

any rate, I took the illustration in that very obvious sense, and that policy, it seems to me, it is the duty of every Christian minister and every man with a conscience to denounce as dishonorable and ruthlessly unjust and oppressive; in a word, utterly antagonistic to Christian ethics. Many leaders in our business world seem to have a dual or divided conscience—a conscience, that is, which is keen and sensitive to the point of scrupulosity as to technical pieties and even the minor morals of personal conduct, while it is color blind in the region of the larger or social ethics. Perhaps they are more to be pitied as the victims of the "system" of "big business" in which they are inextricably involved, rather than condemned as the deliberate framers of its execrable policies. They are possibly more the creatures of their environment than the creators thereof. It is that system and the philosophy which inspires it which I attacked in my sermon, and against that system and philosophy it seems to me the bounden duty of every man who has conscience and courage to "cry aloud and spare not."

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A FRIENDLY REFORMATION.

The American people have just been treated to a sample of tariff revision "by its friends." Burglary revision by its friends would sound as logical in theory and net quite as much in practice.

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The tariff as a means of raising revenue for government is an unmitigated evil, it is the sneak thief method of getting revenue, and its baleful moral effects can be readily seen in the degeneracy of our national legislators.

In those tariff debates the utter meanness of the system was brought clearly into view—narrowness, selfishness, greed, cowardice, treachery (the so-called "jokers"), and every other unlovely quality of the human makeup, hypocrisy being all but universal.

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The wretched pretense that all this legal stealing is for the benefit of the American workingman is a very unhandsome compliment to his intelligence, his industrial efficiency, and his self-respect. The notion that he cannot sustain himself unless the whole nation's pockets are picked in his interest is as interesting as it is immoral and absurd.

The same intellectual gymnasts who advocate tariffs for protection, will in one breath boast of the skill of the American workingman and compare him with his foreign brothers to their vast disadvantage, yet insist in the next that he cannot hope to compete unless sheltered behind that perverted form of incongruous paternalism, a tariff.

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"Tariff reform by its friends" is like the word

"protection." It is catchy, benevolently countenanced, insidious and when analyzed, silly.

Labor is the one vital, virile, irresistible force, in all the world of men, that does not need protection and can not get it. Labor alone can protect laboring men. And it can do it by but one method: by producing food, clothing, shelter, fuel, machinery, factories, ships, railroads, out of the ground, and using them on, in and over the ground. It will continue to do this as long as the ground is accessible; and the only possible thing which can in any noticeable measure prevent this good and necessary union is the system at present in vogue everywhere, which rewards men for holding ground out of use and punishes them with increased taxation for using it,—a species of economic insanity, evil to the last degree—also universal, and very respectable.

The only men who will reform the tariff are its enemies, not its friends. Imagine slavery being reformed or abolished by slave owners!

Every evil system that has tortured the soul and degraded the body of man has been overthrown by the men and women who were sufficiently clear sighted to weigh the institution in the scales of truth, and test it by its merits alone and not by the selfish interests involved in it. To expect any decent reformation of the tariff by its friends is to expect virtue to flow from vice.

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Even those industries demanding free raw materials are impelled by pure selfishness and economic interest, not by any broad statesmanship or lofty motive.

This whole festering pool of political corruption, inseparable from our present system of Federal taxation, has bred and nurtured a generation of political jackals, who, like their owners and operators, the corporate monopolies, prey on the necessities of the poor. The Congressional debates on this subject defy comparison with anything short of a conclave of thieves quarreling over their spoils.

It has bred a race of politicians of such quality that an honest man in public life who is also capable, excites universal wonder, curiosity and admiration. Plutocracy never questions the motives of an Aldrich, they are too well known to need questioning; but when a United States Senator publicly announces himself the champion of the whole people instead of some special interest, as is usually the case, his motives are at once and always looked upon askance by the organs of privilege.

The tariff as a means of raising revenue will no longer do on the grounds of sufficiency alone. Uncle Sam must look elsewhere for funds. And as a means of protecting labor it is a monstrous fraud. The Senate debates on this subject prove it; the fact that labor needs unions in protected industries proves it; the history of the whole system proves it; and if further proof were necessary, the condition of labor in the United States proves it best of all. Labor does not need "protection"; it does need self-respect and larger opportunities.

HENRY H. HARDINGE.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

WESTERN PROSPERITY ON THE SPOT.

Wichita, Kansas, August 15, 1909.

Great is the State of Kansas. Its boundaries include one of the immensely productive agricultural regions with which our country is so lavishly blest. I refrain from entering into statistics. Our State publications do this, and some of them read like a romance. But I will recite a few facts.

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The city of Wichita has been dramatic in the extreme, as illustrating the criminal folly of our present system of land tenures.

Twenty years ago the big boom here reached its zenith. Values were preposterously high. Fortunes were made by those who sold, and lost by those who bought.

Then came the crash. Special trains carried away the thousands who fled like rats from a sinking ship. As the population shrank, so shrank land values.

The thrifty and far sighted saw their opportunity and bought, and now they are selling at twenty times the price paid or, more likely, waiting for a further advance.

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Now as to the State.

It is indeed a garden, and fortunate are they who secured quarter-section titles when they cost little or nothing.

There is some disposition in the East to scout the idea that farmers are using automobiles to any great extent. But they are. Great numbers of automobiles are purchased and used by Kansas farmers. In one little town I recently visited, with a population of only 300, there were said to be forty automobiles. Practically the whole population could ride out of town on them. But they don't want to. They want to stay. They have got a snap. Crops are good year after year and prices are high.

That is a story of prosperity, but the prosperity stops short when we get through with the lucky fellows who were on hand early enough to get the land for little or nothing.

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Some of those early-comers didn't stop with get-

ting enough; they grabbed more than enough—in accordance with the system.

I am acquainted with one gentleman whose family is reputed to own over one thousand quarter-sections of 160 acres each, and I know another who owns 127 quarter-sections. These examples can be duplicated throughout the State, hundreds and perhaps thousands of times.

When it is understood that the present selling price of each good quarter-section is from \$6,000 to \$12,000, it may be realized how difficult it is for a would-be farmer without money to get a foothold. He can generally buy on easy terms, but because of enormous interest charges he practically becomes a tenant, while regular renters are, of course, coming to be more and more the rule. The famous Scully estate has a rent collection office at Marion that is said to resemble a full-fledged national bank.

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The real test of a people's prosperity is always found in the remuneration paid to its lowest class of wage earners, and we find the Kansas farm-laborer making only a bare living.

Nothing could be more farcical than the annual statement, published gleefully by Eastern papers, of big wages ready to be paid to harvest hands. The wages are from \$2.50 to \$3.50 per day for twelve to sixteen hours' work, and the harvest season lasts only for about eight days. If you will compute car fare (leaving out Pullmans and Harvey eating houses) and consider the kind of labor required, you may possibly understand why it is that the unemployed of our Eastern cities are so stubborn in not rushing to Kansas at harvest time, and solving in that way the perplexing labor problem.

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I have been much impressed while going about Southern Kansas, in noting the continual migration to supposedly cheaper land. Illinois farmers to Kansas, Kansas farmers to Oklahoma, Texas or Mexico; while there is so much land here, not used to the best advantage. The single tax is needed here, if for no other reason than to multiply the number of small farms.

You have noticed how in the big land drawing at the Northwest there were 332 blanks to one drawing. Of course many were speculators, but the fact is the same here. Hundreds have to look over the fence at the one fellow who got his land at a fair price.

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The spirit of Jerry Simpson survives in Congressman Victor Murdock. It would be worth while for the Democratic party to change its name if by so doing it could get such Republicans to detach themselves from the party of Aldrich. Senator Bristow is another good "insurgent." It is refreshing to have such men at Washington—the charm being broken only when they feel called upon to chant the praises of unworthy party chieftains.

H. W. ALLEN.

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If you would lead a life without sorrow, regard things which will happen, as if they had already happened.—Epictetus.