



# WILEY

---

Review

Author(s): E. C.

Review by: E. C.

Source: *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Mar., 1917), pp. 316-318

Published by: Wiley for the Royal Statistical Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2340462>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 06:19 UTC

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).



*Royal Statistical Society, Wiley* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*

whole of the scales of remuneration into a new and higher class? Similar problems arise in the nationalization of the coal supply, but as we are on the eve of a real experiment in this direction it may be possible to bring the main features of these proposals to a real test which it is to be hoped will not be prejudiced by the stress and wear of hurried management in war time. It seems that on the financial side, the prospects of the National budget from these two ventures are well founded, but one must speak with less certainty upon the experiment of State Insurance, the case for which is not made with the same clearness and conviction, although it is plausible enough. The final chapter—"a revolution in the Income Tax"—is well written, practical and accurate to a degree rarely found in papers upon the subject. It contains various reasonable suggestions for removing anomalies and stopping evasion, but its main feature is a plea for the "family income" as the basis of true faculty, so arranged that the separate taxation of bachelors and childless couples would be quite unnecessary because they would be automatically "hit" in the absence of the various family allowances. Finally, a special capital tax of 10 per cent. is lightly sketched out, designed to pay off 1,200 millions of debt, but as it is to be raised over ten years by 1 per cent. annually, and to have a correlated poll tax on workers, no really good and sufficient reason has been given, economic or practical, why it should be distinguished from the ordinary income tax. Taken as a whole, the work is of unusual value, and doubtless in another generation one will wonder why it was ever called "bold." But the administrative efficiency and adequacy of the new bureaucracy are taken for granted throughout, and nowhere ever doubted: it is here perhaps that the individualist will still regard himself as unshaken by Mr. Webb's mighty onslaught.

J.C.S.

5.—*The Progress of Capitalism in England.* By W. Cunningham, D.D., F.B.A. xi + 144 pp., cr. 8vo. Cambridge: University Press, 1916. Price 3s. net.

Dr. Cunningham seems to have been "scandalized" by the "pragmatism" of the economist who said that history should have some practical aim, and that "some moral, some guidance should be afforded by it." The economist in question happens to be personally interested, above all other things, in the biography of milestones, which often happen to be more or less than a mile from their neighbours for reasons other than errors of measurement, and thus occasion problems which require laborious research and exercise of the acutest logical faculty for their solution. He enunciated the doctrine which scandalizes the historian in order to facilitate the postponement of this branch of study till his declining years when he is no longer fit for the promotion of more useful science. Whether the doctrine is true or not, Dr. Cunningham admits that he has on this occasion elected to follow it: the intention of the little work before us is "to illustrate the method of treating Economic History

“which may best meet the requirements of those who are less interested in the economic interpretation of political changes in the past than in obtaining a clear insight into the conditions of the present.”

“Capital” Dr. Cunningham understands in the very convenient sense in which it is commonly used when it is not under definition by some economist, politician or socialist with some end of his own to serve—the sense of money to invest or invested: “capitalism” is “a social organization which implies throughout the possession of capital,” and it follows after “natural economy” and “organization in cities.” This makes the subject of the book and the lectures at the London School of Economics which gave rise to it very wide—“The Progress of Capitalism in England” is the progress in England of the social organization which implies throughout the possession of capital. With so wide a subject and so small a space to put it in, it is not surprising that the book should give some impression of slightness which may have been absent from the lectures given to an audience impressed by the lecturer’s vigorous personality. Sometimes everyone will agree; no one is going to quarrel with “However injurious State interference may have been in the past, by checking individual enterprise, the experience of the nineteenth century has convinced the British public that State interference is sometimes necessary. It is admittedly desirable in matters of hygiene and education; and it is coming into vogue increasingly in connection with industry, since State regulation is the most effective means of preventing either capitalists or labourers from pursuing their own interests to the injury of the community. It is, however, much to be regretted that in our time the necessary interference with the individual should appear to be haphazard and arbitrary, instead of depending on a carefully thought out policy as to what is good for the country as a whole, both in its moral and material aspects.” It is so easy to recommend a carefully thought out policy! The lesson of economic history here appears too indefinite to be of use. When a definite conclusion is drawn, as for instance that various parts of the British Empire, including Ireland, ought to have complete fiscal autonomy, the argument in its favour is too slight either to convince opponents or even to confirm in their opinions those who agree with Dr. Cunningham (and the present reviewer) on this point. In his dealing with agriculture, indeed, Dr. Cunningham may be justly accused of something worse than superficiality. There is no more striking parallel in economic history than the cry for a “remunerative price” in 1815 and its revival at the present time, and nothing more instructive than the failure of the attempts of the legislature of the earlier time to give such a price. But Dr. Cunningham adopts the doctrine of remunerative price wholeheartedly, and apparently chiefly in order that the farmer may “do his land justice.” What is justice to land? Getting more out of it than is justified by the price at which its products can be obtained from other land. Somebody

will have to pay for that, and justice to land seems to mean injustice to men. Then where are the historical facts from which Dr. Cunningham deduces the doctrine that "conscious co-operation" between the governments of different countries "will be more stable" and lasting than the haphazard intercourse, with its incidents of "glutted markets and occasional interruptions, which arise when international commerce is left entirely to be conducted by private capitalists"? In these days we sigh for the glutted markets of the past as the Israelites did for the fleshpots of Egypt. We would gladly forgive the private capitalists if they brought them back, and the "occasional interruptions" of ordinary commerce seem not very alarming beside those which have been produced by the efforts of Germany, who "is not perhaps to be blamed if she has pursued German interests and consciously exploited other countries for her own advantage" (p. 130). Was there ever wilder "pure theory" more contrary to all experience than this doctrine that conscious co-operation between states will be steadier than individual commerce?

In the final paragraph of the book the Archdeacon of Ely says it is only in religion that we find the condition which is most favourable to the creation of a federation of the world. We may hope, however, that the rising generation of economic historians, freed from the obsessions derived from successful Germany in the post-1870 period, may be able to assist by the adoption of less particularist views than those which have characterized their predecessors.

E.C.

6.—*The Homeworker and Her Outlook: A Descriptive Study of Tailoresses and Boxmakers.* By V. de Vesselitsky. With an Introduction by R. H. Tawney. viii + 118 pp., 8vo. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1916. Price 2s. net.

The inquiry on which this report is based began in May, 1913, and lasted until the autumn of 1914. During this time 877 tailoresses and 330 boxmakers were visited, many of them more than once. The tailoresses were living principally in the borough of Stepney, the boxmakers in Bethnal Green, Hackney and parts of the adjoining districts. A "credible guess" estimates the number of home workers in the tailoring industry as between 15,000 and 22,000, while in the boxmaking industry "they number approximately 2,000, that is roughly in the one case 11 to 16 per cent.; in the other 7 per cent. of the total number of women workers in the two trades." It should be added that the output per head of these home workers is considerably smaller than the output per head in the factory and workshops.

In the tailoring trade the home workers are to be found mainly in the south, south-east and south-west of England, while the boxmaker is rarely to be found working at home except in London and Birmingham. "Home work tends to spring up in those districts where the bad conditions of male labour make it almost indis-