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It is with the best of good wishes for street car conductors that we congratulate those of Chicago upon the neglect of passengers to adopt a sentimental suggestion by giving them an extra cent when paying fares, as a sort of Christmas "tip." The degrading custom of "tipping" street car men might in this way be easily introduced; and if it once became fixed, these workers would be reduced, as waiters and porters have been, to the level of depending for their pay upon the charity of the public.

The land purchase movement in Ireland is one for the creation of a host of petty landlords in that country, whose little self interests will act as buttresses and buffers for the large interests of the great landlords of England and Scotland. While slightly improving the condition of the tenant class it would not improve that of the still lower grade of working men. Though the former would no longer be rack rented, the latter would continue to be both rack-rented and rack-waged.

A better example of the upside downedness of the university point of view regarding political economy could not be desired than that which Prof. Seligman, of Columbia, exhibited in his paper before the American Economic association last week. He ascribed the passing of slavery in every part of the world to the disappearance of free land. "Morality, indeed, is doing its noble work," he said, "but at bottom lies the disappearance of free land." Therefore, thank God for the disappearance of

free land! But if it is the disappearance of free land that is abolishing slavery, as an economic system, is there much to be thankful for? Slavery can be abolished by the disappearance of free land only because that change forces "free" labor to work for less than the cost of slave labor, which is but another way of saying that it abolishes slavery by substituting one form of slavery for another. Is this anything to boast of? Shall we parade as evidence of economic progress the fact, and fact it is, that whole armies of free laborers would capitalize at less to-day than slaves capitalized at 50 years ago? Professional economists would be better employed if, instead of asking us to cheer because the disappearance of free land (which means a vast monopolization of unused land) has abolished slavery, they were thoughtfully and candidly to explain the effect upon society of abolishing slavery without allowing free land to disappear any faster than it is put to use? Why all this toploftical tomfoolery on the part of professional economists, when they discuss problems that concern the lives and liberties and earnings of the working masses of mankind?

Why President Castro, of Venezuela, is constantly referred to as a rascal it is not easy to explain, unless these references are inspired. Nothing that is generally known of him justifies the imputation. On the contrary, he appears from all that is definitely reported to have played the part of a patriot under extraordinary difficulties and to have played it with great ability and fidelity. Perhaps the explanation may be found in the fact that Castro is the leader of the democratic elements of Venezuela, while the revolutionists there are

plutocratic and have been encouraged and supported in their revolution by financial interests centering in Berlin. In those circumstances, Castro would naturally be unpopular in German court circles; while his unpopularity at Washington and in certain American newspaper offices may possibly be traceable to his abrogation of asphalt grants improvidently if not corruptly made to American syndicates.

Possibly the rush that Germany and Great Britain made upon Venezuela just as Castro had conquered the plutocratic revolutionists may be explained by the fact that German financial interests (maybe British ones also) were interested in reviving the moribund revolution. That would explain the destruction of Castro's little fleet, and nothing else does. It was his fleet that enabled him to transfer his troops so as to hold the revolutionists in check at otherwise inaccessible points. This advantage was taken from him when the allied fleets seized and sunk his ships, and thereupon the revolution was renewed.

The indefensible character of the precipitate attack upon Venezuela is so strongly described by the Boston Journal that no elaboration or further comment could make it stronger. Here it is, in words that should fix the attention and command the sympathy of every American reader:

Let us put ourselves in the place of the Venezuelans. Let us imagine that in the last critical months of our own civil war, when the nation was strained to the utmost to support its armies and maintain its credit at home and abroad, Great Britain and Germany had suddenly delivered an ultimatum at Washington for the immediate payment of the claims of their subjects who had suffered in the progress of the war, and had sent fleets of ironclads to threaten New York and Boston. Would that have been an act of friendliness?