

Independent School of Political Economy



DEL MAR'S History Precious Metals, \$3; Hist. Money, \$2; Hist. Monetary Crimes, 75c; Science of Money, \$1; Hist. Money in America, \$1.50; Hist. Money China, 50c; Hist. Money Netherlands, 50c. CAMBRIDGE PRESS, Box 166, M. S., New York.

FROM EARTH'S CENTER.

Through the kindness of A. Freeland, Mt. Pleasant, Tenn., The Director has received 8 copies of "From Earth's Center," by S. Byron Welcome (published in 1895 by Charles H. Kerr & Co., Chicago). This is, said the Boston Herald review, "an interesting romance that will be read by millions who find Progress and Poverty too abstruse, and will interest students who wish to trace the effects of the single tax reform on social institutions of all kinds."

Henry George said: "I most heartily commend From Earth's Center. It contains in entertaining form an explanation of the practical workings of the single tax, and is on many other matters of social concern suggestive to a high degree."

Mr. Freeland says: "It is a good work for beginners, young and old. Then Social Problems, etc., Progress and Poverty, and wind up with The Story of My Dictatorship."

From Earth's Center is a paper covered book of 274 pages. Postage will be about 5 cents. The eight copies are "free books." Borrowers will pay postage on to the next. Ask for the book.

WANTS CORRESPONDENTS.

Director I. S. P. E.: Your favor of recent date at hand. While I am ever ready to forward a book to the next reader, yet the holding for a few days of Ely's Outlines of Political Economy will enable me to review it; which will be to my profit. I am very glad to get the chance to read such books as are standard authority on the subject of social economics.

I wish to express to The Independent my sincere thanks for the chance not only to read such books as are within the pale of truth, but are a clear exposition of the subject under discussion. Today we are suffering more from our own carelessness than from anything else. I firmly believe in the people. I believe their cause is just. I believe if they will educate themselves and become familiar with economics, that they, the people, will solve many of the problems that are worrying the foremost thinkers. If those who are loyal to liberty are to have a rallying ground, it must be that which gives to the constitutional rights of the citizen a democratic interpretation. It is the contempt for human rights that leads to political rapine and which clouds progress with the crimes of the politician.

You may send me "The Science of Money," by Alexander Del Mar, and oblige.

If there are any of the readers of The Independent who wish to correspond on any of the subjects that interest them, that is, any economic question, which deals not so much with reform as with scientific progress, tell them to write me and we will try and make the subject interesting.

PERRY D. PLAIN.
Atwater, Ill.

THE LAND QUESTION.

Director I. S. P. E.: Have forwarded book No. 104 to Mr. P. A. Booker, Liberty, Tex.

The reading of "The Land Question" has given me an insight to the ownership of land which I did not see heretofore. This work should be read by every member of The Independent School of Political Economy.

As this is the busy season on the farm my time for reading is somewhat limited, but as soon as the busy season is over I expect to take advantage of your liberal offers. You will please send me Henry George's "Protection or Free Trade?"

C. E. DOTY.
Nehawka, Neb. R.F.D.12.

LOCAL TAXATION.

Director I. S. P. E.: I send you under another cover, as a donation to your library, a copy of "Burdens of Local Taxation and Who Bears Them," by Mr. Lawson Purdy, secretary of the New York tax reform association. This pamphlet is neither a plea nor a denunciation of any system of taxation, but a clear statement in concise form, as is expressed in the title, of the distribution of the various kinds of local taxes to the final payer. I do not know of any other book dealing with this subject, at least in such compact form, and I think it will be of value to those of your readers who are taking up the study of taxation. You will see at the end of the book that noted economists

are agreed that the conclusions arrived at in the book are accurate.

BOLTON HALL.
52 William st., New York, N. Y.

LITERARY NOTE.

Prof. Josiah Royce's Outlines of Psychology: an Elementary Treatise with some Practical Applications, will be published on the 10th of June by The Macmillan Co. In this volume the author is concerned solely with certain problems of the natural history of mind; metaphysical issues are not at all in question. The author's plan has led him to concern himself with elementary principles rather than with technical details, and to attempt practical applications of these principles rather than statements of the fascinating but complex special researches of recent laboratory psychology. "I presuppose, then, a serious reader," says Professor Royce in his preface, "but not one trained either in experimental methods or in philosophical inquiries. I try to tell him a few things that seem to me important, regarding the most fundamental and general processes, laws, and conditions of mental life. I say nothing whatever about the philosophical problem of the relations of mind and body, and nothing about the true place of mind in the universe. Meanwhile, I try to view the matter here in question in a perspective which is of my own choosing."

The American Farmer

"The American farmer," said Dr. F. Englehard, of Surprise, Neb., "is the rock upon which both socialism and the single tax will split and go to pieces."

Whether the doctor's forecast is correct, only time can tell; but it is evident that at present the American farmer is an important factor, and any calculations which ignore him are liable to bring an erroneous answer.

"The American Farmer" is the title of a book written by A. M. Simons, editor of the International Socialist Review, Chicago, and published by Charles H. Kerr & Co., 56 Fifth ave., Chicago, (cloth, 208 pp., 50c).

Populists and others who have tried to keep in touch with socialist literature, and keep informed on the subject of scientific socialism, have not failed to notice how utterly inadequate is all foreign writing whenever the field of agriculture is reached. As applied to manufacturing and transportation one can see marked similarities between foreign conditions and those in America; but in agriculture, none of these foreign writers seem to even faintly understand American conditions.

There is a wide field for such a work as Mr. Simons has entered. We may not agree with all his conclusions, but cannot fail to appreciate how faithfully he has given the facts. He remarks in the preface that—

"Anyone entering upon a new field of social thought is always more liable to error than he who follows the beaten path. There is scarcely a page in this book on which it was not necessary to draw conclusions or make decisions on points not previously discussed in theoretical works." And he finds the field so large that he was obliged to write either a monograph upon a narrow phase of the subject or sketch the outlines of the entire field of thought. He chose the latter.

"The American Farmer" is divided into three books: Historical; agricultural economics; and the coming change.

Under the historical head, Mr. Simons subdivides the United States into six groups: The New England States, The South, The Middle West, The Great Plains, The Far West, and The Arid Belt, and treats each separately.

Introducing him, Mr. Simons says, "The American farmer is a distinct and peculiar social factor. No other age has anything comparable to him. No other nation has his counterpart. His problems, his history and his future evolution present complications and relations unknown elsewhere."

The New England States, Mr. Simons finds, began as a theological autocracy, with the village as the social unit, comparable to the time of Tacitus and the isolated German communistic settlements known as the Mark (from which comes our modern word "market"). The so-called "democracy" of the "town meetings" was rather a property-holding theocracy of the most exclusive character. Strangers could enter a community with difficulty and were always subject to expulsion if they dared to question the opinion of the ruling class. Non-property holders were treated practically as chattel slaves through "indenture" devices.

The South, by the days of the re-

volution, had a different social organization. There the farm was the social unit; the government, a patriarchal despotism—the plantation master ruling a self-supporting community. Not more than 5 per cent held negro slaves, and the interstices in southern economy were filled up with "poor whites" who were crowded back into the inaccessible mountain districts, compelled to be self-supporting, trading little, and changing little till in very recent years.

The Middle West was peopled by pioneers who were driven out of New England as the great landed proprietors gobbled up the common land of the villages, breaking down New England feudalism and emerging into capitalism, with manufacturing dominant. These pioneers conquered the wilderness and their life gave the fullest opportunity for the development of individuality, with the closest dependence upon the social unit—the neighborhood or community who joined in "raisings," husking bees, log-rollings, "frolics," etc.

The Great Plains have a very different history. Railroads preceded the settler to a great extent. There were few pioneers and few pioneer hardships. In no part of the United States was the settler, from the start, so dependent upon others. He produced for sale; sold; and bought to supply his wants. (One thing that astonished me when I came to Nebraska in 1884 was to see a farmer haul a load of hogs to town—and return with a side of bacon!) "Instead of splitting rails," says Mr. Simons, "and laying a Virginia rail fence from materials ready to his hand, he was forced to patronize the barbed-wire trust." "Instead of towns arising as trade routes developed, the trade routes, in the form of railroads, came first and their owners arbitrarily decided where the centers of population should be located." Yet withal the wonderfully fertile soil, the farmer on the Great Plains "found himself helpless in the face of the most gigantic financial and corporate forces the world has ever known."

The Far West has already passed through three sharply defined eras: (1) That of Indian domination down to April 11, 1769, when began (2) Spanish domination at San Diego lasting 53 years, or to April 9, 1822, when (3) Mexican pastoral life began with the independence of Mexico; then (4) the American commercial era began, July 7, 1846, and now continues. Here almost alone can we find evidences of the permanent success of what is known as bonanza farming.

The history of the Arid Belt, Mr. Simons believes, "is filled with more tragedy, and its future is pregnant with greater promise than perhaps any other equal expanse of territory within the confines of the Western Hemisphere."

"For many years," he continues, "it was marked upon the maps as a great white blank indicating an inhospitable desert. Finally as the territory bordering upon it became more thickly settled and the pressure for land became ever fiercer, the line of settlements encroached more and more upon this stretch of apparently worthless soil. Following the times of occasionally rainy seasons, this line of social advance rose and fell with rain and drouth, like a mighty tide beating against a tremendous wall of the Rockies. And every such wave left behind it a mass of human wreckage in the shape of broken fortunes, deserted farms and ruined homes."

Lack of space this time prevents a fuller presentation of the second book. Mr. Simons finds that "one industry after another has left the farm and fled to the great city factory. Cobbling, spinning, weaving, dyeing, knitting, sewing have already gone and butter and cheese making with a host of other processes of farm work are developing into separate industries and joining the great procession toward industrial centers."

On the other hand, what work is left the farmer is done by complicated machinery and he is obliged to learn a multitude of trades almost as diverse as he formerly pursued, each one growing more and more complex. But in marketing his crops he is at greatest disadvantage, having practically no knowledge as to best methods and being wholly at the mercy of others—something he must master if he is to exist in the competitive system.

Mr. Simons, arguing rightly that "railroads and steamships, with elevators, cold storage and packing houses are as much a part of the necessary equipment for agricultural production as wagons, teams, granaries and barns," regards the farmer in the light of a wage-worker, because his "income is more nearly comparable to that of the wage-worker." In other words, allow the average farmer wages out of his income and there is nothing left for interest on capital invested. Hence, he argues that the

TRUSTS GOING OUT OF BUSINESS

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There is only one trouble with the trusts. They enable men to produce more wealth with less waste of energy than was ever possible before but they take most of the wealth away from those who do the work and give it to those who do the owning of stocks and bonds.

Suppose that we who work for a living should decide to do the owning ourselves, and to run the trusts for the benefit of all.

That would be SOCIALISM.

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interests of farmer and wage-worker are identical and that the "farmer must enter the political battle from the point of view of the laborer, not of the capitalist"—a point which populists will not dispute.

Some of Mr. Simons' criticisms of the populists will not be commented on at this time for lack of space, but will be taken up later. His book merits a careful reading by populists, nevertheless, if they are to keep abreast of modern thought. And if the co-operative commonwealth perchance should come via the government ownership or "state capitalism" route, Mr. Simons may thank the populists more than all others for the propaganda work they have done in that behalf.

CHARLES Q. DE FRANCE.

Grover—Trust Buster

Editor Independent: Your kind favor of the 8th inst. to hand yesterday, read and contents noted. I was proud of the six months' extension, as I was being anxious to keep posted with some of the discussions that are published in your noble paper and to read the sledge hammer blows you are giving the money gods. Of all trusts and corners the money corner is the worst; the common herd feels it the most and they are the class that is hurt by it.

I will distribute your samples you sent me and do all I can for your grand paper, although I am confined to home with old age and bad health.

I believe old Grover will be the next nominee of the so-called democratic party, and I hope so; he is a trust buster; he came very near busting it into smithereens—once before and I think he would finish it this time. The two old parties are like Jacob's cattle, ring streaked and yellow; they are a kind of mongrel, monkey, ape and baboon; they have lost all of the stripes of Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln and it makes me sick to hear one of the so-called democrats say, "I am a Jeffersonian democrat" or "a Lincoln republican." The leaders of both old parties are rotten to the core and won't do to trust. I want the pops to put out a good clean national ticket. Success is my wish to you.

J. W. RUTHERFORD.
Hayes, Tex.

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