

## PERSONAL SERVICE

Henry George, in both *Progress and Poverty* and throughout his writings explains that the laborer's wages are produced by the laborer, as he labors, and that there is no other source of wages. This is accepted and taught by all Georgists, including the H.C. School of New York- in its Teachers' Manual and elsewhere. Accepting this premise, how is it possible for one, by any process of reasoning, to at the same time contend that personal service is labor and produces wages?

Let us see, - accepting the above wages theory as a premise:

I catch, by hand (as I have often actually done, from a no-rent stream, twelve fish, all of which constitute, exclusively, my personal wages, produced by me as I labored. My son, being more nimble, catches fifteen fish, which constitute, exclusively, his wages, produced by him as he labored.

The wages of each, as he labored, have been drawn from the ~~same~~ source which, according to our premise, is the only possible source of wages.

But a year ago I engaged a tutor to instruct my son in music, and I now pay the tutor's bill, which requires two of my fish. If, while accepting our premise, that there is no other source of wages than the labor of the one who produces his wages as he labors- if we at the same time contend that the two fish with which I pay the tutor's bill are HIS "wages", our contention in fact is that-

the tutor draws wages from a source which, according to our premise, does not, and cannot exist- the reductio ad absurdum. Total wages produced, 27 fish, of which 12 are my wages, and ~~15~~ 15 are my son's wages, and yet, the tutor, for his services rendered a year ago, gets some of the fish as his "wages".

From whatever angle the question be approached, if clear thinking is employed the conclusion is unavoidable, that personal service cannot be "labor" and earn "wages".

If the question be asked, "What then, must be done with personal service, in teaching economics, the answer is, that we are compelled to explain, as Mr. George explained, that while personal service is invaluable to our civilization, and the one who renders it is as useful, or even more useful than, the producer of wealth, no place can be found for it in our present system of economics. If the renderer of personal service foolishly feels slighted because personal service is not included in the science of economics, or chemistry, or any other science, he is at liberty to formulate a science in which it can be included- it will not fuse, and cannot be made to fuse with our present science of economics, for it is contradictory.

A real service will be rendered by anyone who will point a flaw in the above argument. Georgists are supposed to be the salt of the earth, as regards clear thinking, - a reputation that must be sustained.

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