

to reduce his price 5 per cent, which reduction the tenant *could* make, and which he would be free to make, or not, as he might choose. He would merely be in the same position as though a relative died and left him an income equal to 5 per cent of the value of the goods sold in his store. If he so chose he could pass the gift along to his customers by reducing his prices 5 per cent and enjoy the same net income as before.

GEORGE L. RUSBY.

Towaco, N. J.

JOHN ROSE DIGS TRUTHS FROM OLD TOMES

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

We Georgists hold that cheap or available land will insure prosperity and preclude the possibility of poverty. This is no idle speculation, as the old records attest. Take the early history of Pennsylvania, for instance, as described by Gabriel Thomas in his book, "An Historical and Geographical Account of the Province and Country of Pennsylvania" (London, 1698):

"Corn and Flesh, and what else serves Man for Drink, Food and Rayment, is much cheaper here than in England, or elsewhere; but the chief reason why Wages of Servants of all sorts is much higher here than there, arises from the great Fertility and Produce of the Place; besides if these large Stipends were refused them, they would quickly set up for themselves, for they can have Provision very cheap, and Land for a very small matter, or next to nothing in comparison of the Purchase of Lands in England; and the Farmers there can better afford to give that great Wages than the Farmers in England can, for several Reasons very obvious.

"Their Land costs them (as I said but just now) little or nothing in comparison, of which the Farmers commonly will get twice the increase of Corn for every Bushel they sow, that the Farmers in England can from the richest Land they have. * * *

"They pay no Tithes, and their Taxes are inconsiderable; the Place is free for all Persuasions, in a Sober and Civil way; for the Church of England and the Quakers bear equal Share in the Government. They live Friendly and Well together; there is no Persecution for Religion, nor ever like to be; 'tis this that knocks all Commerce on the Head, together with high Imposts, strict Laws, and cramping Orders."

The anonymous author of "American Husbandry" (by an American, London, 1775), while quite favorable to the colonies, probably does not exaggerate the prosperity of New England. He says:

"The face of the country has in general a cultivated, inclosed and cheerful prospect; the farm houses are well and substantially built, and stand thick; gentlemen's houses appear everywhere, and have an air of a wealthy and contented people. Poor, strolling and ragged beggars are scarcely ever to be seen; all the inhabitants of the country appear to be well fed, clothed, and lodged, and everywhere a great degree of independency, and liberty to be met with: nor is that distinction of the ranks and classes to be found which we see in Britain, but which is infinitely more apparent in France and other arbitrary countries. * * *

"This great ease of gaining a farm, renders the lower class of people very industrious; which, with the high price of labour, banishes everything that has the least appearance of begging, or that wandering, destitute state of poverty which we see so common in England. A traveller might pass half through the colony without finding, from the appearance of the people, that there was such a thing as a want of money among them. * * *

"This country [Pennsylvania] is peopled by as happy and free a set of men as any in America. Out of trade there is not much wealth to be found, but at the same time there is very little poverty, and hardly such a thing as a beggar in the province. This is not only a consequence of the plenty of land and the rate of labour, but also of the principles of the Quakers who have a considerable share in the government of the country. It is much to the honour of this sect that they support their own poor in all countries, in a manner much more respectable than known in any other religion."

Henry George men hold that wherever there is private property in land rent, and wherever land is held out of use, there poverty abounds. Take the condition of the poor whites in Virginia in 1780, as observed and noted by the Marquis F. J. Chastellux in his book, "Travels in N. America, in the Years 1780, 1781 and 1782" (published in London, 1787):

"It is in this country (Virginia) that I saw poor persons, for the first time, after I passes the sea; for, in the midst of those rich plantations, where the negro alone is wretched, miserable huts are often to

be met with, inhabited by whites, whose wan looks and ragged garments bespeak poverty. At first I was puzzled to explain to myself how, in a country where there is still so much land to clear, men who do not refuse to work should remain in misery; but I have since learned that all these useless territories, these immense estates, with which Virginia is covered, have their proprietors. Nothing is more common than to see some of them possessing five or six thousand acres of land, who clear out only as much as their negroes can cultivate; yet will they not give, or even sell, the smallest portion of them, because they form a part of their possessions, and they are in hopes of one day augmenting the number of their negroes. These white men, without fortune, and frequently without industry, are straitened, therefore, on every side, and reduced to the small number of acres they are able to acquire."

Contrast the above description of landed wealth and poverty with the description of another section of the country as given by Isaac Weld, Jr., in his book, "Travels Through the States of N. America, &c." (London, 1800):

"The cultivated lands in this country [Shenandoah Valley] are mostly parcelled out in small portions; there are no persons here, as on the other side of the mountains, possessing large farms; nor are there any eminently distinguished by their education or knowledge from the rest of their fellow citizens. Poverty also is as much unknown in this country as great wealth. Each man owns the house he lives in and the land which he cultivates, and everyone appears to be happy and unambitious of a more elevated situation than what he himself enjoys."

JOHN C. ROSE.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

MAY BE GOOD NEWS

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Taxation is looking up.

The Harvard class in economics has dropped in numbers from 140 to 91. This means that 49 less students will be taught economics that are not sound.

THOMAS N. ASHTON.

Fall River, Mass.

EVIDENCE OF APPRECIATION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I thank you for sending me LAND AND FREEDOM here. I had figured on reading it in the local public library. Generally I prefer to have it sent to my home, as then there is no danger of losing it. I always read it carefully when I return home, even if I have read it while away. I also keep every copy on file. I can read the back numbers with as much interest as those of today. I regard it as a very valuable educational journal, as well as a leader in Single Tax philosophy and news. I have been here nearly two months working up a case for electric light reduction, where Attorney La Follette is representing 9,000 petitioners, who ask the State Corporation Commission to reduce rates. Generally, during my vacation, I do not stay in any place more than a week or two. Therefore I depend on the public libraries to keep me up to date.

EDWARD P. E. TROY.

Albuquerque, N. Mex.

FROM AN OLD FRIEND OF THE PAPER

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I want to congratulate you on the last issue of LAND AND FREEDOM.

The contributed articles, taken together with your own expressions of opinion, actually constitute a liberal education for the student of economics.

I wish also to give belated approval of the opening paragraphs in Comment and Reflection of preceding issue, pertaining to our vision, hopes, aspirations and the need for a becoming humility in the presence of a truth of such magnitude and far-reaching potentialities.

Best wishes for continued success.

C. M. HOOSE.

Philadelphia, Pa.

A FALLACY IN CURRENT TERMINOLOGY

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I want to make a suggestion. It has seemed to me that a great deal of confusion exists due to the comprehensive nature of the words "rea