment of rent."

In any country where there is such a margin or border-land open to labor, wages are invariably higher than in those countries, like England, Germany and other European nations, where all the available land is "owned" and labor is asked to pay rent both an natural and speculative value for the lands thus monopolized. In those countries there has long ceased to be a "West" to which the overflow of labor could go. Therefore as there has been no free outlet for labor in European countries where land is "all owned" and fenced in, wages have fallen lower as the competition for employment grew. The only avenue of escape has been to emigrate to North or South America where the border zone of land has welcomed them and they were able to possess the full product of their labor.

The Western Hemisphere has offered higher wages to the labor of the world, simply because it has had abundant available free land for every comer. If, then, we see this self-evident principle, proven in the long period of New England history, shall we not forever reject the unsound and pernicious argument that labor is paid by accumulated capital, or that wages are maintained at a maximum standard by placing a tariff duty on every article the laborer consumes? Moreover, if buying up land in this border land for speculative purposes, prevents labor from using it freely without rent or forces it to go to less productive lands; and forces labor as a result to take less and less for its services till, as the process is carried to its logical conclusion, wages are so small that they will just feed and rough-clothe the laborer, why do many insist that land speculation is morally right? Also, why should we own an unlimited amount of land in fee-simple, if the ownership involves the fostering of this very monopoly system that reduces the laborer to the wages of crusts and rags? Would not simple possession of land in perpetuity be all that a truly civilized society should desire? If possession during life is guaranteed to the next generation as it is to this, would there be that harrowing distress and that anxiety now felt for the future welfare of our children? Would there be that nightmare in our lives, The Fear of Want, to drive us to the extremes of wrong-doing to satisfy human desire? Would there be docket after docket full of unbrotherly litigations over the divisions of estates and the breaking of wills? Would there be the long array of evils and the trials and tribulations incident to a short span of life on this planet that is brought to our attention in the daily press? Does not the rent taken by monopolists destroy the nobility of society and fill life full of sadness at the suffering and degradation this unearned rent engenders? If those who clearly understand this natural wage have honest convictions, and are not looking for the shortest, rose-strewn pathway to become an aristocrat or monopolist, they will see how simple and easy the remedy for the unnatural conditions in which we find thousands of our fellowmen. When they see a ragged urchin, a beggar, or a hovel full pale, weazen-faced wretches, they will know that the natural law of wages has been broken. This law enforced, the problem of poverty is solved; and the untold and unspeakable misery of these children of a common woe will disappear forever.

(To be continued)

INCREASING the taxes on the land will not increase the rent. The rent is just as high when the land is not taxed at all. Rent always tends to be all an industry can pay.

IN every country rent is increasing faster than wages.

THE Single Tax on land values has a tremendous advantage over all other forms of taxation in its simplicity. It can be assessed easily and justly and economically.