

INTRODUCTION

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abstract and the concrete, the general and the particular, they have thrown new light on the material world and its laws within a century. It seems to be time to apply their method to economic facts and changes.

The present volume is, within the limits set by its range of subjects, an effort in that direction. In it I have discussed those matters with which study and experience have made me best acquainted, and endeavoured both to fit laws to facts and to combine facts so that their laws may be made plain. Just such a combination of the inductive and the deductive methods every successful man makes every day of his life. It is, indeed, the main secret of his success. It should, therefore, make clear what are some of the things that we must seek and what some of those that we must avoid. This volume does not attempt to cover the immense field; but simply, as a collection of studies in applied economics, to erect here and there, along the road the nation travels, certain sign-boards where the ways diverge and mark them, "Highways of Progress." The effort may not be successful, but it is at least sincere.

The first chapter indicates the scope and outline of the work. It consists of an address delivered in 1906 before the Agricultural Society of Minnesota. This was published nearly a score of times by individuals, institutions and societies in this and other countries, and has been translated into several languages. It was the first to announce the doctrine of Conservation as a whole, and not an incident of some one occupation; and it sought through this to fix the nation's