

RESCUED A COLLEGE

And Then Used That as a Lever for Prying
Loose all Kinds of Franchises

Editor Independent: In the New York American of the 27th ultimo, on the editorial page, is given the history of a man who "bought a coal mine." I want to give you a part of the history of a man who found a college in a financial strait and came to its rescue. It was located in a town of about 2,000 people; he paid off the debts, put up with the help of others very extensive buildings, he putting in nearly as much as all others put together did. His college was soon named after him. Soon he asked the city council to give him the franchises of the streets for railroad purposes for ninety-nine years. This was done. It was not long until he had a monopoly in the electric lighting of the city—and the price was put very high. Soon after he got a monopoly of the ice business and the price of ice was put two or three times higher than in other cities. Then he got a monopoly in the furnishing of milk for the college. Soon he must have been getting eight or nine thousand dollars per annum from these sources. I have not the exact figures at hand. Well sometimes the college failed to pay running expenses and he generously came to its assistance. One year I remember he put up nearly three thousand dollars besides giving a house and lot and some other things, and in the meantime the city had put up a system of water works, owned and operated by the city, of which all its citizens were very proud; but this public benefactor, having a monopoly in everything else, soon cast a covetous eye towards the city water works. Finally he thought his chance had come; he found a board of aldermen, a majority of whom were corrupt or else he corrupted them with his immense wealth, and he proceeded to lay his proposition before them. Soon they had the contract signed, sealed and delivered, and, Mr. Editor, right here I want to ask you to vouch for my veracity, for I have to give facts. The records of the city clerk's office will show which no man with an honest impulse in his heart can believe unless he is assured of the honesty of the man who tells them. What are these facts? Did he propose to accept the city's system of water works as a gift? Not he. Did he offer to take them as a gift with the addition of 100 thousand dollars added? Never!

Now bear in mind the city was pumping its water from an artesian well, and he had a system of water works about one mile from the well. His offer was to put in a pipe from his water tank to connect with city water works and to pump the water for them for 20 cents per thousand gallons for a period of fifty years. Now, do not forget that the city was then pumping its water at an average cost of about 5 cents per thousand gallons. The city was to keep up its pipes and extend them and renew them when necessary, collect the water rents and pay him this price at the end of every month.

Now, I am somewhat of an expert in figures, and as I figure it, if he had put his income from this contract at interest at 8 per cent as he took it in from the city he would have had at the end of the fifty years more than 670 thousand dollars, a sum far in excess of double the amount of the assessed value of all the property, personal and real, in the city as shown by tax assessors' books. Now, for what the taxpayers did at a heavy expense: they went into the courts and obtained an injunction stopping them in this villainous affair—because the mayor of the city did not sign it.

Did the old man stop there? No, he makes a new contract with the corrupt majority of the board of aldermen worse in some respects than the first one. The mayor, to his everlasting honor be it said, vetoed the thing. Then the philanthropist got a "one-horse" lawyer to try and get the council to pass it over the mayor's veto, but it was no go. At the next two city elections a desperate effort was made to defeat this honest mayor by the "one-horse" lawyer, but he won out both times.

This philanthropist poses as a Christian. God save the mark. So do the Rockefellers, and perhaps the Morgans; of this last, however, I am not sure, as I see he is reported to have gone to sleep at the funeral services of Dr. Curry; and again I see he gives a man 250 thousand dollars a year, the reason for which is being severely criticised. Bear this in mind, Mr. Editor, all millionaires will bear watching. Now, Mr. Editor, I want to trouble you with this article because all over this broad land millionaires are playing dirty tricks upon the people.

It is not often it is done through a

college, but in some way or other almost every city and even, too, little towns are in the courts fighting these thieves for their rights. In a Texas city some years ago an effort was made to sell the city a system of water works at double the cost of the system, no money to be asked for in 50 years, but interest at the end of 50 years would be three times what the principal was; but the people sat down upon the scheme; they have a good law there. The people must be consulted. Could the people had a say-so in Philadelphia when John Wannamaker offered 2½ million dollars for franchises that a thieving board of aldermen gave a few days after to a band of looters, they, the people, would have accepted Wannamaker's money and thereby lightened the burden of the taxpayers. And this brings to mind the fact, that college builder was from the Quaker City, so we want to make allowance for him in view of his associates at home.

VOX POPULI.

De Land, Fla.

Single Tax

Editor Independent: Your issue of December 18 contains a letter from Irl Dean of Marion, Ia., in which the following is found:

"Land monopoly might be restrained by Henry George's plan of single taxation by the government buying the land with greenbacks to be issued by the government. The land to be resold to actual settlers for payments of these greenbacks and a quit claim deed given in exchange."

This passage shows an erroneous view of the single tax. No single taxer advocates the government buying the land with greenbacks or any other kind of money.

If Mr. Dean will look into the law he will find that there exists no necessity of doing anything of the kind in most if not all the states of the union. In Iowa, Nebraska and all states except Louisiana, the common law of England is the rule of action governing all matters relating to land. Now the common law of England does not recognize anything like private property in land. Most people think land is owned like other property, but this is not so. When a man is said to own land the legal phrase is that he is a tenant in fee simple. Now the word tenant means simply a holder—a person who has temporary possession of the land as long as he pays the fee or tax exacted by the real owner—the state or the people as a whole. The single taxers do not propose that the people should buy what they already by right own. Such a proposition is on its face an absurdity.

All indications now point to a revival of an energetic non-partisan crusade in behalf of the single taxes, pure and simple. It is therefore important that at this juncture all persons inclined to single tax should have correct views of what it is and what is intended to be done. The single tax involves the total abolition of the tariff and internal revenue systems of taxation by which the national government is now maintained. Instead of these indirect taxes over which the people have practically no control it is the single tax idea to substitute a direct tax to be collected by the local governments and paid to the national government. In the states it is proposed to abolish all taxes on personal property and improvements to land. This leaves only land value to be taxed. The proposition is a gigantic one and will not be carried into effect for years. It is questionable whether it will be ever accomplished under our present form of representative government. The plutocratic interests are too much in control of all branches of our present government to let the single tax have much chance of success.

Direct legislation through the initiative and referendum by placing the political power in the hands of the masses of the people may bring about this great reform. As a single taxer I am willing to submit the matter to the people as a mass as soon as they get a government which they really control. I am quite confident that I could prove that single tax would be to the best interests of 99 per cent of (or even more) of the population. WM. N. HILL, M. D.
Baltimore, Md.

God-Ordained Revenues.

Editor Independent: Some wise and witty person has remarked that truth lies at the bottom of a well; that most people are willing to let her stay there, while still others would rap her knuckles if she attempted to climb out.

I am inclined to think that the editor, in his attempt to break the force of my argument that the single tax is a God-ordained law, has been guilty

The Silent Salesman



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this time of rapping truth's knuckles. In his reply, "Freaks of the Mind," issue of March 12, he confounds men with society. These are two wholly distinct and different things. Let this distinction be made, then let anyone inclined to dispute the existence of a natural revenue for society, consider again the analogy I used, namely, that after the same manner in which the Creator has provided sustenance for the child in the breast of the mother He has likewise provided revenues for society (not for men, who are the individual units of which society is composed). This natural revenue is the rent of land which single taxers propose to take in the form of a tax. Further, for society to refuse to take this revenue, and instead permit individuals to misappropriate it, is the primary cause of most of the ills which afflict society, even as withholding the milk in her breast injures the mother and robs the child of the nourishment which the Creator intended for it.

Now the only valid objections to these assertions that I know of are, first, to deny God or the existence of a Creator; second, to deny that God or the Creator was wise enough, or beneficent enough, or had enough presence to foresee the needs of society and provide for those needs; third, to admit that there is a God, that He had enough wisdom to do this; but to refuse to believe that He designed society should derive its revenues from a single tax on land values. Take your choice, but have a care. If the last mentioned position is taken, then it's up to you to discover and reveal what revenue the Creator did design for the uses of society.

C. F. SHANDREW.

Germantown, Pa.

(If it is really true that it is up to the editor of The Independent to discover and reveal what revenue the Creator did design for the uses of society, then he is in the worst fix that he ever got yet. He never claimed that he had the power to discover, or the authority to declare what the designs of the Almighty were. He has even held that no man ever held a commission from God authorizing him to declare the "designs" of the Almighty. If Mr. Shandrew has such a commission will he please forward it to The Independent so that the signature can be examined and its genuineness proved.—Ed. Ind.)

Sell Your Land While Prices are High

Land values are higher today than ever before in the history of the state. It is an unpleasant fact, but our real estate values fluctuate very materially. However, extremely high prices or extremely low prices never prevail for a long period of time. Now is the opportune time to sell property. Several thousand men have taken advantage of these high prices and sold their property during the past year; many more will do so during the coming year. It looks like we will have an exceptionally good crop in Nebraska this coming year, and if that is true there will be a very heavy immigration of home-seekers to this state during the coming summer and fall. These men will come from the great farming districts of Iowa, Illinois, Missouri,

Indiana, etc.

We propose to help promote immigration to this state. Within a few weeks we shall commence the preparation of the most extensive list of property for sale ever seen in Nebraska. This will contain a complete catalogue of all lands listed with us for sale, both farm and ranch. Many thousand copies will be printed and judiciously circulated throughout the above mentioned states. A large and systematic campaign of advertising will be inaugurated, and we propose to place our catalogue of Nebraska lands in the hands of every prospective buyer. This will enable us to dispose of a very large amount of land within the next year.

If you have anything to sell it will pay you to write for blank and list your property with us, and thereby get the benefit of this extensive advertising. We desire to put the copy for this catalogue in the hands of the printer as soon as possible, so if you will allow us to help you sell your property, please act promptly.

WEBER & FARRIS,
Lincoln, Neb.

The Prussian Stock Food and Remedy Company have a reputation for manufacturing as good, if not the best, articles in the way of stock remedies, and are certainly worthy of the reputation they have gained. The proprietors being practical pharmacists of over 25 years' experience should be sufficient guarantee as to their goods being all they claim for them. We call attention to their special offer and anyone in need of anything in the way of stock food, poultry food, etc., we would suggest that they write the Prussian Remedy Co., if they cannot secure them from local agents.

Good Harlan County Farm

No. 631. 160 acres 3 miles north and one mile east of Huntley! 60 acres in wheat that goes with the farm; 110 acres in cultivation; 2 acres in alfalfa; plenty of timber for posts and fire wood; good pasture; 4-room house, barn 24x40, with granary and loft; four and a half miles from Ragan, thus giving choice of two trading points. Can give possession this year if taken at once. Price \$4,000. Weber & Farris, Lincoln, Neb.

W. B. Weekes, of Scotia, Neb., had a car of 1300-lb. steers on last Thursday's market at South Omaha, that brought the top price of the day, \$4. They should have been on Wednesday's market, but arrived several hours late. Cattle held over are usually called "stale" and sell at a disadvantage, but owing to the excellent way this car was handled by the commission house, Nye & Buchanan Co., Mr. Weekes says they held their place at the top.

The Independent knows a good opening for the right man to publish a reform paper. One of the Old Guard, who has grown gray in the service, desires to retire. He will sell at right figures. Location, Nebraska. Mention paragraph Y.