



Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie

Lord Radnor Free Trade Speech

In 1839, Lord Radnor made in the House of Lords, one of customary speeches in favour of free trade. The Duke of Buckingham inquired of the noble Earl whether he believed that “a repeal of the corn laws would raise the rate of wages?”

“No” was the response of Lord Radnor. “I do not pretend to say that a repeal of the corn laws would raise wages; but then I think that, from the influence of many causes, wages are now above their natural level.”

“What” asked the Duke of Buckingham, “may be the level of wages which the noble Earl thinks too high?”

“NINE SHILLINGS A-WEEK” was the answer of the philanthropic free trader.

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