

THE LANDMARK

IN the first lecture I attempted to draw your attention to the literature in which we find the ancients in search of justice. I suggested that this was necessary for, unless we are clear about the definition of justice, we shall not know whether it is right to take rent for the purposes of the community. Side by side with this quest I brought to your notice what Maine and others have to tell us about the desire of the Roman juriconsults to seek "a type of perfect law." Associated with that examination we found that the settlement of all people who have given us early records was on the communal basis of land for the use of producers. All the evidence shows that absolute private ownership of land for the purpose of exploiting labor was unknown.

In this second lecture we shall look further, nay deeper, into the system of settlement upon the land, and bring to light the methods by which the early communities determined the boundaries of each land-user's plot.

The first attempt that was made to gather into one volume the evidence of the wide adoption of the boundary stone, the landmark, was undertaken by my friend, Frederick Verinder, who gave us the admirable volume, *My Neighbour's Landmark*. If Verinder and Sir Henry Maine could have collaborated, I have no doubt they would have produced a work of great value to us who promulgate the gospel of Henry George.

Perhaps the earliest record we have of a just economic land settlement is that of China. When the nomadic shepherds became agriculturists, we learn that in every valley the arable lands were shared by all the men (from twenty to sixty years of age) who were able to till them. The date given for this settlement is 2205 B.C. But do not be in a hurry to relegate this to the Limbo of myths. One of the most striking things yielded in the research of the past fifty years is the substantiation of many myths which the Rationalists of the last century condemned with scorn. This date of the land settlement in China coincides with the deportation of the Patriarch Abraham from Egypt. Arthur Weigall in his *History of the Pharaohs* tells us that Abraham left Egypt in 2112 or 2111 B.C., and I might add here that Sir Leonard Woolley has unearthed Ur of the Chaldees, the home of Father Abraham. This is somewhat of a digression, but I promise in a later lecture to present to you some of the Biblical myths which are now accepted by the greatest of the archaeologists as having substance.

Coming to a very much later period, we learn in the Code of Manu, the law book of the Indians, that there were bickerings between the villages over boundaries and that the king advised the planting of trees to mark the limits. We also discover that the man who cleared

a plot had the right to use it. Before the advent of Europeans into India, the soil had never become personal property like ordinary goods. Moreover, the user of the piece of land had no right to sell it. We find the same basic ideas whether we turn to the east or to the west. In lands as far apart as India and Ireland early records show similarities of economic settlement that are amazing.

The Celts in Ireland, so the Brehon Tracts tell us, said "Land is perpetual man." An Irish manuscript believed to date from the twelfth century says that

there was not ditch, nor fence, nor stone-wall round land, till came the period of the sons of Aed Slane, but [only] smooth fields. Because of the abundance of the households in their period, therefore it is that they introduced boundaries in Ireland.

There is also a record in the *Book of Hymns* which states:

Numerous were the human beings in Ireland at that time, and such was their number that they used to get only thrice nine ridges for each man in Ireland, to wit, nine of bog, and nine of smooth [arable], and nine of wood.

Maine has devoted several chapters in *The Early History of Institutions* to an analysis of the Brehon Tracts. (A Brehon was an Irish jurist who stated and interpreted the law with no power to enforce it.) The point I wish to make here is that similar economic settlement and similar law pertained in India and in Ireland. To me this means that the human family, no matter where it lived and moved and had its being, irrespective of race and color, hit upon similar basic procedures when it settled down in groups and began a village community.

The evidence gathered by Maine shows clearly that village communities were settled on a just economic basis and that the people as a whole held the land communally. The division made to the user gave him the right to his produce. The records also tell us that, so long as the system endured, the people were happy. The advice that was given under the laws of Manu to plant trees to mark the boundaries of the lots of the cultivators is significant. It seems to show that the boundary stone, the landmark, was the symbol of economic justice, and that Egypt, Greece, and Rome used this device in the same way as the Israelites did to mark the limit of the land of a tiller against a possible aggressor.

When we look into the Pentateuch, we find that nothing could have been clearer than the injunctions given to the Jews. There were really only two economic conditions upon which they should enjoy the Promised Land: fundamental justice to be rigidly kept, and "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark" (Deuteronomy 19:14). Nothing could be simpler. For the fulfillment of these conditions the people were given "a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it." So long as the Israelites adhered strictly to these injunctions, things went fairly well with them, but such an economic beginning, a springtime of a people, is not rare.

It is, however, to something more fundamental than the similarity of the codes and other early laws that we must look for the economic fundamental with which separate and very different peoples made their beginnings. The clue now easily found has been somewhat neglected by the widely read historians of the nineteenth century. Few of them discovered it, and even then they did not pursue it far enough to understand

that it led to the basis of existence before the State came into being. Perhaps this is the reason why more careful scholars have accused the historians of a want of thoroughness. The latter take too much for granted, seldom explaining the true causes of the rise and fall of civilizations and why, after a certain political and social zenith has been reached, there enters a decline that nothing can stop; the end, like a monstrous epiphany, signifies the vanity of political action.

Sir Henry Maine has devoted many pages to this rather slipshod procedure of investigating and recording. What he says of the "widespread dissatisfaction with existing theories of jurisprudence," may be said of many historians. Writing of the method which should be followed in an inquiry upon the economic and social beginnings of man's activities, he says (in *Ancient Law*):

It would seem antecedently that we ought to commence with the simplest social forms in a state as near as possible to their rudimentary condition. In other words, if we follow the course usual in such inquiries, we should penetrate as far up as we could in the history of primitive societies.

The missing link in the chain of the history of a people—from its known inception to the coming of the State, as that system is understood by us (for it is only in a backward glance that we see the State as it really is)—is no new discovery. It is not as if documents were found today that no one in our era knew existed. The information is set down in the works of classical writers and in the Bible itself which was better known and understood in the Middle Ages than it is today.

Let us see if we cannot present this clue once more and, at the same time, show that it was to be discovered not only in the history of one people but in the records of all the classical nations and even in the lands of people so far removed from the eastern Mediterranean as India and China.

First, let us turn to the Bible, in which we shall find the story set out in full of how a system of economic justice came into being and how it passed into desuetude, thus destroying the people. In Deuteronomy we learn that the disposition of the land and the use of it by tillers is the all-important matter which concerns the well-being of the people, and the command is laid down: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it." This is what I call "the eleventh commandment."

The third curse reads: "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark." And thereupon follows in Chapter 28 the denunciation and penalties for transgressions. Not even the punishments laid down in the sacred books of the laws of India can compare in prophetic fearfulness and horror with its awful vengeance. There is no work to which we may turn that so clearly describes the basic law of the community.

It is the landmark which symbolizes the just economic system of the ancients, and this is the clue to be followed if we would study the similarities of the first recorded settlements of early communities. In it we discover the necessity for the laws set down in the ancient books of people living far apart and with no means of communicating with one another. The very severity of some of the laws affecting land and its tillage denotes

the sacredness of the trust imposed that it be used justly. We find in the history of the Hebrews that, in periods of affliction, the Prophets cried out for the restoration of the landmark. In some of the times of greatest distress, this was the paramount question, and in Nehemiah there is the story of the restoration of the land to the people, when Ezra read the book with sense and understanding.

The importance of the law of the landmark is referred to by Josephus (in *The Jewish Antiquities*) who says:

Let it not be esteemed lawful to remove boundaries, neither our own, nor of those with whom we are at peace. Have a care you do not take these landmarks away, which are, as it were, a divine and unshaken limitation of rights made by God himself, to last forever, since this going beyond limits, and gaining ground upon others, is the occasion of wars and seditions; for those that remove boundaries are not far off an attempt to subvert the laws.

A few years ago when I was in Egypt, one of the new finds which interested archaeologists more than usual was that of some landmark stones. The discovery inspired Arthur Weigall, Inspector-General of Antiquities, to search the record for references in the laws, but with what result I never learned. That the landmark was an Egyptian institution has been accepted by Egyptologists, and Professor Edward Hull says:

. . . In Egypt the land had to be remeasured and allotted after each inundation of the Nile, and boundary-stones placed at the junction of two properties. . . .

Babylonia also had a similar system, and in the Oxford Bible is a picture of a Babylonian landmark. There

is an inscription upon it calling down curses upon any official or other person who shall remove this "everlasting landmark," or attempt to interfere with the boundaries of the land described upon it. The gods are entreated to destroy any such offender and his children for ever and ever.

The landmark, then, was a symbol of justice and, so long as it was maintained in its integrity, the people suffered none of the evils of poverty and slavery. Their afflictions followed the removal of the landmarks, and the Prophets—Daniel, Hosea, Micah, and Haggai—denounced the injustices and iniquities that fell upon the people, and demanded the restoration of the law of justice.

When we turn to Greece, we find that the same fundamental law was established. In Plato's *Laws* it is laid down:

. . . No man shall move boundary-marks of land, whether they be those of a neighbour who is a native citizen or those of a foreigner (in case he holds adjoining land on a frontier), realising that to do this is truly to be guilty of "moving the sacrosanct"; sooner let a man try to move the largest rock which is not a boundary-mark than a small stone which forms a boundary, sanctioned by Heaven, between friendly and hostile ground. For of the one kind Zeus the Clansmen's god is witness, of the other Zeus the Strangers' god; which gods, when aroused, bring wars most deadly. . . .

In *The Republic* Socrates shows that a sure way of making war is to covet a slice of our neighbor's land. And he says to Glaucon:

Then, without determining as yet whether war does good or harm, this much we may affirm, that now we have discovered war to be derived from causes which are

also the causes of almost all the evils in states, private as well as public.

In a fragment of one of his poems, Solon complains:

The ambition of the rich knows no bounds; the most wealthy wish to grow yet more so. Who may be able to assuage this insatiable greed! They respect neither sacred property nor public treasure; they plunder all, in defiance of the sacred laws of justice.

Aristotle describes how the people of Greece were reduced to penury, and the poorer class "were in absolute slavery to the rich." He attributed the sufferings of the poor to the fact that "the whole land was in the hands of a few persons." The landmarks had been removed and in their place the debt pillar became the symbol of slavery.

The tutor of Alexander was not as thorough, however, in defining the term justice as his philosophical predecessors. He says:

Now this Justice is in fact perfect Virtue, yet not simply so but as exercised towards one's neighbour: and for this reason Justice is thought oftentimes to be the best of the Virtues, and

"neither Hesper nor the Morning-star
So worthy of our admiration:"

and in a proverbial saying we express the same:

"All virtue is in Justice comprehended."

And it is in a special sense perfect Virtue because it is the practice of perfect Virtue. . . .

Although Aristotle found fault so often with the notions of Socrates, I think the Athenian sculptor had the advantage over the Stagirite.

I cannot refrain from mentioning a reference to the landmark to be found in the *Iliad*. When the gods fell into bitter strife, we are told

. . . they clashed together with a great noise, and the wide earth groaned, and the clarion of great Heaven rang around. Zeus heard as he sate upon Olympus, and his heart within him laughed pleasantly when he beheld that strife of gods. . . .

Then began the angry tumult between Ares, the god of war, and Athene. Ares struck her with his spear.

. . . But she, giving back, grasped with stout hand a stone that lay upon the plain, black, rugged, huge, which men of old time set to be the landmark of a field; this hurled she, and smote impetuous Ares on the neck, and unstrung his limbs. Seven roods he covered in his fall, and soiled his hair with dust, and his armour rang upon him. . . .

This, I think, is the only occasion when the landmark was used for such a purpose.

In Gautama's work, *Institutes of the Sacred Law*, it is laid down that "Hell [is the punishment] for a theft of land." And the penalties for violating the sacred rules governing the work and chattels of agriculture are extremely severe.

Turning to the history of Rome, we find that the god Terminus protected the boundary stone; for the removal of one, the culprit, together with his cattle, was forthwith put to death. It was Numa who commanded his people to mark the boundaries of their land by stones, and altars to Terminus were set up. This was the form in which they worshipped justice, and so firmly was this order established in the minds of the people that, when Tarquin wished to remove the altars

of several deities in order to build a new temple, Terminus and Juventas alone objected to being displaced.

What is the ethical inference to be drawn from these investigations? May we say that men when left to themselves to work out their own way of life hit upon the right method of producing the necessities required for their well-being? Without the State and its mercenaries they establish themselves in communities and their experience of tilling the land and living in association brings forth the customs which become the guides of the people, generation after generation; and so firmly have different communities in separate parts of the world held that custom was sufficient for the regulation of their affairs that it has endured even to this day. This is one of the most remarkable discoveries that has been made in the annals of Christian jurisprudence.

The weight and volume of evidence collected by Maine, Maurer, Nasse and a few other searchers into the ancient systems are of vast importance to us and, indeed, as Maine points out, their value to the historical school of jurists can scarcely be overestimated. These discoveries mean in one direction that much of the history that goes by that abused term will have to be rewritten. They may mean, furthermore, that the conception of our modern legalists of the necessity of the political State, as it exists today, for the maintenance of order, must undergo serious alteration. Perhaps, indeed, a revival of interest in the historical school will force them to abandon it.

Is it not remarkable that communities as far apart as India and Russia, as ancient Germany and ancient Egypt, should follow similar economic customs? When they are compared by the historical scholars, they are found to differ somewhat only in what I consider to be

superficial regulations. Basically they follow the same rule of land settlement. Maine says in *The Early History of Institutions*, referring to the ancient laws of Ireland, the so-called Brehon Laws, that "this ancient Irish code would correspond historically to the twelve tables of Rome, and to many similar bodies of written rules which appear in the early history of Aryan societies."

There is evidence that the Brehon Laws were drawn up and compiled during the life and under the personal influence of St. Patrick during the fifth century. This may be the gloss of writers who lived in the eleventh century, but the great Celtic scholars, nevertheless, accept the Brehon Tracts as containing the nucleus of a very ancient system. Still, as Maine points out, the English critics of the Brehon Law must admit now that in "turning our eyes to spheres of enquiry fuller of immediate promise to the world than ours," we may observe "how much of the wealth of modern thought has been obtained from the dross which earlier generations had rejected."

The prejudice of many of the British commentators of the nineteenth century must be held responsible for a great deal of the nonsense that has been written by legalists on the importance of the State. Would it not shock the thought of a lawyer raised in the schools at Yale or Harvard to learn that so great an authority as Maine says:

. . . But in ancient Ireland it is at least doubtful whether there was ever, in our sense of the words, a central government; it is also doubtful whether the public force at the command of any ruler or rulers was ever systematically exerted through the mechanism of Courts of Justice; and it is at least a tenable view that the insti-

tutions which stood in the place of Courts of Justice only exercised jurisdiction through the voluntary submission of intending litigants.

Maine said he was inclined to hold that no part of the Brehon Law had its origin in legislation.

On this point I may quote from *Senchus Mor*, one of the great books of the Irish: "The world would be in a state of confusion if verbal contracts were not binding." In another place it says:

There are three periods at which the world dies: the period of a plague, of a general war, of the dissolution of verbal contracts.

We have now reached the place in our examination of the ancient customs when it is necessary to give some consideration to the establishment of the Mark, the land set aside for the purpose of dividing village from village, community of land users from their neighbors. This, however, is not to be confused with the boundary stone, the landmark itself, which limits the area under cultivation and stands as a warning to trespassers. Within the landmark the economic rights of the cultivator were protected by sacred custom. The Mark differs from this in that it was waste land round about the frontiers of the village community in which the landmarks were disposed delimiting the area of each plot. Again in this inquiry we shall discover that the custom of the Mark was general. It was used by the Slavs with just the same constancy as by the Teutons. And, indeed, it is to be inferred from the suggestions made by classical writers that it existed in the very early systems of Greece and Rome.

When we use ethnic terms to distinguish peoples and we indulge in the practice of differentiation regarding

race, color, and creed, we sometimes forget that there were customs which united all men; and, therefore, Henry George was undeniably Christian in the fullest sense of the term when he demonstrated that it was economic justice which bound man to man, no matter where the State was in which he lived and worked and no matter what the conditions were under which he labored. To him the Chinese was just as much an economic animal as the native of Uganda. Indeed, it may be said that the economic customs of the earliest communities ought to impress upon our prelates the fact that the brotherhood of man is a fundamental postulate in determining any man's relationship to the Godhead.

As it was with the boundary stone, so it is with the Mark. The man to whom we who speak the English tongue owe so much for a thorough examination of the evidence concerned with the Mark is John Mitchell Kemble, the English historian, who in 1849 published his profound work called *The Saxons in England*. Kemble was a scholar of great repute, a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Munich and of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin. He was, besides, a Fellow of the Royal Society of History in Stockholm and as familiar with the Saxon tongue as with Latin, Greek, German and that of his motherland. His chapter on "The Mark" stands today as the English source from which many scholars since his time have drawn their information.

As more evidence is discovered and as it is fitted into the general body of knowledge, it is only to be expected that the conclusions of the earlier writers must undergo some change. But after watching these changes over a period of nearly fifty years, I am free to admit that the basic conception of the economic beginnings of settled

communities remains unaltered. Such changes as have been made effect only slight differences as to the distribution of the wealth produced and the rules and regulations of social conduct. Much of the confusion of thought found in some of the books of modern authors may be attributed to the advent of the State and its laws made in defiance of custom. Take, for example, the discussions started by J. H. Round in his work, *Feudal England*. In several recent issues of *The American Historical Review* I have found the research historians busy splitting hairs and shaving toothpicks about matters that have little or nothing whatever to do with the subject we have under consideration. Still, whatever new evidence is produced, the skilled investigators will accord it due consideration and, if it be established, it will be placed where it belongs in the general body of the subject.

Therefore, in approaching Kemble we must keep in mind that he did most of his work during the second quarter of the last century. He tells us that the word "Mark" has a legal as well as a territorial meaning. He says:

. . . The Mark or boundary pasture-land, and the cultivated space which it surrounds, and which is portioned out to the several members of the community, are inseparable; however different the nature of the property which can be had in them, they are in fact one whole; taken together, they make up the whole territorial possession of the original *cognatio*, kin or tribe. . . .

The restrictions placed upon the Mark are several: it should not be distributed in arable, but remain in heath, forest, fen, and pasture. Then he tells us that the Markmen had commonable rights; "but there could be no private estate in it." Moreover, it was undoubtedly un-

der the protection of the gods. No matter how small or how large the community, it had its Mark, "a space or boundary by which its rights of jurisdiction are limited, and the encroachments of others are kept off."

Further on he says:

. . . Although the Mark is waste, it is yet the property of the community: it belongs to the freemen as a whole, not as a partible possession: it may as little be profaned by the stranger, as the arable land itself which it defends.

Kemble suggests that some solemn religious ceremonies at first accompanied and consecrated its limitations. This reminds us of the gods of the boundary stones in Greece and Rome. The names of these Marks often enough denote the place where they extend.

. . . Trees of peculiar size and beauty, and carved with the figures of birds and beasts, perhaps even with runic characters, served the purpose of limitation and definition: striking natural features, a hill, a brook, a morass, a rock, or the artificial mound of an ancient warrior, warned the intruder to abstain from dangerous ground, or taught the herdsman how far he might advance with impunity. In water or in marshy land, poles were set up, which it was as impious to remove, as it would have been to cut or burn down a mark-tree in the forest.

When I was a boy in England and lived with my grandparents in the heart of Shropshire, I loved to sit with the old folks when night fell and hear them tell the stories that had passed for long generations about places in the neighborhood. One was that the mountain, the Wrekin, had been placed there by a giant who took a spadeful of earth; but, before reaching the spot that was to divide one locality from another, he grew tired and the spade wobbled in his hand. From it there

dropped lumps of earth which made the smaller foothills, and he was said to be supremely disappointed that the Wrekin was not higher when he had wearied of his task. I wonder if that hill (for it is only 1,000 feet high) was not a Mark in the old days when the Saxons settled in the west of England.

English Christians for centuries knew not how pagan they were. The superstitions of the countryside in no way affected their religious duties as Christians of the separate denominations, and I daresay they would have been greatly surprised if anyone had told them that they were thinking as pagans when they were telling the stories. The longevity of custom and notion is one of the most amazing things in the history of man. Why, on reflection, the days of the week remind us of the gods of our pagan ancestors! Yet, it is a disturbing thought that the people of long ago who worshipped Wotan had a better notion of economic justice than the educated Christians of this day.

There is a passage in Kemble that I should like to bring to your notice, and I shall make no apology for the length of it because it is an indication of that primitive justice and sense of economic right upon which Henry George founded the fundamental of his gospel:

In the second and more important sense of the word, the Mark is a community of families or households, settled on such plots of land and forest as have been described. This is the original basis upon which all Teutonic society rests, and must be assumed to have been at first amply competent to all the demands of society in a simple and early stage of development: for example, to have been an union for the purpose of administering justice, or supplying a mutual guarantee of peace, security and freedom for the inhabitants of the district. In

this organization, the use of the land, the woods and the waters was made dependent upon the general will of the settlers, and could only be enjoyed under general regulations made by all for the benefit of all. The Mark was a voluntary association of free men, who laid down for themselves, and strictly maintained, a system of cultivation by which the produce of the land on which they settled might be fairly and equally secured for their service and support; and from participation in which they jealously excluded all who were not born, or adopted, into the association. Circumstances dependent upon the peculiar local conformation of the district, or even on the relations of the original parties to the contract, may have caused a great variety in the customs of different Marks; and these appear occasionally anomalous, when we meet with them still subsisting in a different order of social existence; but with the custom of one Mark, another had nothing to do, and the Markmen, within their own limit, were independent, sufficient to their own support and defence, and seised of full power and authority to regulate their own affairs, as seemed most conducive to their own advantage. The Court of the Markmen, as it may be justly called, must have had supreme jurisdiction, at first, over all the causes which could in any way affect the interests of the whole body or the individuals composing it: and suit and service to such court was not less the duty, than the high privilege, of the free settlers. On the continent of Germany the divisions of the Marks and the extent of their jurisdiction can be ascertained with considerable precision; from these it may be inferred that in very many cases the later courts of the great landowners had been in fact at first Markcourts, in which, even long after the downfall of the primaeval freedom, the Lord himself had been only the first Markman, the patron or defender of the simple freemen, either by inheritance or their election. . . .

For those who wish to study the changes that took place in later times I can recommend the essays in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*. Unfortunately only one volume has been published. This appeared a year after the present war began, and I presume we shall not see the other volumes until some time after the conflict is over. In this volume, edited by Dr. Clapham, the Vice Provost of King's College, Cambridge, we find brilliant articles on many different aspects of political and social organization in Europe from the pens of Europe's most accomplished professors. This work does not pretend to deal with our subject; and, of course, it begins at a date long after the systems which Maine studied came to an end or lingered on in small part demonstrating the extraordinary endurance of custom once fixed in the minds of a people.

You will find, when you take up these matters, perhaps not a little difficulty in establishing the economic basis of what were called slaves. Yet it is only occasionally they are mentioned in the early records. The Rig-Veda, the most ancient sacred literature of the Hindus, does not mention them at all. However, when you encounter the term in the records of the early communities, I think you will see in nearly every case that it appears in the record of a people who have migrated and who in their movements to other lands have been engaged in conquest. It was so with the Teutons; it was undoubtedly so with the Romans and the Greeks. There are many references to slaves in the documents concerning the early dynasties of Egypt and Babylonia. Therefore, it will be well to keep in mind that slavery may be attributed to wars of conquest; yet not all slaves suffered the severity of those who worked in the

silver mines of Greece. As we proceed, we shall find cases which show that, even after wars of conquest and when the State became all powerful, the slave was better provided for than many of our freemen of this day.

Let us keep in mind, therefore, that war is the mother of slavery and that it is an imperial institution. Tribute is the object for which nations war and, as rent is the essential of all tribute systems, conquest is the means by which free men are put under the yoke of bondage. One of the important works given to us in the nineteenth century, which deals specifically with the problems we have discussed in this lecture, is *The Nemesis of Nations* by Romaine Paterson. In his book he describes the conditions that brought the four great empires of the past—Hindustan, Babylon, Greece and Rome—crumbling to dust. In these essays you will learn much about the removal of boundary stones and also about slavery. The book is indispensable for our purpose.

In conclusion, I should like to say a word or two about a doubt that may be haunting your mind. It is: in this work-a-day world, of what practical use can these studies be to us? We are called upon every day to face the grinding exigencies of the time, and the prospect of a return to a just economic basis is so remote under the political conditions which exist that it seems something of a waste of time to bother with such subjects. Now let me say, entirely apart from the spiritual and intellectual enjoyment to be found in these studies, a return to an economic system of production may not be so remote as you think. In changing the present state of affairs everything depends upon you, and I feel sure that the opportunity that is coming will be the greatest one ever presented to the people. With knowledge you

can change it overnight. This—if you grant me the privilege of plain speaking—I must say to some of you: Your power is so great that the amazing thing is you will not take the trouble to learn that you have that power and it is only to be exercised to bring this system to an end. The wisest philosophers have told you that, but you take no heed, and the reason for your heedlessness is your abysmal ignorance of your own endowment and capacity.

What we all want is knowledge, and surely you will say with me that Henry George more than any other secular writer has put us in the way of finding it for ourselves. Hence, the necessity of reviewing once more in these lectures the sources of the best that has been thought and said. The Greek motto was, "Know thyself." The advice is just as precious to us as it was to the Athenians. If you want to be rid of the woe of your present burdens, you must learn how they came about and why you have been afflicted.