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THE STANDARD

Free Trade

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HENRY GEORGE WANTS INDUSTRIAL FREEDOM.

NEW YORK, April 2, 1891

LOUIS E. POST, President Manhattan Single Tax Club.

DEAR SIR: I cannot be at your meeting. But allow me in this way to express my joy that men differing on other things at last unite to declare for Free Trade and to proclaim uncompromising hostility to all tariffs.

Political freedom has been gained, so far as it ever can be gained without industrial freedom. That is the task of our time; the task we must accomplish if other gains are to avail anything. To abolish undeserved poverty, to secure to labor its natural opportunities and its full earnings, to open to all the moral, mental and physical advantages which increasing knowledge and multiplying invention make possible for all, is to me the one thing worth struggling for in politics. And in this time and this country the road to this is that of Free Trade.

Jefferson was right. The secret of a healthy society, of a stable state, of national peace and plenty, and virtue and happiness, lies in the practical application of the Golden Rule - in the recognition by all of the rights of each. The cause of low wages, of depressed trade, of farmers eaten but by mortgages, of cities filled with those who live on charity or gain by hard struggle only a poor and pitiful living, is that men are robbed under the guise of law. And the only remedy is that of abolishing the robbery. No devices for helping some men at the expense of other men can avail the masses. The few may live

at the expense of the many, but the many cannot live at the expense of the few. Workmen's unions that have no longer aim than the establishment of labor trusts and labor restrictions, farmers' combinations that would help farmers by making them participants in the plunder of the treasury, they can no more help the masses than can those rosewater reformers who would cure political corruption by electing good men to office and solve the awful problem of poverty by doles of alms. The only thing that can help the masses is freedom.

And, therefore, it is that in raising the banner of Free Trade you raise the standard of the true labor movement, you raise again for another leap forward the glorious standard of human liberty.

Free Trade! Can there be real freedom without freedom to trade? Is it not a natural right; and unalienable right? With its abolition of custom houses and spies and lobbyists and trusts, with its union of the world in the bonds of commerce, and its guarantee of peace among the nations, is it no indeed the "international law of God?"

The day of the compromisers on the tariff question is nearly over. The future is ours. When such men as will be represented at your meeting to-night gather together to proclaim a great truth for which the time is ripe, its victory is already half won.

With hearty congratulations, yours,

HENRY GEORGE.

April 8, 1891.