

great new areas are taken up, the landlords drawing an ever-increasing tribute from those who actually cultivate the soil.

### **Intensive Cultivation. Law of Diminishing Returns.**

But some one will say "Why not escape this by applying more cultivation to the first quality land—intensive cultivation as it is called now?" Up to a certain limit this is quite possible, but everyone knows that if we put a second "dose" (say an extra \$30 worth per acre) of capital and labour into our first quality land, it will not yield us an additional 30 bushels of wheat. Doubling the cultivation does not double the crop, and even if it did we could not go further and say that trebling or quadrupling the investment of capital and labour on an acre of ground would treble or quadruple the crop. Everybody knows they will not, probably because the crop is as much a product of the sunshine and the rain as it is a product of human effort, and we cannot double or treble the supply of sunshine and rain at will when we double the capital and labour. The natural productive forces are not doubled when the human forces of labour and capital are doubled, and therefore we cannot anticipate a doubled product. This is a general law known as the law of diminishing returns and applying to all production, but especially noticeable in agriculture and other so-called primary industries, where—so to speak—nature works along with man. Marshall defines it thus: "An increase in the capital and labour applied in the cultivation of land causes in general a less than proportionate increase in the amount of produce raised."

It is impossible, therefore, to escape by intensive cultivation from the inevitable accruing of rent. The pressure or rent, however, may be lessened and the law of diminishing returns to some extent neutralized by improvements in the art of agriculture, which may enable us to raise a larger yield from each acre of cultivated ground at the same investment of capital and labour. This larger yield

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