

A BRACE OF LAND REFORMERS.

THE work of Mr. A. R. Wallace* professes to be devoted to the abolition of pauperism amongst the working classes, and illustrates certain troubles between landowners and tenants chiefly of Celtic descent, but also affecting those of Anglo-Saxon origin in a second degree, to which the author attributes much of the evil quoted. By extinguishing these troubles between landlords and tenants on a drastic plan which has suggested itself to him, he hopes to accomplish his object.

Having come to the conclusion "that low wages and pauperism are the direct consequences of unrestricted private property in land," he remarks, "it remains to be shown that a remedy can be found for the terrible disease under which the social organism in our country is labouring," the requirements of which are as follows:—

(1.) "In the first place it is clear that landlordism must be replaced by occupying ownership. No less radical reform will get rid of the wide-spread evils of our present system.

(2.) "Arrangements must be made by which the tenure of the holder of land must be secure and permanent, and nothing must be permitted to interfere with his free use of the land, or his certainty of reaping all the fruits of any labour or outlay he may bestow upon it.

(3.) "Arrangements must be made by which every British subject may secure a portion of land for personal occupation at its fair agricultural value.

(4.) "All suitable tracts of unenclosed land must (under certain limitations) be open to cultivation by occupying owners.

(5.) "The freest sale and transfer of every holder's interest in his land must be secured.

(6.) "In order that these conditions be rendered permanent, sub-letting must be absolutely prohibited, and mortgages strictly limited."

To secure these requirements, the author contends "the State must be the real owner or ground landlord;" that "a person must own land (*sic*) only so long as he occupies personally;" that "the State must become owner of the land apart from improvements added to it;" that "the State may be remunerated for the use (of

* *Land Nationalization: its Necessity and its Aims*, by A. R. Wallace; and *Primitive Property*, by Emelie de Laveleye.

its ground ownership) by payment of a perpetual quit rent." That "buildings, fences, drains, gates, private roads, plantations, &c., should always be the property of the tenant and holder of the land."

These novel suggestions, apart from themselves, have doubtless acquired weight from the author's distinguished position in other walks of the literary world, and from them he apparently designs that henceforth there be two interests connected with each landed property in the realm. One interest in the *ground*, to be held by the State; the other in the *improvements*, to be held, either by the original landowner, or by a tenant of the State, as may happen. It will be well, therefore, to inquire what is the value of the interests to be manipulated.

On the latest date for which we can readily, here, obtain statistics (1865) the landed property of Great Britain was estimated at a capital value equal to 3,200 millions sterling. This sum, then, the author designs to be divided into two parts: 1st, value of ground; 2nd, value of improvements. On separate values of such divisions, unfortunately, statistics are silent, hence we are forced to guess at their respective amounts, and may surmise that the value of ground equals one-third of the whole, and that of improvements two-thirds; remarking, at the same time, that if the surmise be faulty, it will not affect the principles involved or alter the political results.

Thus, of the landed property of Great Britain we may put the ground value at 1,066 millions sterling, which the author designs to be resumed by the State; and the improvements at 2,132 millions, which are to remain with the original landowners, or which may be purchased from them by the State tenants.

In determining the value of the two interests, residing or about to reside in the separate individuals of the two classes of population, Mr. Wallace concludes that—

"The annual value of tenant right (*i.e.*, the interest in improvements retained by the original owner), capitalized on a scale determined by the durability of these landlords' improvements, would be the sum to be paid by the tenant who wished to hold the land under the State."

Thus, while original landowners under the scheme might be extruded at the will of any tenant, he believes that the sum to be paid by him would be very small, in fact he suggests *a few shillings in some cases*.

He then enters on the principle of compensating existing land-

owners for the loss of the "ground." This, he says, "may be done either by its purchase for a fixed sum, or by securing them the full revenue they have hitherto derived from it." As he does not mention who is to furnish the purchase-money, it is concluded that he recommends the latter measure, which means that he would compensate landowners for loss of their ground by an annuity of an amount equal to the rent they had hitherto derived. But he does not mention the number of years the annuity is to run, which is an essential. He suggests a term, loosely however, indicated by a "certain number of lives;" and that the landowners should have it fixed for as short a period as possible is denoted by his calling them "pensioned idlers," "pensioners on the land," or as "persons living on the labours of others." By the scheme, at best, Mr. Wallace does not design that the annuity should descend beyond living heirs. The time of its ceasing might, therefore, be in ten or twenty years, or, if abnormally prolonged, not beyond fifty or sixty. From this information, however vague, we at least are enabled to judge comparatively of its merits by reducing it to a supposititious example.

Thus, let there be an estate "with only a few shillings worth of improvements on it," held by a landowner, from which he draws £100 a year in rent. Then at present market rates its capital value will be £3,000. Here, then, is a rent of £100 a year which the author designs to change by law to an annuity of the same amount. The question now comes, What is the market value of such an annuity? and it is answered thus—The value depends on the term. If it terminates in twenty years, its value will be £1,222; in forty years, £1,724; or in sixty years, £1,923. The proposed forced resumption by the State cannot, consequently, be said to be made, as he suggests, "without real injury to existing landowners;" on the contrary, the loss will be a very heavy one indeed; in the several terms quoted amounting to 1,724, 1,276, and 1,077 pounds respectively in the £3,000.

The author's prime scheme, therefore, does not bear on its face the mark of equity, for, were his suggestions to become law, a recent purchaser of "ground" in Britain might have given 3, 30, or 300 thousand pounds for an estate which he would have to resign to the Government for half those values, more or less.

On looking at the affair in its wider scope, the ground value of all the landowners in Great Britain being 1,066 millions sterling, they, as a class, by the transaction would be despoiled of half that

sum, more or less. The disclaimer of doing "no real injury to existing landowners" is therefore fallacious, and falls to the ground.

This consideration alone, it will be allowed, vitiates the prime scheme in its first step, so much so that it is scarcely worth while to proceed with further criticism.

But let us tarry a little on the question notwithstanding, remarking that all the considerations heretofore brought are relating to landowner and tenant—the working man's interest being notable alone by its exclusion. Let us inquire how other interests are affected by the scheme? Landowners neither in Great Britain nor elsewhere are singular from being free from debt; it is, unfortunately for themselves, very much otherwise. They are often mortgaged to two-thirds of the value of their estates. What, then, would be the influence of this resumption by the State of half the value of their estates? Nothing less than to plunge them into absolute poverty and inextricable debt.

True, they have the improvements left them; but here again, if these be taken from them at the author's own estimate (a few shillings in some cases), these need not be counted.

To experienced colonists the mode of looking at property improvement is very different from the author's, for he naturally goes back to the period of the land purchaser first taking possession of waste land. In the colonies these improvements are to be seen in all states of progression, extending over 1 to 100 years—from the breaking of the first furrow to the planting of hedges, the draining and the metalling of the district and occupation roads.

They include many more items than the author seems to have any conception of, and to deprive the owner of the value of these would, in these colonies at least, be admitted to be unjust; and, with these improvements wrested at undervalue, the loss may not, and in many cases will not, fall on the landowner alone, but on the mortgagee, or other creditor. In short, the measure of forced transference of such an enormous amount of property, amounting probably to 1,000 millions, from one class to another, would unsettle the financial equilibrium and destroy the credit of the greatest nation in the world.

By the dedication of his work we perceive the object sought by Mr. Wallace is, amongst other things, to "enable labour to reap its just reward, which will surely tend to abolish pauperism, and which will give to all who industriously seek it a fair share in the

increased prosperity of their native land." In so far he must have the entire sympathies of every right-minded person ; but his project is calculated neither to accomplish the end in view, nor to avoid injustice to other classes whose injury he deprecates. When we refer to writers of undoubted authority on the affairs of our workers, we hesitate to attribute the undesirable feature of pauperism alone to them. Professor Leone Levi says that "our workmen have no reason to complain of the extent of taxation pressing upon them. . . . Now the taxes are greatly diminished, and they are so levied that a working man of sober and abstemious habits may be said to bear a very small share, indeed, of the national burdens." And he concludes that though "the accumulations of the working classes cannot be compared to those of the middle or higher classes, yet a decided improvement is perceptible in their general condition." Is, then, may we ask, pauperism, for whose extirpation so sweeping measures are advocated by the author, not the concomitant of all classes? Probably this will be found to be the case. In the social organism, pauperism, or extreme poverty, is the antithesis of extreme wealth, as cold in the physical world is that of heat. Reduce the temperature of the poles to that of the equator: no atmosphere would flow, and death would reign on the surface of the earth. So it is with society; polarity of condition is its essential, the spur to interchange, the maintainer of good offices and mutual services between man and man, class and class. Hence, we must conclude that Mr. Wallace has not scanned his chosen topic with that healthy eye which would support him in an unperverted judgment.

An injustice perpetrated in any class for the benefit of another, high or low, has that benefit annulled by an unerring sensitive counteraction in the economical world. In this manner injustice destroys confidence—want of confidence deteriorates credit—deteriorated credit dissolves capital—capital dissolved depletes that reservoir which employs labour and nourishes the poor. In short, spoliation of a class beggars the other it is intended to serve.

We may, therefore, leave the further consideration of Mr. Wallace's work, and proceed to that one by Emelie de Laveleye; and, while doing so, it is interesting to notice the mode of handling a kindred principle by authors of different nationalities; the former basing his deductions from the compilation of exceptional incidents, the latter having recourse to observations on the social arrangements of primitive tribes or nations for the support of his theories.

But it would be an injustice to Mr. Laveleye not to admit that his work is one of great and wide research, pursued by a mind as much open to conviction as preconceived opinions or innate bias will permit. It is, therefore, well worthy of careful perusal.

This author asks how it is possible in modern times "to reconcile absolute liberty with the maintenance of established order." In reply to this, it may be said that there can be no such thing as absolute liberty in society or in nations. There may be greater or less liberty, but no perfect liberty—only liberty in *ratio*. As, for instance—to take a homely example—there can be no absolute liberty in a baker's shop, but there may be more or less liberty; and the usage of society is found to settle itself down to this practice, that the hungry or needy are allowed less liberty in such a place than the well-fed or well-to-do. Or, go to a jeweller's: here the thief will not obtain the same liberty as the honest man; and it is so anywhere else, not excepting even the political arena. And, as regards the latter, even under the *régime* of manhood or universal suffrage, custom or usage draws a line somewhat excluding a portion of the people, and giving to these liberty less absolute than their fellows.

Again, we come to the following aphorism:—"Under the empire of existing institutions those who labour have no property, while those who do not labour live in opulence." But, may we not also ask—Do not those who labour acquire property, and do not those who are opulent too often spend their means? Experience teaches us very generally that opulence is the result of long-continued steady labour, whether of the brain or of the sinew, and it seldom frees the owner from exertion of a kind more oppressive than bodily work. And this condition is the burden also of those who inherit. Labour, intellectual and manual, is sweet and good for us—not to be avoided for our soul's sake, or despised; consequently, it is supererogatory to commiserate that labourer who takes a pride in his work.

Again, the author remarks, "Primitive nations, in obedience to an instinctive sentiment, recognized in every man a natural right to occupy a portion of the soil." In support of this aphorism Mr. Laveleye quotes the Greeks, Romans, communities of the Middle Ages, Russians, Chinese, Hindoos, Javanese, &c. But, may we not fairly ask, are not some of these nations far removed from the primitive—nay, were they not in some cases transcendent for their civilization? For an elucidation of this subject it is not necessary

to go back to the ancients, for even now ample illustrations of the sentiments of primitive tribes may be found in the four quarters of the globe. As for instance, glancing at this very date at some of the primitive peoples of the Malay Archipelago, such as the Seletar of Johore, the Sabimba of Rambau, or the Semangs of Kiddah, these regard land occupation with perfect contempt and indifference. Roaming about, as they do, from place to place, supporting themselves on the natural products of the forests, rivers, and estuaries, they do not deign even to scratch the earth's surface; hence amongst them there is not a particle of "instinctive sentiment" such as above quoted. It may be admitted, however, that in the growth of a tribe, or family, sentiments as to property in "movables and in immovables" evolve themselves, but these germinate first in relation to arms and implements, next in relation to fruit and other natural products. If the tribe advances, other sentiments develop themselves, such as the right to fishing pools and hunting grounds. So comminuted are these rights, that, in New Zealand, the fruit of the north part of a tree may belong to one native, and that of the south to another. But that it has been ever in any tribe or nation a "sentiment" that "every man" had "a natural right to occupy a portion of the soil" is doubtful; because at an early stage of the existences of tribes or nations, a large portion of "men" are kept in slavery, with no rights whatever but to do their owner's bidding. Thus all that can be said is, that "certain rights" became recognized as peoples progress from the primitive to the civilized state, and the European is almost singular in having given up the right of ownership in his fellow-men. Rights in civilized nations may consequently be regarded rather as artificial than natural. To those who have had opportunities of personal observation, it will be apparent that "rights" take forms and applications varying in conformity with the genius or circumstances of diverse peoples. There is no cast-iron rule, nor fixity of sentiment.

It is, therefore, impossible to agree with M. Laveleye when he cites "instinctive sentiments" of "primitive nations" as law and example for us to follow.

But we now come to what appears to be the more important part of the author's work. Quoting from Mill, who seems to have extolled the system on which the Governments of India and Java retain possession of the soil, he suggests that—

"Were this system applied to European nations, the rent (taken by the Governments from the landowners) might be made high enough to replace every

other impost, and then the inhabitants would, in fact, cease to pay any contribution. . . . It is easy to see the increased facility of all kinds of industrial and commercial transactions which would result from the entire suppression of all taxes. Circumstances would be easier, at the same time salaries would be lower, because they would be no longer subject to the deduction imposed by existing taxation. The system would present no difficulty in practice. The whole economic organization would continue to operate as at present under the action of the law of supply and demand. The only difference would be the raising of the land-tax to the present rent, or of a fair rent determined by the price of produce, and leaving a sufficient margin to recompense the cultivators for their labour, and to allow them to reap the benefits of the improvements effected by them. Just as, under the *ryotwar* system, the tenants of the State could hold in perpetuity at a fair rental. The nationalization of land thus understood would not entail any radical modification of the existing organization of society. It would merely allow the application to purposes of the State, the provinces, or communes, of the net produce of the soil, which now serves to support a certain number of individuals who render no service in return for what they receive."

The above quotation claims several remarks, not only on account of its importance, but because of its being conveyed in almost the identical words of other writers—

1st. The rent taken might be made high enough to replace every other impost. As regards Great Britain, the full rent for ground and improvements being 160 millions sterling, or thereby; assuming the rent of improvements at two-thirds, this would leave the ground rent at one-third, which would amount to 53 millions sterling. But as the annual necessities of the State amount to 78 millions, the 53 millions of ground rent would not suffice; and, further, the value of the property taken to obtain this rent being equal to 1,066 millions, the interest on this amount, in justice, would also have to be annually provided for. This question then crops up, at what rate of interest could the State borrow so great a sum as 1,066 millions, which far exceeds the National Debt now standing? Could it borrow at 3 per cent.? No; at 4 or 5? Say at 4 per cent. If at 4 per cent., then the annual payment of interest would claim 42 millions. And what would the State receive as a recompense for this? It would receive the usual fair rents for the grounds it had resumed, yielding, therefore, 2 per cent. in capital value, or 21 millions sterling. Hence the State would be an annual loser of the difference—*i.e.*, 21 millions—which, coming as a burden on the general revenue, would raise the annual expenditure to 99 millions sterling. Forty-six millions would, consequently, have to be met by taxation otherwise than on land. The customs, excise, and other taxes would, therefore, yet have to be imposed, thus burdening the people more

heavily than ever. Nor can advantages to commerce and industry be anticipated, for the landowners are to be compensated for their expropriation. As the transaction involves so immediate and enormous a system of public borrowing, it could not but straiten the money market, thus thwarting and curtailing mercantile and manufacturing enterprise.

2nd. Difficulties present themselves in the author's next proposal—viz., to initiate a sliding scale of rent in relation to the prices of produce. What an army of officials would not this ever-oscillating condition of affairs call for? and if the army of such magnitude can be collected, where may we expect the honesty, integrity, and judgment to regulate such myriads of delicate private and public opposing interests?

3rd. The author's next proposal, apparently brought out with all sincerity, to reduce the landowners and tenant-farmers of Great Britain to the condition of the tropical *ryots* of Bengal and Java, strikes one who knows them both intimately as whimsical; but as the proposal is made, we must surmise that it is done in want of local knowledge.

Naked and miserable, the *ryots* of Bengal vegetate on the fraction of an acre, atrophizing life down to the flicker of a candle, the object of every day of the year being to evade State rent; and the *ryots* of Java are in even a worse plight. Both under the thralldom of conquerors, the Javanese have fallen under those who know how to economize and appropriate labour. There the *ryots*, placed under the *corvee*, or forced labour, are driven by the rattan in herds to the sugar fields and coffee plantations to create saleable ware, without recompense to themselves, but for the benefit of the *Handelmaatschappij*, a trading company, of which the King of Holland was, if he is not yet, a principal partner.

Of course, there is no franchise here; there was, and may be yet, but one newspaper in Netherlands India for twenty millions of people, and that is a government one, devoted solely to its support. Happy agriculturists of Britain, this is the pleasanter state of society to which a Frenchman designs you to live in.

Leaving this portion, we come to the further unfolding of M. Laveleye's measures.

"Admitting," he says, "that the State should be placed in possession of the soil so as to receive the rent of it as revenue, this would not be effected by the way of purchase. To attain its object gradually, and without occasioning the least disturbance, all that is necessary is to limit collateral succession to the

degree of first cousin, and to have a tax on successions generally, which should be set aside for the purpose of buying up landed property as it comes into the market. As for the difficulties of administration, they would not exist. The right of persons occupying land would be transferred into a lease, and the receivers of land revenue would collect the rent in place of the existing taxes. In that part of the west of London which belongs to the Duke of Westminster the property is managed very much in this way. Suppose the Duke's agents nominated by the Crown, and handing over their receipts to the national exchequer each year, and there would be *no appreciable change.*"

The system would simply be the application of the theory of physiocrats—"a single tax assessed on soil."

It may be remarked that M. Laveleye, like Mr. Wallace, has a covert sense as to the injustice of his proposals towards a class, as he, like the latter, disclaims any desire of disturbing in the least the interests of the parties affected, promising "no real injury to existing landowners;" in short, "without injury to anyone," but "beneficially to every class." How this legerdemain can be I have a difficulty in apprehending, seeing that it is intended by him that the State shall be placed in possession of the land "*not by way of purchase.*" If not by purchase, how then does he avoid injustice? He says, "by limiting collateral succession to the degree of first cousin, and taxing successions generally for *buying up landed property* as it comes into the market." Surely this project, as now unfolded, amounts to nothing less than making holders and investors in land create the fund which is to make a State domain of their properties. They are, in fact, to dig their own graves. If this be the logical sequence of the scheme, the learned author has not thought it out to its conclusion. But, apart from this, questions immediately arise such as the following:—If succession be limited to first cousins by law, these first cousins being not forthcoming, does the land pass to the Crown? Then, can a *cousinless* person sell his land? Will his mortgages be annulled? Will it end dowries, settlements, legacies, &c.? Again, as the tax in successions generally is to buy up the kingdom, will they amount to one-fourth or one-half the value of the land, or how much? These and many other questions would at once arise in financial circles.

Nothing resents injustice so quickly as capital; and, in so far as invested in land, it would evaporate, which avowedly is not Mr. Laveleye's intention. But the questions which the two authors have attempted to grapple with are too portentous to be dismissed without mature thought and anxious examination. They are, indeed, so vast that none can approach them without misgivings.

In recurring to the tone of their works I may be allowed to remark that while there is a close resemblance in object, there is little analogy in argument. Mr. Wallace's scheme is founded too narrowly on retribution for exceptional acts, Mr. Laveleye's too broadly on examples of demi-savages; and it will be useful here to point an inaccuracy of deduction in both on a fundamental phase which leads them to false issues. Both hold all labour to be productive, and out of this deduction comes their antagonism to classes other than labouring men. Their attitude is uncompromising. On this point it may not be unprofitable to linger a while, when we shall probably find that there are not producers alone among the labouring classes, but consumers also; and not constructors alone, but *destructors*.

Thus, take dockyard labourers, army and navy, amounting, with their families, to over one million of souls. However useful, are they producers? I think not. They must then be put down as consumers. Nay, more; engaged for war purposes, they are on the destructive side of the social organism. Such must also be considered the position of the labourers engaged by Armstrong, Whitworth, and all other manufacturers of cannon, guns, and missiles. Next, take the Post-office and policemen, amounting, with their families, to 240,000 souls—Are they producers? I think not: they are consumers. Then take domestic servants, with their families, amounting to 4,000,000 souls—Are they producers? It cannot be said so. Next, take workmen on railways, roads, canals, ships, private docks, warehousemen, and porters, who, with their families, amount to 3,500,000 souls—Are they producers? No. And thus we go on to printers, musicians, coachmakers, silk-manufacturers, hairdressers, tailors, dressmakers, glove-manufacturers, gunmakers, gunpowder and shot manufacturers, ribbon, gauze, and tinsel weavers, confectioners, brewers, maltsters, tobacconists, combmakers, gold and silver-smiths, fancy-ware-makers, most of whom are employed not as producers, though modifiers of material devoted for the use of wealth, of luxury, ease—and, we may add, sometimes of vice. And if we sum up all these non-producers or modifiers, we shall find that they comprise nearly half the nation. Thus it comes home to the mind that all persons calling themselves workmen are not producers. Producers amongst workmen, however, there are, and these are to be found principally in the branches of agriculture, who are the most numerous of all—of mines, fisheries, &c. Hence, amongst the labouring classes, it

must be accepted that they are broadly divided into producers and consumers; and, in a lesser measure, into constructors and *destructors*. And this is the necessity of a living nation, which fact gives us a true comprehension of the structure of our social organism.

This prepares us for the next admission of an influence in modern society, to the effect that it is not now man alone who works. Steam does an immense deal of this also, so much so that we are surprised at its vast range of operation. At the lowest estimate, in Great Britain the power of 8,500,000 horses, equal to 58,000,000 men, is employed by machinery on works exceeding the number of manual labourers ten times. Now, be it said, not all works of production of material wealth, but of consumption in luxury, ease, and vice not excepted. And the capital invested in machinery is approximately estimated at 2,470,000,000 pounds sterling, a sum only short of the amount invested in land; that invested in commerce amounts to £1,000,000,000; in railways, £502,000,000; in foreign and colonial investments, £800,000,000; and, in the public funds, £800,000,000; amounting to a total of 5,572,000,000 pounds sterling, exceeding the value of land by £2,372,000,000. This helps us to scan our social responsibilities; for, without this information before us, we are not in a position to form a fair judgment on the questions brought before us by the authors.

The school of political economy to which they belong maintain that the rise of land values has been the cause of pauperism in the labouring classes; but can we not with much more reason attribute the evil to that other cause above quoted, viz., the rise in value of personal property, which in these modern times has been exceedingly more rapid than that of land? As, for example, while the income of land in Great Britain a century ago was estimated at 60 millions, personal property was estimated at only 20 millions, yet the income of the latter now exceeds the former by seven times. The increase of wealth, then, which our authors so much complain of, is not abnormal as regards the landowner, but it is so in regard to the holder of personal property. If wealth, then, is injurious to the labouring man's interest, it is from the holder of personal property that the evil emanates.

But it is not so. Man lives by interchange of offices; and, for the maintenance of the circulation which this interchange demands, man must live in various circles, grades, and spheres, and he must be the possessor of different attributes and gradations of skill.

Nay, contrariety is the soul of existence—the conditions of old and young, rich and poor, having and *wanting*. As polarity is the root of material existence, so it is the essence of social vitality, and in our social organism dead levelism would extinguish all ambition or enterprise, and create a world of paupers.

Dead levelism, then, is not good for man, even were it attainable; on the contrary, there must be polarity in the commonwealth of tribes or nations, which maintains not only opposite conditions, but opposite wants and aspirations; and it is to the current of intercourse permeating to and through all parts of the habitable world that we owe progress and prosperity. The enlarged experience thus gained as between man and man, nation and nation, while it widely extends our privileges, elevates the vast majority of the people at the same time.

That feature of modern society so much commented on by Mr. Wallace, to wit, increase of capital, to my mind indicates only a higher state of polarity in the social system—interests more built up, processes of interchange more elaborated, the delicacies and refinements of counterpoises in the national structure more subtle, the skill of builders and maintainers more profound and scientific. If wealth has increased, who can say that it fails in its responsibilities. British wealth now spans the world by steam, it binds its most distant regions by the telegraph, it subdues the forests of Canada and India, and spreads green fields and verdant pastures over New Zealand and Australia; and this plethora of wealth, is it or is it not under the domain of economic law? Yes. Its abundance subjects it to the strife of competition, and it seeks employment at lowest returns. In other words, plethora of capital urges it to seek new enterprises for its employment, and in so doing it calls to its aid the best ally—LABOUR. Plethora of labour induces reciprocal action by capital, service for service. Hence the proposed destruction of capital, as indicated by our authors, however and in whatever way invested, is as wise as the demolition of a reservoir, whose waters are irrigating a thirsty land.

Much has been made, in these and kindred works, of labour preceding capital. This I hold to be a matter of little consequence; at best it leads us into such subtleties of argument as are had recourse to in regarding the simultaneousness of cause and effect. All that we really have to consider is the position in which we actually find them. Last century, we learn from statistics that in 1782, of workers, including their families, numbering 8,800,000

souls, the income per head was £7 0s. 10d. This century, in 1865, we learn that, of workers, including their families, numbering 22,000,000 souls, the income per head was £19 9s. 1d., showing a very marked amelioration of condition. Thus advance of wealth, even though invested in land, cannot be said to be hurtful to labour, but the contrary.

Pauperism will thus be seen not to arise from the influence on the labouring man of increasing wealth; nor can it be said to specially attach to his class. So much is it otherwise, that it is an evil from which no class can escape. Pauperism is not the attribute of the *worker*, but more correctly of the *non-worker*. And its depths of misery are felt and experienced not by the humble alone, but those who were once of the exalted. The problem of pauperism is indeed far apart from the scheme of land nationalisation; it has no connection with it, and it would exist in Britain were the State to become landlord, just in the same manner as it does at the present time exist in other countries, where the *ryot* or subject owns no land. Pauperism in a community is as certain a factor as wealth. Impute it to what you may—to vice, misfortune, or to accident—there it is; and it preserves an equal ratio in the rise and fall of populations. Prosperity does not make it vanish, adversity scarcely increases it. It is as the tired limb is to the individual: it can no longer work, but must depend on the other members. Alive to this principle, we see that in Great Britain a Cabinet Minister is charged with the administration of the element not to nourish and enlarge pauperism by lavish support, nor to crush the individuals by stint, but to distribute a nation's help to the unfortunate in a manner befitting their wants, possibly with a hope that many may recover themselves. To feeble and conquered nations, land nationalisation is a fact co-existent with their history; as regards robust, free, self-governing nations, it may be idealized in theory, but never realized in practice.

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