INDUSTRIAL FREEDOM

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FREE LAND.

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Whilst another man has no land my title mine, your title to yours, is at once vitiated.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Immediately adjoining the little ity in which I live lies a comparavely small Indian reservation consting of a few thousand acres of valable land. On this land, nine-tenths which is uncultivated and untouchd by the hand of man, some four or e hundred very peaceable Indians rsue the daily round of life. Each mily has its cabin, its little field and domestic animals, in greater or aller supply, as measured by its instry and application; for all are the oduct of the unaided labor of the dians themselves. The land is held severalty by the different families d males over 21 years of age are owed to vote.

By a convenient fiction the land is d as belonging to the United States d so escapes taxation. This secures ree home to every member of the be, for if subjected to the heavy xation prevalent hereabout the riff would disposess them all. Albugh the tribe has sold and is sell, through the U. S. authorities, e of its surplus lands, a family mestead, I understand, is reserved ich can not be alienated. Each nily is thus in possession of a suffint portion of the earth's surface self support, made free and inenable. Aside from their labor y have no other means of support.

he results of these natural conditions are not far to seek. They patent to all who care to observe. lthough these people are not high he intellectual scale they are reably good citizens; crime has rcely an existence among them being in full and free possession hat the Creator without question nded as the birthright of every and daughter of Adam they are surably free: an inalienable home the soil has made them so. They free, too, from care; the future no terrors for them and their chilhave only to till the soil, as their nts now do to some extent, to be red of support. A good school is tained and two little churches er in the religiously inclined: in t these people are in the possesof one ef the great natural rights an, the right to a home upon the a right with which nature or the tor, has endowed each and every born into the world, yet now by aws largely denied to white citi-

would appear that white heads of lies should be at least as well ided for as the Indians. If a hun- Anglo-Saxon families were posd of like privileges, the situation d be materially changed and improvements made; neat ges and vine-clad bowers would nd, for the conditions present d make possible the existence of al community. A public library ecture hall, the example of the trious and the studious and the ng influences that come with aded knowledge would as surely the standard among white men session and security have raised ong the simple and unintelligent gines.

the other side and also immedi- adjoining the reservation lies a f some 50,000 inhabitants. Some f these are rich, but many are Perhaps it is not too much to hat a majority of the people in this city would be glad to nge places with the Indians. y see them upon their streets scarcely any are so poor as to rived of horses and conveyanf one kind and another, and much of their personal appears capable of improvement their nor is quiet and modest and the tages they enjoy are apparent and enviable to most, and espeso to those who are subject to dern fearful struggle for bread. s been frequently and rather tly said by many that "the lasses" do not desire land and not avail themselves of a home country, even if the opportuni afforded them, but this is a e in the main. It is true that rage farmer is at present disgusted with his opportunities, subjected as he is to present unjust conditions, but that the human family is ever hungry for a free home upon the soil is proved by the scenes enacted at the opening of every Indian reservation to white settlement. Indeed, scarcely an incident of late years has so tragically shown the deprivation of man, as the opening of the Oklahoma and the Cherokee strip, when thousands stood in line and at the crack of a pistol rushed forward hoping to obtain that which it was clearly the intention of Providence to freely provide for all.

And yet in spite of the plain lessons of past and present times men are so blinded to their own interests and that of those committed to their care that they fail to note, or even to know that they are deprived of a natural and God-given right.

Not long since, in the city just referred to, a steady and industrious workingman who had succeeded by the most unremtting toil in bringing up a family to that time when the older children were anxiously and vainly seeking an opportunity to begin for themselves the work of life, said to me: "Rights! why I already have all the rights I want; what other right should I have which I do not now possess?" Poor man, he had been so closely employed, his mind so heavily taxed by the necessities of his position that he did not know that he was deprived of that most important and most inalienable right of man: the right to the soil. He did not stop to think that though he himself might not wish to apply his labor to land, if the unemployed laborers in his own line were able to do this that the certain and absolutely inevitable result would be the raising of the rate of wages received by himself, and that free access to land benefits not only the laborer on the land but the city mechanic as well.

For if only the unemployed are in this way disposed of and made into wealth producers and wealth consumers business of every legitimate kind would at once mount to the sky line.

Expenditure and demand are thus increased and prices legitimately rise.

For the moment, too, he had forgotten that the unnatural and dependent position which he occupied as a laborer for hire was also a most hazardous and precarious one. If at any time he had failed to be able to work, his family would necessarily suffer, and if this condition had become permanent his carefully reared and intelligent children would have been an impossibility. He did not stop to think that the reason of the comparative freedom and prosperity of the people of these states in the past has been the fact that land has been measurably free: and now that his children are vainly looking for an opening in life this man did not know that the reason why they they could not find a place in the world was simply because land is being gathered into fewer and still fewer hands. Having never thought on this subject he denied the possibility of such a cause and such an effect. His boys did not want land; why then should the question of land trouble them? And yet he had some educational advantages; he went regularly to church and probably believed all the preacher told him about affairs "way down in Judee"—to the exclusion of much of interest vastly nearer home.

The United States homestead law has in the past provided many families with substantially the same conditions now prevailing upon the Indian reservation referred to. For a possible seven years people have been able to occupy free homes upon the soil; they were not taxed and the home thus gained could not be taken for debt. The effect of this law has been good, and good, too, entirely unconnected with evil. Why not, then, perpetuate it and enlarge its scope? If results are good why confine them to seven years of occupancy and use? Why not extend the time from seven years to that of the life of the individual benefited? And by another change in the laws why not give every family an opportunity to avail itself of a free home? Why not protect man's natural right to the soil by exempting from all taxation a home of moderate valuation to every family and prohibit its sale for debt? It can be done, this great and most righteous reform effected so that in due time none need be without a home; done, too, without injury or injustice to any man's person or property. In this way the labor question can be settled, by allowing each laborer to settle his own question for himself, by gradually and finally giving him an opportunity to employ himself upon his own ground. He is then master of the situation and can accept employment from others—or refuse it. With him then, there is no "labor question."

It is true that free lands available for settlement in the United States are now practically exhausted, but the individual right of man to the soil remains. Government has no rights save those delegated to it by the citizen, as expressly stated in our national and state constitutions. No man has delegated his right to the soil: it is inherent in each individual citizen, inalienable, imprescriptible, and indestructible. That right must be asserted and maintained. The Puyallup Indian on his reservation and the "homesteader" on his "claim" have been prosperous and happy in the past, not because government has done anything for them, but simply because it has taken its heavy hand from off their heads and allowed them to keep the gift God has given to all.

Government gave them no land! It had none to give.

Man's right remains. Let him assert it, carefully, prudently, with proper regard to the acquired rights of present possessors and yet with sufficient firmness to obtain his own.

Secure to every man his natural right to apply labor to land without the payment of tribute to any man or community; and all will be well. If men do not wish to apply labor to land they cannot then tax those who do. Land used for public or business purposes, involving the public, may properly enough be taxed by the public. Two "rights" here plainly appear: The individual right of man and the public right of society. Let us freely admit them both, adopt as our maxim: PUBLIC THINGS TO THE PUBLIC, PRIVATE AFFAIRS TO THE INDIVIDUAL, and press forward to their unqualified endorsement in statute law.

I would not only see homes free from attachment for debt, but free from taxation also.—Robert G. Ingersoll.

The following constitutional amendment is offered as a means of securing both these rights gradually and with due regard for present titles. Any state can adopt it, and enforce its provisions. Properly it is a matter for the state and not the national government to consider.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment.

SECTION 1. Real Estate, or land and all usual improvements, to the value of a sum not exceeding——dollars held, used and occupied in good faith as a homestead, by any usual and private family, the head of which family shall be a citizen of the United States and of the state of——,is hereby exempted from all taxation of every kind and character in this state, provided, that all lands and natural opportunities used, or needed for public use or business, as certain limited areas in towns and cities, or elsewhere valuable for business purposes, all mines, forests, waterfalls, or other natural opportunities not available for cultivation or as dwelling places; and all lands held by individuals in excess of exemption in the sum of—dollars, be and the same are hereby expressly exempted from the provisions of this article.

SECTION 2. The right of every family described in section one of this article to the exclusive possession of a homestead, held used and occupied as described in said section one, and valued at a sum not exceeding——dollars shall not be abridged or denied by reason of any contract, agreement, mortgage, or other instrument or promise whatsoever, verbal or written, made or executed by the legal possessers of said homestead after this article shall have been adopted in proper form by the people of this state. Provided, that homesteads valued at a sum not exceeding said sum of——dollars, may be transferred at any time by the occupant giving peaceable possession, personal occupancy and use being held a necessary condition of exemption.

SECTION 3. The legislature shall enact such laws as may be necessary to carry into effect the due intent and meaning of the provisions of this article.

The passage of this amendment would in time restore to the people of a state the birthright of which man has been defrauded. This is the cause of that frightful poverty which makes a torture-house of the world. This is that impious shame which a decaying Christianity makes no effort to remove. Remove this damning blot and man will be free.

In the first century of the Chrstian era the philosopher Seneca was the instructor of the youthful Nero. Afterward this devil's whelp had the good man murdered. But Seneca knew the cause of the misery of man, for he wrote as follows:

"While nature lay in common and all the benefits promiscuously enjoyed what could be happier than the state of mankind, when people lived without avarice or envy. What could be richer than when a poor man could not be found in the world. So soon as this impartial bounty of Providence came to be restrained by covetousness, so soon as individuals appropriated to themselves that which was intended for all, then did poverty creep into the world."

The enactment into law of the provisions of this amendment will restore to man this blessing of God. And it will do it gradually and without injustice to any. And, further, it will prevent that fatal clash of the classes otherwise inevitable. It will prevent it because it will restore that of which men are now defrauded. It is a simple act of justice.

All objections to the plan here set forth can be readily met. Schools should be supported by state taxation.

County government should be abolished or reduced to the merest skeleton of what it now is. Township and municipal government can attend to local affairs: let the state be called in where necessary. Adopt the Initiative and Referendum and country people can govern themselves the way our grandfathers did, almost without cost. In no state would the amount exempted by the provisions of this amendment exceed ten per cent of the total valuation. In most states it would be less.

A Momentous Revolution.

"Peace has nominally come. The actual conflict has ended, but less than 100 days of war has resulted in a revolution in the United States. The foundations upon which the government depends have become unsettled, the principles upon which the government rests have been violated. We have undertaken obligations which neither our institutions nor our national character enable us properly to discharge; we, the one great non-military power in the world, have suddenly joined the ranks of the nations burdened with great armies and navies; we have burdened ourselves with an enormous additional debt, and with an enormous increase in our national annual expenditures, a permanent oppressive tax upon the industry of the people, and whatever disposition may be made of the Phillipines, we are already, through holding them and claiming the right to dispose of them, brought into entangling relations with the nations of the world, and run the risk of losing the inestimable boon which has hitherto been ours of freedom in the complications of the international politics of the old world, and of remaining the independent masters of our own fortunes. It is, indeed, a momentous revolution."—Prof. Charles E. Norton, Harvard University.

A Spectral Line.

"Two hundred and fifty killed!" quoth Alger. "Fortunately small." But there is a line along the sands, beneath the Carib's blue, around Cape Maysi Point, along through the Windward Passage, up Florida's palm-lined coast, off stormy Hatteras—even to Montauk—a long line of shrouded forms that needed no weighty kentledge to drag them to their last rest. There was the Cohcho, the Mobile, the Seguranca—a dozen or more, all ships of death. Without medicine, without nurses, without ice, without scientific skill, with only the sick, these boats sailed away from Shafter for treeless Montauk, where hot dust blew in the sick soldier's faces, where the tents were without flooring, where there was no fresh milk, no good water—nothing but blunder.—St. Louis Republic.

WIREGRASS LOGIC.

THE CITY.

No; there aint naught the matter wi' Meely,
Meely she's gettin' along,
An' young Dave, he's like his daddy:
I aint feared of his going wrong.

But I'm jes' clean done up, ole 'oman,
With the awful sights ez I see,
An' I cant somehow settle down easy,
A knowin' thet such miseries be.

Yes, Dave he's honest and study,
An' our Meely's a good modest girl,
But it pears to me, Mother, it's them things
As is most beat down in the world!

There wus some things wus monstrous prutty
Dave he tuck me a powerful jaunt!
We walked all through the factry
And the big electric plant.

But somehow, albeit 'twere handsome,
I couldn't jes' feel it were right
Ther should be so many places so dark
Wher men had sech a power o' light!

Then we passed by the rows of buildings
Where books is made and sold:
And the gran' new Church they say will cost
A million most of gold.

We went to thu Legislatur,
And heard some fine speakin', sho,
Well, sartin hit were amazin'
What a sight them members did know!

They could tell ye jess how many bales o' hay,
An' cotton an' corn an' sich,
Wuz raised in the whole United States
And how the laws had made us rich.

And had built us schools an' churches,
An' railroads an' jails an' things,
An' 'lectric wires es talks thro' thu sea,
An' Coal Barons an' Cattle Kings!

Well, hit did make ye proud o' ye Country
To think o' sich enterprise!
But, Mother, the mis'ry 'at's in that town—
You wouldn't believe your eyes!

Thur were feeble ole men an' women
Tott'rin' 'bout in thu night an' thu snow,
Turned out to freeze an' to starve in the storm,
When thur work didn't count no more!

An thur pitiful little children,
Pinched wi' hunger an' toil an' cold,
So young in years an' helplessness,
In sorrow an' sin so old!

An' then there were women, Mother,
Wi' a look o' the lost an' dead,
Whose starved souls wait at the gates o' Hell
While they sell their bodies for bread!

But thur werent nothin' yet more piteous
Than to see strong men, and brave,
Stand helpless by apleadin' for work,
While their children goes down to the grave!

An' I sot thar an' looked at our Meely,
Wi' the little one at her breast,
An' thought o' them pitiful ones outside
Tell my min' couldn't get no rest.

I war n't never much on larnin'
An' don't say es I knows it all,
But the thought kep' comin' to me o' Him
As what watches the sparrow fall.

And fur all thur gran' speech makin'
Hit peared like a woful case,
That God's gift o' grain should be so great,
An' the childun's bread so scase.

An' hit doubts me thu weel of a nation,
Albeit in splendor hit rolls,
Ef thu mintses what coins its money,
Is grindin' up children's souls!

An' ef LAWS is so mighty powerful
Fur thu makin' of money, then,
Hit 'pears to me, sorter, thur mought be laws
Es 'ud helf to make women and men.

But thurs Christian folks thet 'pears to think
Thet the laws of a land don't tell;
An' some es gives praise to the Kingdom o' God,
Gives thur votes to the powers o' Hell!

—Derrill Hope.

One dollar in gold sold for $2.85 in greenbacks in 1863, and this was caused solely by the exemption clause placed on the paper at the dictation of the bankers. Every full legal tender greenback was always worth its face in gold, and never went below par.—Chicago Express.

A full legal tender dollar is a dollar, no matter of what material it is made. It has never depreciated, and can never depreciate.

The American government has paid three million dollars for telegraph service since the commencement of the Spanish war. Yet the telegraph companies refused to stand their war tax of one cent each on telegrams. If the people ever get their eyes open they will build a few lines of their own.—Citizen and Country.

WHAT CONSCIENCE SAID.

BY HENRY D. LLOYD.

Let us listen while a delegation from the money power remonstrates with the new conscience for its unreasonable sentiments and ideas. Here they come, one by one, and range themselves about. First speaks the Merchant Prince:

I have a right to buy where I can buy cheapest.

Conscience—See these little stunted, hollow-eyed girls coming out of that factory!

Capitalist—Every man has a right to do what he will with his own.

Conscience—What is the price of a senatorship today?

Statistician—Never were food, fuel, clothing so cheap.

Conscience—Little Mary Mitchell works in Waterbury's ropeworks five days a week, from 6 in the evening till 6 in the morning.

Railroad King—Every man makes his own career. I was a workingman myself twenty years ago, and now I keep a carriage, a butler, and several judges and legislators "in four states," and—

Conscience—That tired looking man is a railroad conductor of a company owned by half a dozen men worth $300,000,000, which is not enough for them, so they squeeze a few more dollars a month out of him by making him on every alternate trip do twenty-eight and a half hours' continuous work without sleep.

Banker—Our wealth is increasing one billion dollars a year. We have boards of trade, the best railroads in the world, packing houses that can kill ten thousand hogs.

Conscience—The sickening stench, the blistered air, the foul sights of the tenements, and the motherhood and the childhood choking there!

Conservative—This is the best government in the world. America is good enough for me.

Conscience—Listen to that "tramp, tramp, tramp" of a million men out of work.

Philanthropist—The church is renewing its youth. We give millions of dollars for hospitals and foreign work and domestic missions to carry the gospel to the poor of all nations.

Conscience—I hear a voice in the Abbey that cries: We do not want charity; give us work.

Manufacturer—Without this system of industry the subjugation of North America to civilization would have been impossible; we could never have shown the world the magnificent spectacle of—

Conscience—There is a little boy standing ten hours a day up to his ankles in the water in the coal mine!

Coal Monopolist—I have a statistician who can prove—he can prove anything—that the workingman is a great deal better off than he ever was, that he makes more than I do; that small incomes are increasing and large ones decreasing, and there is no involuntary poverty, and that the workingmen could loudly live on twenty-five cents a day, and buy up the United States with their savings—and—

Conscience—How long shall it be cheaper to run over workingmen and women at the railroad crossings in the cities than to put up gates?

Clergyman—The poor ye are to have with you always.

Conscience—That sewing woman you see pawning her shawl has lived this winter with her two children in a room without fire. Are you wearing one of the shirts she finished?

Statesman—The workingman has the ballot and the newspapers. He is a free citizen.

Conscience—As the nights grow colder see how the number of girls on the streets increases!

Now what can a man of affairs, a business man, one who understands political economy and the Constitution of the United States and all that, do with such a disputant as this? The more the pride of America points to its magnificence, and boasts of its Declaration of Independence, the more does the new conscience point to the wrongs and sufferings of these miserable men, women and children—and so few of them, too!

All extreme cases, you say? Just so. It was the possibility of its extreme cases that destroyed slavery. The possibility of such extreme cases as these demands the abolition of the system and the philosophy which permits them.—Appeal to Reason.