

of the worn out fringe, but to "retire" the taxed-out farmers from taxed-out margins is a more difficult problem. In the Lake states 106 farm-family incomes averaged only \$559 per year, and in all areas in New York State the same class averaged only \$350 per annum.

Sensitive statesmen now begin to suspect that such economic conditions break down community morale, lessen school support, defeat community projects and kill the purchasing power of farm families. It is a flattering commentary upon politicians' perceptive powers when they discover, after a century of national governmental intimacies, that the farm-family's total annual wage of \$559—to say naught of the \$350 wage in N'York—somehow affects the purchasing power of the man with the hoe and of the woman with the churn. In no time at all these lynx-eyed leaders will be keenly kenning that rain is wet.

The "retiring" nature of these serious-minded Nature-improvers restrains them to timidly suggesting that "Farm income in these (marginal) land areas has become an economic problem." This very conservative opinion, even so, removes all notions that the subject is within the categories of either grand opera, astrology or beano. The germ has been isolated and it is now definitely suspected that perhaps the problem is one of economics—hence the necessity to begin "retiring" everything connected with taxed-out agriculture. (We say "hence" in event that *you* find a connection—we couldn't.)

Something's gotta be done, especially when 400 Wisconsin farms out of 2500 are abandoned in one year—with a high record of 66 out of 97 being forsaken in one Wisconsin county.

Becoming all het up over the situation—and desiring to help our statesmen to "retire" things—we are perfecting a plan to retire every form of industry which fails to yield "a living wage" in accord with the bureaucratic budgeteers' finesse in finitely fixing the relative ratios of 2 carfares, 1 lunch, 1 clean towel, 1 bottle of pills, 1 walk in the park, etc., etc., per man per day. We aim to "retire" every last soul and thing which fails to enjoy the minimum guaranteed under our budget hours and regimented motions for eating, sleeping, working and playing at the inexpensive game of hop-sotch.

We are determined to take the Bible literally and be our brother's keeper with full authority and complete control.

SINS AND TAXES

"Wash My Sins Away" sang the old village choir back in the days when we were young, naive and unsophisticated. Lustily we joined in the orthodox hymn under the inspired leadership of patriarchal Republican protectionists. Nevertheless, we held mental reservations as we offered up to heaven our impassioned plea for a spiritual bath. In particular, we reserved to our-

self the right to impose protective retaliations upon certain individual contemporaries who were prone to squawk when we won their marbles.

Protectionism ran rampant in our youthful idealism. With all due respect for the Divine Creator to whom we offered regimented supplication at scheduled intervals, our elders felt constrained to insure domestic tranquility by writing a tariff which permitted the washing away of taxes at an extra profit to certain manufacturers. Content to practise our youthful protectionism in our own way, in our childish civil warfare, we accepted without question or understanding the protectionism precepts of our fathers in all matters of home, village, State and nation, and it was not until these latter days, after we had read "Progress and Poverty," that we began to wonder if dear old Dad really knew, himself, what were the fruits of Republican protectionism which he so earnestly instilled in our young minds. In those days we salved our immature conscience with the sanctimonious thought that, at the next prayer meeting, any and all errors in our political and pugilistic programmes would be taken care of in our periodic choral petition to "Wash My Sins Away."

It was not until these latter years, when Single Tax gave us a new slant upon the orthodoxy of our youthful principles, that we began to peek behind the scenery of protectionism. Somehow, orthodox oratory began to lose its persuasive powers—it seemed to grow more and more less pleasantly platitudinous—the articulations seemed fraught less and less with axiomatic aphorisms—the grand total seemed to become a summation of senseless sophistries. Our youthful years' supplications for the washing away of our sins now brought to us the sudden dawn of a new conception of what our sins really included—a new understanding that the very protectionism, which had been our heritage, had, in itself, been the very instrument for a multitude of sins which we never had asked to have washed away.

We began to wonder just how efficacious had been our prayerful petitions for these spiritual ablutions. Keenly apprehensive we turned to the historic analysis of the politico-economic precepts of protectionism—precepts professorily propounded by a master-mind of cultured protectionism—by one who knows the exact delicacy and finesse which should be exercised in levelling the gun of protective-tariff at the victim's head, and which should be exercised in pulling the trigger if crude and disastrous results are to be avoided.

As our nosey perigrinations into protectionism began to bear fruit we were markedly impressed by the historic information that taxes easily were washed away, literally and figuratively, even if our sins were not.

It appears that the tariff Act of 1867 provided that clothing wool, if washed before reaching our customs house, should pay double duty—if scoured, treble duty. Similarly combing wool and carpet wool were taxed treble

duty if scoured. But no provision whatever was made as to combing and carpet wools if *washed*; they were admitted at the same rate of duty whether washed or unwashed. This amounted to a lowering of the duty on carpet wools.

Before washing, carpet wools weighing one and one-half pounds would be charged with a duty of twenty cents. The same wool when washed would weigh only one pound and would pay a duty of only thirteen cents. The result was that carpet wool was advantageously imported in a washed condition, and the duty was in effect appreciably below the rate on unwashed wool. Yet the compensative duty on carpet wool was arranged as in the case of clothing wool—at the full compensatory duty on unwashed wool. Thus the Republican-protectionism manufacturers, and their diffident Democratic contemporary carpet manufacturers, received the full compensating rate on their product, though they did not pay the intended duty on their imported wools.

"It is a well-known fact," says the historian, "that this anomaly in the Act of 1867 was due chiefly to a prominent manufacturer of New England, whose business, as a consequence, was made exceedingly profitable during the years immediately succeeding the passage of the Act."

In the "profitable years" which marked our childhood dear old Dad and our sweetly-tempered, toiling mother could not afford even one carpet on any of the three-room floors which comprised our factory-town tenement. Dad was busily engaged, outside of factory hours, energetically advocating his mill-master's protectionism among the weavers in Ward Nine. Mother was busily engaged, from dawn 'til dark, tending looms which wove cotton cloth which the family purse ill could afford to buy.

In the twilight we absorbed the endless harangue on protectionism, and, betimes—whilst the carpet manufacturers dropped a small part of their extra profits into the collection box—we lustily joined the choral-seeking to "Wash My Sins Away," uninformed that the protective tariff had washed away the carpet maker's tax on wool though paying to him a "compensatory" duty in full.

"Children of dust, astray among the suns,
Children of the earth, adrift upon the night.
Who have shaken the pageant of old gods and thrones,
And know them crushed and dead and lost to sight?"

BUT it seems to us the vice of socialism in all its degrees is its want of radicalism, of going to the root. It takes its theories from those who have sought to justify the impoverishment of the masses, and its advocates generally teach the preposterous and degrading doctrine that slavery was the first condition of labor.

THE CONDITION OF LABOR, BY HENRY GEORGE.

Henry George The Economist

Remarks of Broadus Mitchell, Associate Professor of Political Economy, Johns Hopkins University, at a Memorial Meeting in Honor of Henry George, held at Princeton University, October 31, 1937.

This memorial meeting is one incident in the growing recognition of the permanent place of Henry George in the economic thought of this country and the world. Henry George always wanted, with a solicitude which did us too much honor, to be accepted in academic circles. But most of our universities and colleges did not give him while he lived or for years afterwards, even a fair hearing. It was as though we believed that our disapproval, due to befuddlement and fear, could really hamper the progress of a great idea. It is now our part, in repair of our self-respect, to learn of his life and opinions, and to try to impress them upon those who look to us for guidance.

Henry George was America's foremost contribution to economic insight. The next claimant after him, for very different reasons, would perhaps be Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton in most ways was a man of special circumstances. His thought sprang from a particular situation, and his proposals in turn changed this situation. This is not a detracting from the boldness of his conceptions, nor from the quality of his mental and moral capacities. It is simply a fact that it was Hamilton's business to take a confusion and make of it a country.

Henry George's analysis, and the applications which he drew from it, were as nearly as possible universal. They were more universal, in space and time, than the teachings of Adam Smith, and maybe more so than those of Karl Marx. This much said, I do not need to go further in mere praise of Henry George.

I would like, in this place, to do what I can to repel a persistent and pernicious statement that is made about him. It is not so much a criticism of George as it is an attempt to put him out of serious notice. It is a familiar device of the shallow, the timid, and the designing. It belongs to a great disreputable company of efforts to undermine a powerful influence. I refer to the allegation that Henry George was a brilliant crank. This charge met his first writings, followed him through life, and has sought to attach itself to his followers.

If we leave aside the less worthy aspects of this comment, it amounts to the belief that he was a poor mental workman, that with him infatuation took the place of inquiry, that ardor stood in the stead of assiduity. It is said that in presenting a panacea he *must* be wrong. A panacea, it is declared, however justified by certain social phenomena, implies a neglect of other and probably contradictory areas of economic achievement and conduct. In short, George's generalization glitters, but is not gold.

Now his analysis may, in fact, fall short. That would not be remarkable, but with it I am not concerned at the moment. I want to make the point that George