

# The Philosophy of Freedom

An Open Forum for Single Taxers

## The Beast and His Burden

Fresh from his valet, breathing forth perfume,  
Swathed in the softest product of the loom,  
Full-fed and arrogant, the beggar rode  
And cursed the laboring beast which he bestrode.  
A pleasant beggar he, who asked mere mites,  
Such as Possession of the Public Rights,  
Franchises, Rights of Way, and title deeds  
To profit by our children's children's needs.

Another leaped upon the laboring beast  
Which fattered as he felt the load increased.  
The beggar burned with wrath, but found relief  
To see it was his trusted friend, the thief,  
A man to scale a congress, tie the hands  
And gag the tongues, while forcing his demands  
For booty and for bounty. Yet so wise  
A cracksman he, he puts it in the guise  
Of benefit to others, so that we  
Snatch off our hats to him and bow the knee.

But now the beast, by some strange impulse fired,  
Cried out: "Get off my back, for I am tired.  
I want to roll upon the earth. I need  
To rest a little and I want more feed."  
"Beast!" cries the beggar, striving  
with his goad,  
"We only ride to keep you in the road.  
Did we not feed and feed you, you would wander  
And starve to death out in the grasses yonder.

"Ass!" cried the thief "are you too blind to see,  
'Tis not your vulgar strength which carries me,  
But I support you by this tight-drawn rein?"

And I am almost weary of the strain,  
So if you hind again you want to stop,  
I swear I'll loose the rein and let you drop."

The laboring beast cried out in great alarm  
Prayed the thief to keep a steady arm.

And he keeps his patient, weary thief and beggar calmly  
Edmund Vance Cooke.

## OF SUPPLIES.

There is a Lincoln street in Chicago, the corner of wages. Most reduction—ing them, k. He make am

the blackboard, and prove the demonstration."

"That's easy, mister, mighty durned easy. - What's that you've got your hand on?"

"My watch chain," I replied, a little puzzled.

"Where did yer get it?"

All bartenders are inclined to be impudent, or, as they themselves would term it, "fresh," if you allow them liberties; but I knew that Sam had some object in view, so I answered, "At the jeweler's."

"Where did he get it?"

"At the manufacturer's."

"Where did the factory get the gold?"

"Well, I suppose you want to know where the gold comes from, eh?"

"Just so. From the mines, from the earth," said Sam.

"You are right."

"Where did yer hat come from?"

"Where did yer clothes come from?"

"Hold on, Sam. My clothes came from sheep."

"That's so; but where did the stuff that made the wool grow come from?"

"The grass that grew in the pasture, I suppose."

"Yes; it also came from the earth. Where did yer shoes come from?"

"Earth," he said, answering his own query. "Where did yer stockings come from?"

"Earth," he repeated. "Where does yer food come from?"

"Earth. Now, yer see, the fellow that owns der earth owns the base of supplies, as we used ter say in der army; and if we could catch on ter der enemy's base of supplies and hold it, der enemy was ours widout any more fighting, cause, soon as they used up what they had they would starve, unless they came to us as prisoners of war. Now then, mister, a few men—a mighty few—own the United States and the earth, the base of supplies fer the hull of us. That's the reason we are prisoners of war! That's the reason we are slaves! That's the reason I tend bar! That's the reason they fellers live all their lives under ground, piling up money fer you fellers, see?"

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misery and economic condition of the world as natural. I could not account for it, and I thought that there could not be any God or anything out mere chance, for no loving God would have arranged things here on earth in such a way as to cause suffering and want in the very midst of plenty. Henry George has shown to me a new light. He has set forth in the clearest and most comprehensive manner that God or whatever you may call that immeasurable Something, has established most perfect laws for the conduct of all human affairs. I now see that adherence to these laws will effect a most equitable and just distribution of wealth—a complete opportunity for the happiness of every living thing. I now see that what I thought was mere chance, or if there was a God, then of his lack of human interest in this world, has been purely the result of man's stupidity and indifference to natural law. It is this truth that has been awakened in me by Henry George, and this truth has aroused in me a religious faith that I thought had been forever "used out of me."

Yes, man has defended his stupidity on the ground that poverty and misery were natural and necessary to prepare us "for mansions in the skies." Many a poor, unenlightened wretch has reconciled himself to the thought that since here the things that would conduce to his best happiness, he would secure them there. And priestcraft, itself foregoing nothing to further its earthly happiness, has encouraged this monstrous idea in the minds of devotees. But the truth is dawning (slowly, but none the less surely) that such is not true, and that it has been told only to deceive.

The doctrine that "The poor ye have always with you," construing that doctrine as a decree of the all-father, is a blasphemous doctrine. It has driven thousands of such well-meaning people as my friend, from the whole consideration of religion in any phase. It has aroused in them only a contempt for a god that would so decree. And it ought to so arouse contempt.

No one can gain perpetual bliss by denying the full demands of his normal nature here. Nature's compensations are always complete. She metes good for good and ill for ill: at the moment of their commission. She can not be denied. The commission of every act adds to or detracts from the building of character, and character is life. It is character that makes perpetual life wholly desirable. There is no postponement.

In the last analysis the philosophy of Henry George is simply a demand that the folly of man be superseded by the wisdom of God. That if man would but remove his grip, fortified by statute law, then natural law would freely operate to bring peace and plenty and happiness into the world.

L. J. QUINBY,  
Associate Editor.

Detroit News: Every one of these taxes (on commodities and buildings) the ostensible tax payer—the men on the assessor's books—shifts to other shoulders. The only tax he can not shift is the tax on land values.

Journal of the Knights of Labor: The underlying principle of the single tax—that the earth belongs equally to all, and that the best way to secure substantial justice is to tax the occupant an amount equal to the yearly value of the land—is sound.

St. Louis Chronicle: The products of individual industry should remain at all times untaxed. Take the annual value of land without regard for improvements, no matter what it amounts to. The community could put this fund to better uses than the individual landlords.

New York World: One of the permanent obstacles to the growth and improvement of cities is the man who hoards and holds it for a rise. The policy in taxation should discourage against keeping lots vacant, and it does against improve-

son: Whenever there are uncultivated lands, it is clear that property have been violate natural as a condition and live

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