



UNEMPLOYMENT

ITS CAUSE AND CURE.

Moses was the only consistent thief mentioned in history. See Numbers XXXI, and meditate on the 40th Verse.

Men need *food, clothing, shelter and things*.

Some men have more *food, clothing, shelter and things* than they need, and many have less than they need.

When we speak of "WEALTH" we mean "Food, Clothing, Sheltered and Things".

The wealth of the world is produced by the labor of men and women applied to the raw material. By raw material we mean the land, the sea, the surface of the earth and the waters, minerals and oils under the earth. In other words the gift of God or Nature to men.

The land was here before any of us arrived. It is that by which and from which we live and it is that from which comes in response to men's labor all of the wealth of the world.

The reason that some men do not have enough Food, Clothing, Shelter and Things is due to one of three things. Either God did not supply enough raw material or men do not change enough raw material into the things they need or the wealth is not fairly divided. Which is it?

If God has put more people on the earth than the earth can support then the fault is in His bad judgment, and we might as well take the advice offered to Job by his friends, namely, "Curse God and Die". But as we have not begun to exhaust the resources of Nature it is evidently not the fault of the Creator that many suffer. What then?

Have men not intelligence enough and energy enough to produce what they need? When we have today hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat and millions of bales of cotton that are seeking a market and stores full of things, it can not be said that men do not produce enough. If men are really too lazy to work they do not deserve sympathy, but as a matter of fact we constantly hear of overproduction.

We have only one more guess and that inclines us to think that the wealth is not fairly divided, so suppose we ask, what is the natural division of wealth?

Wealth is divided into Wages, Interest and Rent. Men who do the work get wages. Men who help do the work get interest and the men who allow the other men to produce the wealth get rent. In other words the Labor of the world gets wages and Capital gets interest and the Land Owner gets rent.

Rent as the word is used here means Ground Rent or the price paid for the use of the land. House Rent is the return on the improvement and is really interest on the capital invested. An improvement such as a house or mill or store is built by the individual and is the result of the effort expended by the individual and the House Rent rightly belongs to the man that built the house. The Ground Rent is the value that is attached to the land owing to the labor of the community in making public improvements and should be used by the public for public expenses. Ground Rent is the exact measure of the advantage that one locality or site has over the poorest location in use, and if taken for the public use, will equalize opportunity because the man who has the best location will pay to the community the difference between the valuable position and the least valuable one in use so all will share the value that is produced by the combined labor of the community.

We Americans talk of our freedom and boast of our native-land and at the same time we pay to the landlords \$13,600,000,000 each year for the privilege of living in our native land and making use of it.

Suppose we look at this question from another standpoint. If all wages were taken in taxation men would work for nothing and that would be slavery. Chattel slavery is where men are owned as cattle and work for another without compensation. Chattel slavery ended in this country at the end of the Civil War and was followed by the Industrial Slavery that disgraces our land today.

Before the Civil War we imported the black man from Africa because labor was scarce. Today we have millions of men looking for work.

Let us go a step further in this inquiry. If all interest were taken in taxes, men would not loan capital. Capital is wealth used to produce more wealth. If we tax capital we drive it out

of the market and that makes production more difficult. That is not desirable.

Now let us see where we stand. If all wages are taken in taxes men are reduced to slavery. If all interest is taken in taxes men will not loan capital and that will make production more difficult, and we have but one more source from which we can draw our Public Revenues, and that is "Ground Rent".

Now what would happen if all "Ground Rent" were taken in taxes, that is, for the use of the community whose labor alone has produced this value? Bear in mind that we are speaking of "Ground Rent", which is the measure of the advantage which one location has over the poorest location in use. House Rent is interest and is the return on capital invested in the improvement. Ground Rent is created by the labor of all.

Now what would happen if the Ground Rents were taken and used for the benefit of all? Well, in the first place, men would own land to use and not to hold idle while the labor of others added to its value. Idle men and idle land would be brought together. All men who are working today are working on the land, either in the shape of the raw materials or upon the finished product in trade. There are no jobs except those that come from applying labor to land, and if the idle land were brought into use there could be no unemployment until all the desires of all men were satisfied. Another thing that would happen, wages would rise and men would keep all of their wages. The men that supplied the capital would keep all of the interest they got and incidentally the landlords, those who now live upon the labor of others, who charge others for the use of the earth, and for permitting labor and capital to produce the wealth, they would go to work, they would become laborers or they would use their land by putting up good houses and store buildings and thus they would become useful citizens instead of monopolists living on the labor of others.

If we stop to think for a moment we must know that if all land were held out of use there would be no work, no production, no one would have a job, trade would cease and men would perish from the earth. There is a vast difference between land and things made by men. If one man owned all the pianos in the world it would not be long before we would have a new supply and that is true of toothbrushes, dress suits, shoe strings, collar buttons and everything made by men. But if one man owned all the land he would be able to control the wealth produced by all the other men

and would really own the men who were landless as men cannot live without the use of land. If one man owned all the land and we had real good sense we would make that one man responsible for the support of all the others as he had monopolized the source of all support. Today the landless men do the work that supports the landowners, whereas if we could view the situation in a clear light we would demand that the landowner should support those who are landless for the landless have been deprived of their natural rights to the use of the earth. If men have a right to live then they have a right to the use of that element from which alone life can be supported. If not, why not?

My Country 'Tis of Thee. Forevermore with thee I take my stand. How can there freedom be where men must bend the knee. There is no equality without land.

It is well to bear in mind that land is the only thing that increases in value through the expenditure of taxes, so why should not that increased value be taken for public needs especially when it is produced by the labor of all? It is said by those who have looked into the matter that the American people pay each year to the landlords \$13,600,000,000 to be allowed to use their native land to produce the wealth that all enjoy.

We hear a good deal today of the evil of "Short Selling" in the Stock Market. "Short Selling" may be evil or it may not be. It is part of the speculative method and is an attempt to get something for nothing which attempt is the real objection to all gambling. But "Short Selling" is nothing compared to the evil involved when land speculators sell us our own improvements, the value of which is reflected in the increased ground rent. No man is compelled to buy or sell stock, grain or cotton but he is compelled to make use of land or attend his own funeral.

The land question is the labor question and the life question. Gambling in stock is a matter of choice. Land is more necessary to human life than water or air. Land is the gift of God to men. Not to some men but to all men and to all the children of all men. Land is cheap where there are no public improvements, where law and order are absent but the moment we pave streets, make sidewalks, build schools, churches and parks or any other improvement paid for by the community, state, city or nation, up goes the price of land and we are then invited to buy back these improvements in increased Ground Rent or get off the earth, and the amazing thing is that we walk right up and do the buying.

We make the improvements and then pay to enjoy them. Talk about the "Short Selling" in the market, this selling us our own improvements is the greatest monopoly on earth and it operates to induce men to hold land idle, to make men pay for something that they have paid for already and idle land means idle men. Every job held today consists in working on land as truly as that the foundation of a twenty story building supports the roof. The supply of land is made artificially scarce by land speculation. If the Ground Rent were taken for public uses there would be no need for taxes, land would be used not held idle and the supply of land would become normal.

Now the difference between land and the things made by men is this, when we tax land by taking the ground rent for the public we increase the supply, but when we tax any article made by men the tax is added to the price of the article and that makes it more difficult to get as it naturally decreases the supply.

By increasing the supply of land and thus opening up opportunities for labor, men could employ themselves and no man would work for another for less than he could make on his own account and that would put wages at the natural level, namely, all that a man produced by his labor. Speculating in land is speculating in the source of all wealth and is a great mistake. If the Ground Rent were taken by the community which created it for public purposes, land speculation would cease, there would be no taxes, there would be jobs for all and as much prosperity as we could stand. There would be fewer millionaires and no poor.. The idle rich and the idle poor would both disappear.

Have we as a Nation sense and courage enough to make the change? Probably not, but at least it is satisfactory to see the way out, even though like Moses we see the promised land from a distance and unlike Moses we have not the courage of our convictions, for Moses when he robbed a people "put them to the sword", he did not want them around looking on. If it is not, it ought to be embarrassing to see the conditions our land system has created. On the one hand palaces, luxury, self-indulgence and on the other hand poverty, crime, vice, prisons and asylums.

Men are crying for work and disputing about who shall have a job and we are still paying for a war fought to put a stop to importing black men to do our work. Not many years ago "Uncle Sam" was boasting that America was an asylum for the oppressed of the world. The poor of Europe came here and "took up land" for the

price of the entry fee, made homes, built a nation but not satisfied with land taken to use, men grabbed all they could get under any pretext and what is the result? Instead of a free people with wealth fairly divided we have the spectacle of a few men rich beyond the experience of any age and millions of miserable, poverty-stricken wretches who are rapidly filling the ranks of vice, murder, suicides and those without hope.

Farming is the foundation of our civilization and the farmers are taxed upon every thing that they use and are compelled to sell their surplus crops of wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco in competition with the crops of world. Buying in a dear market and selling in a cheap market makes the farmers too poor to buy the goods made by the mills and manufactories. The thousands who work in the mills, factories and stores have so little left after paying their living expenses they cannot afford to build homes so trade suffers, and the builders are idle and apartments, boarding houses, rooms, tenements, slums take the place of homes.

We have been getting ready for the condition that confronts us today for 150 years when Fischer Ames of Massachusetts said in Congress that in order to get our young men and women to come into the mills and factories "invitation and encouragement" were necessary as they gained a competency from our cheap and fertile soil. Now what Mr. Ames really said was that the sons and daughters of our farmers were not poor enough to leave the farms and go into the cities and live like cattle and work in the mills and factories, therefore the thing to do is to make them poor, to make life on the farm difficult then they would flock to the cities and our history shows that they made them poor and forced them into the cities, first by taxing everything they use and secondly by allowing land speculation which encouraged men to grab land they did not need and would not use but which they held until they could force others to pay the price of necessity to the owners who had done nothing to improve but had just sat down on the holdings until the labor and needs of others put up the price to a point that induced the speculator to let go and allow labor and capital to go to work. ~~and~~ After all the experience of 150 years the best Congress can do is to appropriate millions of money that does not belong to Congress to keep up the price of wheat, cotton and corn instead of undoing what we have done that is wrong, unjust and injurious, establishing once for all free trade, free land, free men, abolishing all taxes, taking for public uses the Ground Rent which

is produced by the presence of population which is the result of the labor of all and is needed for the benefit of all and belongs to all. Our mistake is in mixing up public and private obligations and rights.

Land produces two crops each year. One is due to the labor of the individual and it should all belong to him free from any tax. The other is produced by the people as a whole and is reflected in the value of the land. The individual has no right to the Ground Rent and the community has no right to any part of a man's wages. The only way to determine what is a just wage is to make it possible for a man to employ himself but employers of labor do not want any such condition, they talk about freedom but support privilege. We must be educated so we can tell the difference between a trolley pole and a franchise so that we realize that taxing goods and things makes them harder to get but taking the full Ground Rent for the community will put a stop to land speculation and bring real true permanent prosperity and peace on earth.

All this talk about hoarding money is very misleading to the public and there is no necessity for a gold standard. If money were made of iron the only way to get any of it would be by producing some kind of wealth by applying labor to land and then trading the surplus of our wealth for the surplus wealth produced by another man and that fact leads to this thought namely where division of labor is the method of producing wealth, communication, transportation and money should be public convenience and not managed for private gain. For instance, one man raises corn in Kansas and one mines coal in Pennsylvania. It is a mistake to burn corn or to eat coal. Those men should trade corn for coal and in order to do that they must communicate and that means letters and telegrams and telephones which are the means of communication and which should be public utilities. In the same way railroads and highways should be for the benefit of all and money which is the medium of exchange or that which completes the exchange should be issued by the Government and not put into private hands.

If it were necessary for Aaron Burr to kill Alexander Hamilton it is a great pity he did not do so before Hamilton fastened the National Bank System on this nation. Public improvements, good society and order make land dear, and difficult to get, but they make goods cheap.

Taxing land in proportion to its value destroys land specula-

tion. Taxing goods makes it difficult to get them for the tax is added to the price.

Three things will bring out the resources of a nation. War will call out and demand men, money and supplies. If men really loved each other and stood for justice, nobody would need nor suffer from want but the most practical method of utilizing a nation's resources, is to take the Ground Rent for the community, that method will free the land, open up opportunities for labor, provide jobs for all, abolish all taxes, give to each what he earns, put a stop to some men getting what they do not earn, and for the first time in the history of man build a civilization founded on right and justice.

Land monopoly was the curse of Egypt. It caused the downfall of Rome. It is more than any other thing the cause of poverty, crime, drunkenness, vice and the misery which we American people are experiencing today. The natural opportunities are owned by a few who hold our happiness in their hands and even now they reach for the control of the water power so they may to a greater extent enjoy the wealth that they do not create but which is Nature's gift to man.

Very likely public ownership of utilities would reduce taxes but it would at the same time increase the Ground Rent and until that value is taken by the Public who create it we can not hope for general prosperity or anything that approaches permanent relief.

Charity is the apology made by the rich to the miserable ones for maintaining a system that makes Charity necessary.

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