New Era Economics, Presenting A Rational Theory Of Value

Frederick Brown John
Title: New Era Economics, Presenting A Rational Theory Of Value

Author: Frederick Brown John

This is an exact replica of a book. The book reprint was manually improved by a team of professionals, as opposed to automatic/OCR processes used by some companies. However, the book may still have imperfections such as missing pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were a part of the original text. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections which can not be improved, and hope you will enjoy reading this book.
New Era Economics

PRESENTING A

RATIONAL THEORY OF VALUE

BY

JOHN FREDERICK BROWN, B.S.

Published and For Sale by the Author
529 EAST NEW YORK ST., INDIANAPOLIS, IND.
1918

PRICE:
IN PAPER COVER - - .50
CLOTH BOUND - - $1.00

RIGHT OF TRANSLATION RESERVED
CONTENTS

PART I. Introductory.

CHAPTER. Page.

I. Scope and Function of Economics... 5

PART II. Value.

II. General Value Notions. Anderson and Davenport on Value... 36

III. Value Based on Labor of Standard Efficiency... 51

IV. Economic Status of Professionals and Artists... 66

V. Equal Value of, and Equal Compensation for All Kinds of Skilled Labor... 74

VI. Equal Value of Skilled and Unskilled Labor... 87

VII. No Labor Without Skill. Present Tendency Toward Equal Compensation... 115

VIII. Ultimacy in Value. Summary of Value Theory... 127

PART III. Application.

IX. Application of Value Theory. Some Objections Answered... 143

X. New Era Society. Further Applications of Value Theory... 162
PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Chapter I.

Scope and Function of Economics.*

Any fairly well informed person who takes up the study of economics must be struck by the variety and the conflicting character of doctrines presented by different schools of political economy; and he could not help noticing the difference of viewpoint, taken by various writers, as to what is the proper function and scope of the science of political economy; a difference which necessarily must affect the deductions and the teachings of the respective writers in a marked degree. One class of economists may be credited with a distinct desire to give a moral side, or content, to their theories. These were unquestionably men of strongly humane and kindly instincts, men who saw the widespread misery of the greater number of their fellow beings, the almost universal poverty and degradation of the masses, largely self-inflicted perhaps, but more largely imposed by circumstances, by customs, and by institutions over which the victims have no control; such as the misfortune of sickness or

*Any reader of this book who is versed in economics is advised to turn at once to Part II, which presents the author's value theory; since that is the part which, if any, would be of interest to such a reader.
of native incapacity, of enforced idleness, precariousness of work, and meagerness of compensation, especially in the case of unskilled labor. Contemplating this widespread suffering, these large-souled humanitarian men took thought and set about enquiring the cause, and endeavored to find remedy and means of betterment. To this class unquestionably both Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill belong; for, though they may not have made any explicit statement to that effect, yet, it seems to me that a distinct undertone runs through their books, indicating a strong desire to be helpful; to improve conditions; to abate evils and errors which result in human suffering; and to assist in bringing about a nearer approximation to economic justice than obtained in their day. Besides being economists, both were moral philosophers and writers on morals; Adam Smith being a teacher of such, as Professor of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow University.

In this class of humanitarians can also be listed several American economists. Among these is Henry C. Carey, author of Principles of Social Science, on almost every page of which can be noticed his intense desire to teach that which he believes essential to human welfare. This is admirably expressed in the preface to the one volume manual, into which his three volume work has been condensed by Kate McKean (1864). This, in part, reads as follows:

“Why do misery and crime exist? Why when so large a portion of the earth is yet unoccupied are human beings suffering for food, and
crowded together in unwholesome dens, to the sacrifice of decency, comfort and health? Why does one nation export food of which its own members are in need, while another sends its manufactures throughout the world although hundreds at home are scarcely clothed? Why are nations and individuals seen elbowing each other, so to speak, for room to live? Why are we called on to see everywhere an uneasy jealousy among communities, each watching with an unfriendly eye the expansion of the other—the strong ever encroaching upon the rights of the weak? Why should the chief European nations wage a ceaseless warfare against the industry and prosperity of the world at large? In short, what is the cause of the measureless woe that exists in this fair world which the Creator pronounced to be very good?"

"Who that has ever reflected upon human affairs has not asked himself these questions, has not at some period of his life sought to solve these problems? Is there no law regulating human affairs? Is there no principle, broad, simple, comprehensive, which can account for all this confusion, and reconcile these contradictions? If so, where is it to be found, to whom has it been revealed? Has the Newton of social science not yet appeared?"

Francis Wayland, Professor of Economics and Moral Philosophy, and President of Brown University, prepared a textbook in the preface of which he says: "The principles of political economy are so closely analogous to those of moral philosophy that almost every question in the one
may be argued on grounds belonging to the other."

Wayland never loses a certain moral attitude toward his subject, and he teaches it as a means to human welfare; and I mention him here in order to list him in the class of humanitarian economists.

Henry George, whom some would deny a place among economists, is another American philosopher and writer on economics who heart and soul is intent on abolishing poverty, and who sought to establish unfailing employment and general welfare by destroying monopoly ownership of land through his single tax scheme.

In the class of humanitarians also belongs Richard T. Ely, of Wisconsin University. He says, Chapter I. of his Outline of Economics:

"Animating the entire subject, blended of course with the love of truth for truth's sake common to all sciences, is the persistent hope that by systematic study we may eventually abolish the material poverty which deadens and dwarfs the lives of millions of our fellows. Economics is a science, but something more than a science; it is a science shot through with the infinite variety of human life, calling not only for systematic, ordered thinking, but for human sympathy, imagination, and in an unusual degree for the saving grace of common sense. . . . Satisfaction of social need, not individual profit, is the objective point of the science."

"Economics treats of man; but the supreme importance of man in the study of wealth has not always been appreciated by those who have