

good use of the precious heritage left us by our master. Let us then arm ourselves with the keen edged weapons which the well stocked arsenal of his intellect furnishes us in his works, and go ahead to fight the good fight.

Soon the time will come—I see it approaching faster and faster—when from all over the globe men and women will arise to help us in our fight. Then it will be our blessed privilege to “beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks” and with the use of them loosen and break up the hard soil, sow the seed and raise a crop which will laugh into a harvest that all mankind will enjoy. Then we will have a common brotherhood of man and a common fatherhood of God.

We are like the Children of Israel in the desert, ~~tramping~~ trudging along for many a weary year, but in front of their columns they saw beaming through the darkness of the night the ball of fire that led them on, and in their hearts they harbored the undying hope that they would reach the promised land, for they believed in the words of their great leader, Moses. The fate of Moses was also that of our leader. He, too, could see the promised land, although only with his spiritual vision, and like Moses he was not permitted to enter it. But we shall come to it if we only keep up courage and waver not from the path where the light is leading us on.

“Let us then be up and doing
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.”

“Learn to labor:” teach the nations, preach our gospel, speak to your neighbours, talk of your friends!

“Learn to wait:” the signs of the times are propitious, the people are waking, the dawn is breaking, the day is coming. Sooner than even the optimists among us anticipate, shall we reach the promised land, but whenever that may be, reach it we shall, because ours is the gospel of truth: “truth that may lose an occasional battle, but never loses the campaign!”

TOM WATSON AND THE SINGLE TAX.

Reprinted from the *St. Louis Mirror* of May 3, 1906.

By WILLIAM PRESTON HILL.

Watson's Magazine for April contains a long defense of private property in land and a criticism of Henry George's doctrine, written by Hon. Thomas E. Watson of Georgia. As Mr. Watson was the Presidential nominee of the Populist party and has a national reputation as a reformer, it is necessary to point out the influences that produced this article. In the first place *Watson's Magazine* is sailing under false colors when it uses that title. It never was and is not now owned or published by Mr. Watson. On the contrary, it is owned and published by the company controlled by Col. W. D'Alton Mann of alleged blackmailing notoriety, who publishes *The Smart Set* and *Town Topics* and *Tales and Fads and Fancies*.

So much for the *Magazine*. Now as to the writer. Mr. Watson is one of the largest land owners in Georgia. He may not allow this fact to influence his judgment, but the presumption is to the contrary. It is not difficult for a large

landlord to believe that private ownership of land is both natural and just. Mr. Watson has a perfect right to defend his views and at the same time his interests, in any way he chooses, and the plutocratic owners of *Watson's Magazine* have a perfect right to dictate and publish such attacks in their magazine, but we also have a perfect right to object to their flying the false colors of reformers when they do so and it is our duty to expose them in their true light.

Now as to his arguments. He starts out by saying that the believers in Henry George's doctrine, whom he calls doctrinaires, are careful to avoid history and have forgotten the elemental traits of human nature, have forgotten how unequal we are by nature, that some men are lions, others hogs and sloths and others sheep and that we cannot create ideal conditions unless we had ideal men. This is the old absurdity that Lincoln exposed before Watson was born and it is a shame to be obliged to repeat it at this late day.

We do not propose to make men equal in intellect or strength or in any other mental or physical characteristic, but we do propose to make them equal *as to their rights and privileges before the law* and that men shall have equality of opportunity to develop themselves, we do propose to prevent the human tiger and hog and the various other human animals from using the power of government to create an artificial inequality that does not exist in nature.

Next, Mr. Watson admits that undoubtedly the earth was given to all the human family and that nature undoubtedly teaches that the earth belongs in common to the entire human race. Thus it was in the beginning, he says, but he claims that society is only a matter of convention and that nature did not frame it and that we have to improve on nature's way and laws, in this as well as in other things, and recognize different rights from those of nature.

We ask why so? Blackstone says that "the laws of Nature are coeval with mankind and are binding everywhere and in all times" and that "all human enactments derive whatever force and validity they have from their conformity to those great originals and that any human law made in contradiction to the laws of nature must eventually fail and become null and void."

The French convention said that all disorders of government can be traced to some fundamental neglect, contempt or denial of human rights.

Perhaps some of the disorders of our nation can be traced to the denial and neglect of this fundamental law of nature which Mr. Watson shows we have disregarded.

Mr. Watson further says that gradually people began to recognize private property in the things produced by labor. He says "mine was the canoe which my hands had hollowed out, mine the bow and arrows I had fashioned, mine the wild horse which I had tamed, etc." Then he asks, "Should the idler or the thief of the tribe take from me that which my labor has produced?" and he answers that nature says "No!" "Nature, speaking through elemental instinct, said that which my labor made is mine against all the world."

And we fully agree with this doctrine. We propose to make a man's title to what his labor produces still more sacred than Mr. Watson is willing to make it, and that the State shall not step in under the guise of taxation and take away a portion of his labor and that the State shall not grant to a landlord the special privilege of taking away another portion of his labor for merely permitting him to work on the earth, which, Mr. Watson says, belongs, by natural right, in common to all men. But says Mr. Watson: "The recognition of private property in the products of labor naturally and insensibly extended to private property in land. That when fish grew scarce and game disappeared from the forests the products of nature had to be supplemented by human industry." But, he continues, "before land could be cultivated, the trees had to be cut away, etc., and the strong, clear-headed laborer made the farm." And further, Mr. Watson gives us the following remarkable statement: "Those who assail

private ownership of land say 'that the man who makes a farm doesn't make it in a sense that one makes a basket or a chair.' They see clearly that if they admit that the pioneer who goes into the wilderness or the swamps and creates a farm, is to be put on the same footing as a man who goes into the woods, gets material and makes a chair or a basket, it is 'farewell world' to their theory about the land. Therefore, they say the farm was already there, waiting for the farmer."

We, the doctrinaires, have never said anything of the kind. We have only claimed, and justly, too, that the *land* was there and remains there forever, and when the pioneer goes into the wilderness, as Watson says, with ax in one hand and rifle in the other and at risk of life from savages and malaria, clears or drains the land and creates a farm, he has not created the land but has simply changed it to suit his needs and has made improvements to the land just as when he erects a house or surrounds the land with a fence and that he is entitled to the benefit of these improvements because he has produced them by his labor. No doctrine would rob the pioneer of one jot or tittle of his labor. But because *he is entitled to all the value that his labor has produced* for that very same reason he is *not entitled to any value that his labor has not produced*.

The trouble with Mr. Watson, and others who attempt to criticise Henry George's doctrine, without taking the trouble to study it, is that they keep talking about *land*, whereas we doctrinaires keep talking about *land values*. We talk about the value that attaches to land by reason of the growth of the community and the pressure of population. Mr. Astor, for instance, bought a farm on Manhattan Island for \$20,000. Let us admit that the original settler of the farm went with his rifle in one hand and ax in the other and even blasted some of the granite boulders so prevalent there and created a farm and that Mr. Astor succeeded by purchase to all the original settler's rights. But the growth of the nation necessitated putting Manhattan Island to other uses and its conversion into a vast metropolis. The value of that land, not as a farm, but simply as land, is now many millions of dollars per acre and in fact is now valued and measured by the square foot. Who created that value? Did Mr. Astor? Mr. Watson and everybody else knows that if Mr. Astor could have been asleep from that time to the present day, like Rip Van Winkle, this land would be worth just as much. That value attaches to that land, not because of anything Mr. Astor did, but by reason of the growth of New York City. The use of that land by millions of people in their concentrated activities has created its value. If we admit, therefore, with Mr. Watson that Mr. Astor was entitled to the value that he or his predecessors put upon the land by their labor, we must, by the same process of reasoning, deny that he is entitled to that portion of the enormous value which his labor has not created, and it follows that that value belongs by natural right to the community whose labor *did* produce it.

"But," says Mr. Watson, "I never would have gone to the great toil, danger and hardship of the pioneer if I had not believed that society would secure me in the possession of the farm after I had made it." Such reasoning ignores plain, everyday facts. Everybody knows that the greatest improvements have been made on land leased for a limited period only, say 99 years or even less, and that people have erected buildings costing millions of dollars on ground leased for a limited time only, knowing full well, beforehand, they would lose the improvements at the expiration of their lease. It is false to claim that the pioneer needed the stimulus of ownership to make him go out and occupy land, because this has often been done by tenants who did not have that stimulus.

Further, Mr. Watson says that "society, having established the pioneer in his security of possession which, he says, is tantamount to title, society having admitted his title, must continue to recognize it in perpetuity and should not

limit it, because it has no right to do so. That which he has made, he ought to have the right to dispose of on such terms as please him. His title having originated in the sacred rights of labor, you should not limit his enjoyment or his disposition of that which his labor has created." Just so, say we, that which his labor has created, he ought to have the right to enjoy and dispose of, but what has his labor created? Not the land, surely, because that was created by the Almighty. His labor has created some improvements to the land to make it more suitable to his immediate uses and to these and these only is he entitled. We deny utterly that to secure him in the possession of these is tantamount to title, as Mr. Watson says, and that society must continue to recognize it forever, etc. On this point I am going to quote Watson against himself. Further along in his article he says: "So, as to property, no man holds an absolute title to land as against the State. The government, acting for all the people, can confiscate my property for public purposes when the public requires it and I would have to surrender my individual preference to what is supposed to be, by the constituted authorities, the necessity of the State. This right of the public to take away any portion of the soil from the individual and to dedicate it to the use of the public, is called the right of eminent domain and is a remnant of the old system which recognized that the title to all lands was in the king. Of course, the king stood for the State. Centered in the personal sovereign were the sovereign rights which belonged to the people as a whole and they, the people, represented by the king, were admitted to be the owners of the ultimate fee in the land and could compel any individual to surrender his individual holdings for the benefit of the entire people, just compensation having first been paid to the individual."

Just so, say we, and this is excellent doctrine. Now let us apply it to our pioneer. Suppose that the people as a whole, represented by their government, decide that they must put the pioneer's farm to other uses necessitated by the growth of the community and decide to exercise their sovereign rights for the benefit of all the people. What just compensation shall they make to the pioneer? Shall they not give him the exact value of the improvements that his labor has created on it? Is not this in accordance with strict justice? Or, shall they, as Mr. Watson contends, give him also the additional value that the labors of millions of his fellow men have bestowed on that land? By what system of logic or by what right human or divine can he claim that which his labor has not produced?

The only way for one man to receive as his own that which his labor has not produced is to deny to other men that which their labor did produce. When Mr. Watson insists so strenuously on his right to what his labor produced, let us not forget that there are other men who have the same sacred right to the product of their labor and that the duty of the State is not solely to safeguard the rights of a few landlords, but to give equal protection to the rights of all its citizens and special favors to none.

I quote from Abraham Lincoln: "In the early days of our race the Almighty said to the first of mankind, 'In the sweat of thy face, shalt thou eat bread,' and since then, if we except the light and air of heaven, no good thing has been or can be enjoyed by us without having first cost labor. And inasmuch as most good things have been produced by labor, it follows that all such things belong of right to those whose labor has produced them. But it has so happened in all ages of the world, that some have labored and others have, without labor, enjoyed a large portion of the fruits. This is wrong and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any government."

If therefore, as Mr. Watson admits, the State has the right to the ultimate sovereign ownership of all the land and the right of the individual, pioneer or

otherwise, has in all cases to give way to the common welfare of all the people, then the regulation of land tenure becomes simply a question for the people to determine according to what they think will conduce to the greatest good of the greatest number and that will in the greatest measure secure the natural rights of every citizen.

In one place Mr. Watson tells us he sees no difference between the ownership of a cow-lot and that of a cow. We will therefore point out to him an essential difference. The cow-lot, if favorably situated, may grow in value without any labor on the part of its owner and become worth \$10,000 or more a front foot whereas the cow requires labor in the parts of her owner to feed and take care of her and will never increase in value to be worth \$10,000 a pound.

But Mr. Watson himself unconsciously concedes a difference when later he says "he is opposed to the abuse of land ownership and that there should be no monopoly of land for speculative purposes." Does anybody speak of the abuse of cow-ownership or to monopoly of cows for speculative purposes.

There must be then, a marked difference in cow-ownership and land-ownership.

He does not tell us how he is going to prevent or correct the monopoly of land for speculative purposes and we will continue to believe that the *best way* and, practically, the *only way* to accomplish this, is *for the community to take away by taxation the values which the community creates and to leave, undiminished by taxation, to the individual, the values which his labor creates.*

Moreover, Mr. Watson, having his mind concentrated on *land* and not on *land values*, is oblivious to the fact that the farmer or pioneer in this country is bearing altogether too much of the burden of taxation of this nation. He does not know that though the farmer owns a great deal of *land*, he actually owns comparatively little of *land value*, irrespective of improvements. The farmers, according to the compilations of the last census, own *less than 20 per cent. of the land values* of this country and *they pay between 60 and 70 per cent. of all the taxes*, State and Federal, direct and indirect. Under a system of taxation, therefore, that would fall exclusively on *land values*, the farmer *would pay less than 20 per cent. of the taxes or less than one-third of what he pays now.* Such a system of taxation, instead of bearing with crushing effect upon the hard working producers of the nation, and our farmers are certainly entitled to that designation, would fall on the congested wealth of the idle holders of special privileges.

Mr. Watson says he wants to fight with all the power that is in him to equalize the taxes and make the rich support the government in proportion to their wealth. How is he going to do it? Who but the rich are the holders of our greatest land values? They can hide their personal property and escape taxation on it, but they cannot hide their land values and if they have to pay heavily on those, it will equalize what they escape on their personal estate. We agree with Mr. Watson that the State should own all public utilities and we not only wish to abolish taxation on the necessities of life but also to *free labor by abolishing taxation on every product of labor.*

A tax on the products of labor is a tax that must ultimately be borne by labor itself and it is in the nature of a fine on industry, whereas a tax on land values is a tax to discourage holding land idle for speculative purposes and to compel the owner to put it to its best use. It is therefore a tax to prevent land monopoly and to encourage industry.

The great mistake that Mr. Watson and other critics make is to assume that the application of the Henry George doctrine necessarily involves confiscation, so-called, of private property in land and robbery of the land owner. There are very many who believe that the land owner should be compensated and that the easiest way to bring it about would be by direct purchase.

President Roosevelt has pointed out that it may soon be necessary for the nation to limit the inheritance of the enormous fortunes already swollen beyond all reason. One of America's greatest jurists has indicated that the question of inheritance is purely one to be regulated by the State. A strong, progressive inheritance tax would, in the course of one generation or so, enable the government to nationalize the most valuable land holdings without injury to a single vested interest. It is not necessary to nationalize the land of the farmers, because the government can by owning directly the great land values and collecting the full rent therefrom, change the system of taxation on the farmer's land by removing the taxes from his improvements and placing it all on the farmer's land values. As the farmers do not own much land value at present, he would pay about one-third as much taxes as he pays now.

But in the future the government would collect all its taxes from land values and if the farmers' land should increase in value by reason of the growth of the country, the government would absorb that increase by taxation.

This would not take away from the farmer anything he now owns. On the contrary, it would make more sacred than ever before all the values that the farmer creates by his labor. But it would deprive the farmer of any possibility of getting something for nothing by reason of other people's labor, and preclude his being able to absorb in the future, from the community, values not created by his labor and to which he is therefore not entitled. This is supremely just.

ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE—HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

One of the most notable volumes of last year was the autobiography of Alfred Russel Wallace in two large octavo volumes. It is the record of a great intellectual life, and is published by Chapman and Hall, of London. Few men in this generation have achieved eminence in so many lines. Mr. Wallace is President of the Land Nationalization Society of Great Britain, and among the imposing array of vice presidents of that society are sixty-eight members of Parliament, a significant indication of the growth of the movement of "The Land for the People" among the English speaking race. He was the co-discoverer with Charles Darwin of the doctrine of evolution, if it be not an error to speak of the "discovery" of a theory more or less clearly pointed out by many notable thinkers from Lucretius to Goethe. His rank among naturalists is high and he is one of the leading anti-vaccinationists, an investigator into the phenomena of spiritualism, as well as one of the leading apostles of that faith. He is a man of exceptionally liberal learnings, and one whose published works, by reason of original discovery and hypothesis, must give him high rank among his scientific contemporaries—Darwin, Huxley, Tyndal, Spencer. And he has left a record of these achievements, of the intimate processes of his thought, of the distinguished men whose friend he was—all told in delightfully clear and direct English, from which we gain a knowledge of the man, and the finely simple character of his greatness.

In 1886 this representative thinker of his time—already an old man with silvered hair—stood upon one of our platforms and said a good word for Henry George, then our candidate for Mayor. He tells us that he failed to produce an impression upon his audience, but in this we think he is mistaken. Certainly, to those who knew of him and his great scientific achievements, his presence