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(WITH SOME TELLING POINTS,)

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FIVE CENTURIES OF PROGRESS !

"Five centuries ago the wealth-producing power of England for man, was small indeed compared with what it is now. Merely were all the great inventions and discoveries which the introduction of steam have revolutionised mechanical industry then undreamed of, but even agriculture was far ruder and less productive . . . Yet patient students of those times . . . tell that the condition of the English labourer was not only relatively but absolutely better in those rude times than it is in England to-day after five centuries of advance in the productive arts. They tell us that the working man did not work so hard as he now, and lived better; that he was exempt from the harassing of being forced by loss of employment to want and beggary, and leaving a family that must apply to charity to avoid starvation. Pauperism as it prevails in the rich England of the 19th century was in the far poorer England of the 14th century absolutely unknown. Medicine was empirical and superstitious, sanitary regulations and precautions were all but unknown. There was frequent plague and occasionally famine, for owing to the difficulties of transportation, the scarcity of one district could not be relieved by the plenty of another. But men did not, as they do now, live in the midst of abundance; and what is perhaps the most significant fact of all is that not only were women and children not worked as they are to-day, but the eight-hour system . . . was the common system." (Henry George in "Protection or Free Trade")

GOD AND THE LAND-LORD

"The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands prepared dry land." (Psalm XCV)

Work has been begun on the new Solway colliery. Two shafts are to be sunk to a depth of 1,000 feet in order to win 10 miles of coal from under the sea. A daily output of 2,500 tons

is expected, and 1,500 miners will be employed.

The psalmist did not know the modern landlord. The (a part of it) is his though he did not make it, and the furnishes his requirements though other hands have prepared. The kindly fruits of the earth drawn from soil, mine, or ocean bed, which minister to his needs, are produced by other faces than his own. The natural or divine order - product to the producer - has been replaced by a system of banditry which gives to a few privileged non-producers the right to enjoy harvests which God has sown and other men have gathered, and to withhold the divine bounty in Mother Earth that suits their purpose.

Only a return to the natural order can save humanity from disaster, and the first step in the process is the removal of the great barrier to progress and happiness - LANDLORDISM. Universal values taxation is the just and practical means to this

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JAPANESE SHIRTS

Lancashire manufacturers complain that imports of Japanese shirts cause unemployment in the cotton industry. The consumer is, as usual, left out of consideration. The people who buy these shirts are, in most cases, too poor to buy British shirts, and further tariff restrictions would raise still higher the cost of living of this poorest section of the community. It is argued, though these people would have to pay more for fewer shirts, unemployed shirt makers would get jobs.

Bastiat once wrote about "things seen and not seen." The case for tariffs and duties is made attractive by portraying some of their effects. The things not seen, or not mentioned in this controversy, are that imports of shirts are paid for by exports of other goods or by services. Excluding Japan from the market would involve a corresponding reduction of exports or services. Any increased employment of British shirt makers results from trade restrictions would - other things being equal - be offset by increased unemployment in other industries.

Trade prevention

An argument used in the campaign against Japanese imports is that the purchase of such goods assists that country in its wicked policy in China. It should be remembered that Japan does not sell her products to Britain; British traders buy from Chinese traders, and they buy cheap shirts because poverty in China provides a ready market for them.

In spite of the Government's trade-prevention policy, there is still freedom in this country to buy British and foreign commodities. People who wish to give practical expression

condemnation of Japanese aggression can do so by refusing to goods made in that country - they can "protect" themselves. are also free to persuade other people to adopt the same attitude. But freedom of this kind is what Protection is designed to establish. Though advocates of the policy declare that it protects British industry against foreign competition, its real purpose and effect is the protection of certain British manufacturers and traders against the British public. Tariffs and similar devices are used to prevent British purchasers from buying what they wish to buy, and to compel them to purchase what the protected producers wish to sell. The system makes a few people prosperous by worsening the conditions of the many, and every extension of it aggravates the existing injustice in the distribution of wealth - to Land Monopoly. While this root cause of poverty remains, no method of trade regulation can do more than redistribute misery. But land restoration can be achieved by means of Land Valuation. This policy, combined with Free Trade, would solve our economic problems and remove the barriers to trade which cause international ill-will and lead to war.

THE GREAT ROBBERY

In a recent edition of the "Manchester Evening Chronicle" the story of the enclosures of the common lands which robbed the British people of millions of acres and made them wage-slaves in their native country. At one time three-fifths of the land was communally owned, but to-day the area of common land is only 1,500,000 acres. The attack on the people's rights began with the Statute of Merton in 1235, and the enclosures were actively continued in the 18th and 19th centuries. Between 1700 and 1801 2,000 Acts enclosed 250,000 acres; from 1761 to 1801 2,000 Acts enclosed 3,180,000 acres; and between 1802 and 1844 a further 2,549,000 acres were enclosed by 1883 Acts. In 1866 the Metropolitan Commons Act prohibited enclosures within the metropolitan area, and only resistance against further encroachments saved the remaining commons in London and elsewhere for the public.

Commons-preservation not enough

In order to make the remaining commons secure for all, the Commons Preservation Society advocates a national survey of the State of all common lands. This is excellent, but not enough; it will only secure what has not been lost. Important as a commons for recreational purposes, it is more important that it should be available for work and homes. The great poverty and unemployment in all its phases of unemployment, low wages, malnutrition, bad housing, &c. is the result of the expropriation of the land from the soil. Therefore a policy is needed which will not

prevent further encroachments, but will also restore to his natural right to earn and enjoy a good living in the his birth. Such a policy is found in the Taxation of La By this measure the present unjust system can be ended a Land-lords made to pay rent to the people, to whom the l ly belongs. The provision of public revenue from this s will make the taxation of industry unnecessary and stimu private and public enterprise.

Past and present wrongs

Evil deeds committed in the past cannot be undone, b ancient wrongs are reflected in unjust laws which inflict injury on the present generation. The enclosure of the is one of these. But justice can be done by amending th The iniquity of treating the natural resources of the cc private property, and the private appropriation of econc which this involves, can be brought to an end by the met taxation and rating based on the communally-created val land, and a corresponding un-taxing of earnings and savi

SHARING INJUSTICE

Preaching on the occasion of the hundredth annivers Manchester's incorporation, the Bishop of Manchester sai not at all sure that complaining about the rates is not Christian thing. Of course we are entitled to criticise in which our money is spent and apportioned, but as Chri citizens we ought to rejoice to bear our share of the cc burden which does so much to make the city happy."

Perhaps the Bishop does not know that local author obtain "our money" by an unjust process. We are entitle merely to criticise the system; it is our duty to conden endeavour to change it. The cost of local services wou a burden if the land-values created by the community we for this purpose. It is only because these land-values en to the landowners that public authorities find it nee to extort money from the ratepayers to finance these se The present evil system is responsible for more poverty happiness than such services can possibly relieve, and acquainted with the facts can imagine that local govern at present conducted, has, or ever will, "make the city

To a mere layman it would seem that a Christian ou rejoice in sharing an unjust burden, but that he ought to establish justice in civic government, and rejoice or that has been accomplished.