

very elementary education entirely at their own expense, they decide that the State shall exact sufficient from its citizens to afford all the opportunity of an education, or in other words the State or Commune deprives the citizen of a portion of his property for the benefit of his fellow-citizens; and as the extent to which this deprivation can be carried rests with the State—that is, with the majority—the Communistic principle is fully admitted, that the control of the fruits of individual effort is at the command of the State to whatever extent the State may consider it expedient. Here I may point out that taxation for such a purpose as education is exacted on a totally different principle from that imposed for the defence or protection of person or property. In the latter case, though the contribution may not be equal, the distribution equally defends all in the conditions which they owe to individual effort; in the former case the contributions are distributed with a view to equalizing at the individual expense the inequality of conditions which are the result of individual effort. This becomes more apparent as the exactions of the majority grow. In one instance of public education, to-day it is perhaps considered enough if the majority affords itself the opportunity of learning the three "Rs", but to-morrow it may demand, what is already demanded by many in its name, the opportunity of learning at the public expense any trade, profession, art or science which the various individuals comprising it (the majority) may choose to pursue. In which case it will be found that a very large share of the fruits of individual industry will be exacted by the State for the purpose of equalizing the conditions of its citizens. Nor do I see why these exactions should stop at this advanced point. If the majority decide that any citizen has a right to demand from the State that he or she shall be afforded the opportunity of fitting him or herself at the public expense for any pursuit which he or she may choose, it is very natural that he or she may demand that the further opportunity shall be given them for pursuing that path for which they have been especially educated. For instance, if a poor youth has demanded and received from the State the means of learning engraving, and when he has done so finds it difficult to get any engraving to do, I think he has a perfect right to turn round and say to the State: You afforded me the means of learning this art at a considerable expenditure of time and effort which has unfitted me to chop wood or plough, and now I demand the employment for which you have fitted me. If he does not get it we shall probably find that the art of engraving learned at the public expense is very likely to be employed in engraving bank or Government notes without authority. In fact, it is necessary to bear in mind, in advocating "Technical Education" at the public expense, that to educate an indefinite number of youths in any branch or branches of human effort, without securing them an outlet for the energies so cultivated, is to put most dangerous weapons into their hands, without giving them any object upon which to use them.

The *Educational Weekly* of Boston is quoted by R. S. W. in the article which I have taken as my text as also asserting that to drill youth to the use of particular arms is to establish a right, on their part, to demand the opportunity to make use of their training and arms. But, he replies, no such right can be demanded, for in that case the present objects of popular education should be supplied with opportunities for thinking, or should be placed in business when it trains them in commercial pursuits. Certainly it should, if it has specially trained them for commercial pursuits. If, however, it has only trained them generally in those elements which strengthen their powers of observation and thought, it creates no further right on their part, for no one possessed of powers of observation and thought can fail, so long as he lives at all, to find limitless opportunities for the use of both sets of faculties. I think, however, that if my argument has been worth anything, it will be evident that even a State elementary education, emanating from the majority, is Communistic in its nature, and that how much further this shall be carried—whether it is to stop short at the next step, or whether all are to be afforded the opportunity of acquiring any or every branch of human knowledge, short of which there is no logical stopping point—is plainly a question of degree and not of kind.

There is one point, however, which, so far as I know, our unconscious Communists have overlooked in their advocacy or adoption of communistic measures, and that is, to advocate or adopt communistic safeguards. For instance, if the State is to afford any citizen the opportunity of becoming a farmer, watchmaker or sculptor, it has the right, which it must exercise on peril of injury to the State, to dictate as to how many and who of its citizens are to be respectively farmers, watchmakers or sculptors. If it does not exercise this right, we shall find that all the pleasant and popular branches will be crowded with a clamorous mob, while the more disagreeable or less highly esteemed pursuits are being starved.

If it is said we already suffer from this crowding of favourite and depletion of disagreeable pursuits, I answer, This is true; but at present the public pays individually for its training in any particular branch, and incurs individually the cost and risk, and therefore has no right to any consideration from the State if its calculations are not justified; but if the State itself afforded its citizens special training in various branches of knowledge, it is, as I have before said, not unreasonable that it should guard against its opportunities being thrown away from want of a field for their exercise.

I have now shortly and I hope clearly drawn the public attention to what I believe to be the real nature of one of the most popular movements of the day; in so doing I write neither as the advocate nor the opponent of popular education or any other more or less communistic movement but merely from a sense that it behooves the public to recognize clearly the principles upon which it is called upon to act, so that it may the better control its actions in such a manner as shall at once secure to itself their full benefit freed from those dangers which are inseparable from all new movements.

Roswell Fisher.

PROTECTION VERSUS FREE TRADE.

In the *SPECTATOR* of Nov. 29th will be found an article by "J. E. H. T." on what he calls "Protection fallacies." The first one given by him is as follows: "If the consumer buys from a manufacturer in the country, no money goes out of the country." "J. E. H. T." cites as a point in favour of his theory that such is not the case, that landholders in Jamaica declare it actually cheaper to sell off and buy from the dealer. If I sell my produce to a dealer at sixpence a pound and buy it back from him at fivepence a pound, of course it is cheaper; but if I pay him eightpence a pound for it, it cannot be cheaper. Say that I am a large sugar grower, and have no facilities for refining, it would be cheaper for me to sell the raw sugar to the refiner and buy back the refined article; and if the refining is carried on in my own country, so much the better for me, as the freight will be less, and if there is any profit to be gained by the refiner, the profit will remain in my own country. As to Adam Smith having exploded the idea that a man saved money by uniting under his own hand all the processes of producing an article of manufacture,—it is not true; a man's success in this direction is merely limited by his talents and by his facilities for carrying on the processes. Could not a man grow sugar-beets, own a sugar refinery, and sell the sugar?

"J. E. H. T." states that as Canada produces a much larger quantity of breadstuffs than is required for the support of her inhabitants, and of course sells it to the foreign consumer, therefore she ought not to have a protective tariff, as the ships which transport the grain would be obliged to return in ballast, thereby lessening the price obtained for the breadstuffs. This is a merely temporary view of the matter, as the idea of Protection is to establish manufactures, thereby increasing the population of the country, which population will consume the breadstuffs, and the grower of the breadstuffs will not have to pay freight on his produce *even one way*; whereas with Free Trade he has to pay *at least one way*, no matter how cheap that may be. If we secure our domestic markets to our own manufacturers, we shall necessarily improve, increase and create markets for our farmers; employments will be in accordance with the wants of the people. If we should confine ourselves to agricultural pursuits, we should be entirely dependent upon foreign nations for our manufactures, and would be giving away our markets for the products furnishing the most profitable return, as agriculture is the least profitable of all pursuits. Further, as we have a surplus of breadstuffs, the foreign markets are thereby surfeited, and the prices obtained by the producer are generally unprofitable (as a strict matter of interest), so that the foreigner obtains from us our produce at less than cost, and we purchase his manufactures, thereby supporting his mechanics in preference to our own. The question is not so much what a nation can produce, but what they can sell and get paid for; that is to say, if x (quantity of labour expended in agriculture) only brings in one hundred dollars, and in manufactures brings in two hundred dollars, there can hardly be any question as to which is most advantageous. The gain of every individual necessarily increases the gain of the community when the individual gain arises from production, but not always when it arises from trade and commerce; because in the latter case the gain is at the expense of the purchaser and consumer. It does not matter to people who have no means of payment how cheap articles may be nominally; on the other hand, it is immaterial to buyers how high the nominal price of domestic goods may be (under a protective tariff), provided they have employment at prices equally high. The true test of cost to the consumer is, not the nominal price, but the difficulty or facility of payment.

"J. E. H. T." states that he has been amused to find it taken for granted that progress in manufacture meant progress in civilization. How he can deny the fact that manufactures are not even an evidence of civilization is more than I can understand, and I would submit the following for his consideration and study. I regard civilization, as defined, to be culture, refinement, and material improvement, and do not, at this time, consider civilization as affected by Christianity, as we are considering it as affected by manufactures. In the first place, wandering tribes are always savages or barbarians—are poor, ignorant and destitute, and may be called uncivilized. Their first step in civilization is the securing of fixed abodes, primarily, where food is abundant; and, secondly, they have to get their food by industry, using tools in their industrial pursuits. As their wants increase, so do their manufactured articles, these articles being a direct and distinct evidence of civilization. Manufactured articles are not only an evidence of civilization, being evidences of higher wants, but are also a