

**THE NEW UTOPIA; OR, PROGRESS
AND PROSPERITY. FREE
RAILWAYS; OR, THE ABOLITION
OF TOLLS AND TAXES; PP. 1-23**

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The New Utopia; Or, Progress and Prosperity. Free Railways; Or, the Abolition of Tolls and Taxes; pp. 1-23 by Alexander W. Johnston

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ALEXANDER W. JOHNSTON

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THE
NEW UTOPIA;
OR,
PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

AN EXPOSURE
OF THE EVILS PRODUCED BY UNWISE LEGISLATION,
AND
A SUGGESTION
OF THE MEANS WHEREBY THEY MAY BE
REMEDIED.

BY
ALEXANDER W. JOHNSTON, M.A.

Sydney:
TURNER AND HENDERSON.
1890.

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FREE RAILWAYS; OR, THE ABOLITION OF
TOLLS AND TAXES 1—24

PREFACE.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to state plain truths in plain and simple language, avoiding abstract propositions and abstruse digressions, which would tend only to confuse the thoughts and weary the minds of my readers without adding anything essential to the opinions presented for their consideration. As far as possible, words are used in their most simple and ordinary application, and if a meaning other than the most general may seem to be attached to any particular term, the context must be accepted in explanation. With regard to the term "producer," for example, it is clear, though not expressly stated, that it is applied only to those to whom produce belongs. I am aware that many authorities reckon among producers the Labourers employed in productive work, but erroneously, as I think, because the produce of their labour does not belong to them; they may never even see it, and they have no responsibility of any kind in connection with it. If a farmer employs one man to plough his land, another to harrow it, and others to perform each successive operation until his crop is finally disposed of; and next year he employs only one man to do all the work, is that one man any more a producer than those who had each done a part of the work the previous year, but who manifestly produced nothing? If the crop should fail, the labourer loses nothing, nor does

PREFACE.

he gain in the contrary case. Wherefore, as far as he himself is concerned, he cannot possibly be a producer, although his labour is productive labour, bearing to the product the same relation as the capital and experience of his employer, that is, he is a *contributor to production*.

Hence the meaning I attach to the term "producer" is "the owner of the product of labour," whatever it may be, who pays all the expenses of production and all the taxes on the product.

The reader's attention is specially directed to the evils produced by bad legislation, and to the faults of our present policy, as exhibited in the evils resulting from it, such as poverty, disunion, strikes and so forth, and in its oppressive and ever ruinous treatment of that class of our population upon whose welfare that of the nation depends, with whose prosperity all the people prosper, with whose decline the people all must suffer; and in the next place, to the nature and effects of the remedy proposed; lastly, to the urgent need of reform, irresistibly impressed upon the mind by the terrible disasters and dangers *now impending* out of the threatening thunder cloud of "the Labour Troubles," which are shown to be created and sustained by the maleficent operation of a vicious and injurious system of legislation.

The evils produced by bad laws having been traced from effect back to cause, and again from cause to effect, I have next endeavoured to unfold a plan, which commends itself to my judgment as most simple, efficacious and just, whereby we may sweep away those bad laws and all their evil offspring, and replace them with a policy calculated to promote the welfare and happiness of a prosperous and contented people.

THE NEW UTOPIA;

OR,

PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

IN "Looking Backward" Mr. Edward Bellamy has opened the eyes of the world to speculations about the grand possibilities that lie before us in the future. The picture he presents, however, though fascinating in every respect, is too finely drawn and too highly coloured to be received as a portrayal of reforms that are, as yet, within our reach. We must attain a much higher level of social, moral, and political development before the plane on which he elevates humanity will appear to lie within the bounds of possibility. For this reason, whilst viewing it with admiration and delight, we are compelled to acknowledge with a sigh that his picture is too good for us, as we are at present, to hope for its attainment. Our minds cannot frame any possible intermediate steps by which to climb so great a height, and though we cherish a fond memory of the glimpse of heavenly beauty we have seen in "Looking Backward," we sadly wish the author had shown us "the how and the why,"

that we might set to work on even a forlorn hope of realising for ourselves some at least of the beauties of his dream.

In the following pages an attempt is made to show how we may attain, not all that Mr. Bellamy has described, but a much nearer approach to his ideal than is practicable under any political system at present existing in the world. If we content ourselves with what is demonstrably within our reach we may perhaps elevate ourselves, step by step, to a plane from which the means of reaching even a better state than he has imagined for us may at length become apparent.

Mr. Henry George has indicated the lines of a reform which may serve for the first step upwards, but his great indignation against the wrongs, the poverty, and the suffering resulting from the abuse of a privilege our laws confer on all, has begotten in him a feeling that savours of animosity against landowners, who are innocent enough of any deliberate intent to wrong others by acquiring possession of land. Their doing so is in accordance with all our old ideas of right, and we ourselves make them landowners, by making the laws under which they not only *may*, but *must*, become landowners. It is therefore quite clear that no man is blameworthy for being a landowner, any more than Queen Victoria is to blame for being Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India, or Mr. Harrison for being President of the United States.