

The Philosophy of Freedom

An Open Forum for Single Taxers

THE CHALLENGE ACCEPTED.

Mr. Dodge's challenge to debate with the single taxers has been accepted by Mr. Wakefield of Kansas. The debate will be conducted as follows:

1. Mr. Dodge will open with a two-column article (1,200 to 1,400 words) which will be mailed to Mr. Wakefield, who will prepare an answer of the same length. Both will be published on this page.

2. Mr. Dodge will have a column for reply, and Mr. Wakefield the same space for rejoinder—both to be published together.

3. Mr. Dodge's surrejoinder, one column; Mr. Wakefield's rebutter, the same.

4. If both combatants are alive, it is likely they might continue for an issue or two more, but the editor's knowledge of common law pleadings carries him no further than the "sur-rebutter," and, hence, he cannot give a name to the succeeding pairs in the argument. It is somewhat like enumeration in arithmetic: One runs along glibly enough with "octillions nonillions, . . . octodecillions, nondecillions, and vigintillions," but that "etc." in the arithmetic is no more helpful in naming what comes after vigintillions than is Chitty's "etc." in acquainting one with what follows a surrebutter.

These articles will not run each week, but with an interval of two or three weeks between each pair. It is to be hoped that much good will result.

REPLIES TO MRS. TWITCHELL.

Mrs. Eliza Stowe Twitchell attempts to defend Henry George's theory of the laws of distribution in The Independent for August 13. The errors she attempts to point out in my article of July 2 are of very little importance compared with my main arguments, which she did not attempt to refute. She admits that my logic is correct, but disputes my premises. I will attempt to prove my premises, and show that it was a false premise that prevented Mr. George from working out the laws of distribution correctly.

But first let me explain my motive in writing these articles. I am a single taxer, and want to do what I can for that reform. I believe that Henry George made a mistake in regard to the laws of distribution, that that mistake prevented him from solving the money question, that it prevents his followers from seeing the importance of the money question, and that it prevents the single tax movement from making the progress it otherwise would.

It will be necessary for me to quote largely from Progress and Poverty and I may require considerable space in The Independent, but if I can succeed in uniting the followers of Del Mar and George the space will be used to the best advantage.

Mr. George asks: "Why in spite of increase in productive power, do wages tend to a minimum which will give but a bare living?"

"The answer of the current political economy is, that wages are fixed by the ratio between the number of laborers and the amount of capital devoted to the employment of labor. . . . In current thought this doctrine holds all but undisputed sway. It bears the indorsement of the very highest names among the cultivators of political economy. . . . And yet widely accepted and deeply rooted as it is, it seems to me that this theory does not tally with obvious facts. For, if wages depend upon the ratio between the amount of labor seeking employment and the amount of capital devoted to its employment, the relative scarcity or abundance of one factor must mean

the relative abundance or scarcity of the other. Thus, capital must be relatively abundant where wages are high, and relatively scarce where wages are low. Now, as the capital used in paying wages must largely consist of the capital constantly seeking investment, the current rate of interest must be the measure of its relative abundance or scarcity. So, if it be true that wages depend upon the ratio between the amount of labor seeking employment and the capital devoted to its employment, then high wages, the mark of the relative scarcity of labor, must be accompanied by low interest, the mark of the relative abundance of capital and reversely, low wages must be accompanied by high interest. This is not the fact, but the contrary."

Now I quite agree with Mr. George's argument just quoted, and if there were but two factors in production it would disprove the current doctrine that wages depend upon the ratio between the amount of labor seeking employment and the amount of capital devoted to its employment. As the case stands, Mr. George's argument proves that wages do not depend entirely upon the relative abundance and scarcity of labor and capital; but let us examine the third factor—land—before we condemn the current doctrine. At first glance the fact that wages and interest generally rise and fall together in new countries seems to disprove the current theory of wages; and neither Mr. George nor any other writer on political economy has succeeded in reconciling the theory with the facts; and Mr. George was forced to abandon that theory. He says: "We have seen that the current theory that wages depend upon the ratio between the number of laborers and the amount of capital devoted to the employment of labor is inconsistent with the general fact that wages and interest do not rise and fall inversely, but conjointly."

I will attempt to explain the apparent inconsistency between the theory and the facts: If there is any truth in the theory, the effect of an increased supply of capital upon wages must always be to raise wages; but as pointed out by Mr. George it seldom does actually raise them. Why? I can explain it best by using an illustration: Suppose a tug-of-war between rent and interest. Abundance of capital and low interest are pulling wages up and at the same time scarcity of land and high rent are pulling wages down. If rent is the strongest wages will fall in spite of the fact that plenty of capital and low interest are pulling them up. In new countries land is very plentiful and rent very low, while labor and capital are both scarce, and interest and wages both high; but as population increases capital becomes plentiful and land becomes scarce, the landlord appropriates all the benefits to be derived from abundance of capital, and wages fall with interest in spite of the fact that the effect of low interest on wages is to raise them. Wages depend partly upon the supply of capital and partly on the supply of land, and will be highest where both are plentiful and rent and interest both low.

It was Mr. George's failure to see this, that forced him to abandon the position in regard to wages and interest that the laws of distribution are laws of proportion. And as no amount of ability will enable a man to harmonize truth and error, his false premise, that the effect of high interest is to raise wages, was the cause of his failure to discover the laws of distribution.

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THE ANARCHIST CONSTITUTION.

By courtesy of the Radical Publishing Co., San Francisco, The Independent has received a copy of "The Anarchist Constitution," by one "D. I. Sturber," who calls himself an anarchist. Mr. "Disturber" adjoins his critics to "Know what you denounce and denounce, if at all, intelligently." Paraphrasing Mr. "Disturber's" advice, we might say to him: "Know what you advocate and advocate, if at all, intelligently." Mr. "Disturber" may be a "sure-enough" anarchist; but if he is, God pity the whole lot of them who hope to reach that ideal state of society wherein every man is a law unto himself and the negative Golden Rule is applied unceasingly.

"Anarchists," says Mr. "Disturber," "simply want that old original social

compact wiped out and something better substituted in its place." Well, well, well! Who is to write the new one? Oh, Mr. Disturber has already done that. He proposes that all constitutions, statutes, rules and regulations be wholly "wiped out" and in their place adopted his "anarchist constitution" of 225 sections. This "constitution" is a heterogeneous collection, a medley as it were, of nation, state and local statutes, gathered together without "rhyme or reason," without any apparent attempt at classification, each drawn to correct some "evil" which has disturbed Mr. Disturber.

It won't do. Anarchists, when they confine themselves to criticisms of existing conditions make telling points; but as a constructive force they pro-

mulgate forms for guiding the new society which would be a disgrace to a lot of twelve-year-olds framing a constitution for a country lyceum.

"JOHN WRYLAND."

The Independent acknowledges receipt of "The Travels of John Wryland," published by the Equitable Publishing Co., 317 North 4th street, Allentown, Pa., (cloth, 236 pages, \$1). From the copyright it seems probable that the author is Henry J. O'Neill. The story is ostensibly an account of the journey of John Wryland to Tibet and of his founding a kingdom on the Island of Palti.

The author evidently intends this book as a contribution to the literature of anti-imperialism and in a number of foot notes shows the historical connection between some of the criminal acts performed by the king of Palti and similar acts committed by various European monarchs and president of republics. On the whole the book is considerable of a disappointment; some of the passages are particularly fine, yet immediately following will be statements which can be characterized by nothing so aptly as the word "rot." The author is plainly attempting to imitate the style of Dean Swift in Gulliver's Travels, but in this role is a failure. Swift could make filthiness teach a lesson which would not soon be forgotten; the author of John Wryland in his imitation of Swift is even less effective as a teacher than is the ordinary commercial traveller with his stock of smutty stories. While there are some

good things in the book it is safe to say that it is not worth reading.

"THE AMERICAN HANDICAP."

The Independent acknowledges receipt of "The American Handicap," by Andrew S. Phelps, Joliet, Ill. Andrew says his book is "a little common sense, truthful history and mathematics applies to the money question." This is a paper bound book of 149 pages and is a collection of short essays on money question and bimetalism written by Mr. Phelps and published in the Joliet News at intervals during the past six years. It contains a large amount of information culled from various public documents and presented in a readable way. Especially interesting are the tables in the back of the book giving prices of wheat, cotton, variations in average annual price and the American Handicap showing disadvantage under which the American farmer is placed in his competition with agriculturists of other countries.

BARBARA VILLIERS.

Editor Independent: Appreciating the efforts you are making to secure for the country a restoration of its sovereign prerogative to control its emissions of money, whether of metal or paper, we beg your acceptance of the accompanying work of Mr. Del Mar ("Barbara Villiers," sent by book post), which shows, historically, how and under what circumstances that prerogative was lost. CAMBRIDGE ENCYCLOPEDIA CO. New York, N. Y.

IN EVERY STATE

Readers of the Independent are Enthusiastically Pushing the Educational Work

Since the last announcement long lists of new subscribers have day by day been received at this office. They have been secured by the men who have been readers of The Independent who know its worth and indorse the principles which it advocates. This steady increase in the circulation of The Independent shows that there is an increasing interest in those great fundamental principles, first announced in the new world by Jefferson and more than 100 years afterwards reaffirmed and again promulgated at Omaha in 1892. The loyalty and devotion of those who there consecrated themselves to the work of advocating equal opportunity for all and special privileges for none, has not abated as these new subscribers, which are the result of their work and of the converts they have made, plainly shows. These men are still on the picket line. Their firing is regular and their aim is sure. They march in open order now. It will be seen from the states represented that it extends from ocean to ocean and from the lakes to the gulf. But the line grows stronger. Whenever one of the Old Guard fires his last shot and passes on into the Great Beyond, not only does a new recruit take up his well-worn weapon, but another one besides comes with him.

The Independent will do its best to supply the ammunition for this long line of fighting patriots. It is rather costly work. Just in proportion as The Independent is more valuable than the plutocratic papers, its cost increases. They can make up their columns out of plates and their whole inside pages of ready prints, the matter of which has been prepared by literary hacks in the interests of plutocracy. The matter in The Independent is original from the first word in the first column to the last word on the last page.

The offer of five months for 25 cents, to assist in the educational work during this year's campaigns in the different states, is as low as can be made by a paper that must depend largely upon its subscriptions to pay expenses. The great 25-cent weeklies of plutocracy and the thousands of them that are sent free, are prepared in a different manner. Every word in them is a reprint that has appeared and been circulated among the people before. They are a second-hand "hand out" to the "lower classes" whom they so much despise, but whose votes they manage to get. This educational work should be pushed in Nebraska during the coming campaign. How many of the old readers of the paper will take a hand for the coming few weeks?

Among those who have been waging the battle for equal rights for all and special privileges to none and who have sent in lists of new subscribers since the last announcement are the following. It will be seen that there are active workers in the revival of populism in every state in the union. A. Shufelt, Ashburn, Mo. Stephen Shaw, Tompkins Corners, N.Y. Noel Harrington, Naples, N. Y. John Hartline, Willmot, O.

J. T. Greenwade, Willard, Mo. Leslie Pritner, Calumet, Okla. Scott Whitney, Hunter, Okla. H. Ellingston, Minnehaha, Minn. L. B. Fetter, Remote, Ore. S. G. Hankins, Avilla, Mo. Paul Carpenter, Partridge, Okla. Lars Talberg, Ramey, Minn. W. S. Dean, Delhi, N. Y. Wm. Donaldson, Middlefield, O. I. Lenord, Glenville, O. Geo. J. Menger, Palmyra, Mo. John A. Gaylord, Cuyahoga Falls, O. W. Stephenson, Moorefield, Neb. Ed. Pickering, West Milton, O. J. M. Clark, Deer Creek, Okla. Dr. R. H. Reemelin, 426 Straight st., Cincinnati, O. John Rose, Mattawan, Mich. P. Pearson, Silver City, Ia. M. D. Morse, Hickman Mills, Mo. S. K. Lewis, Parnell, Mo. C. E. Leiter, Drew, Mich. Sam'l Cross, Dekalb, Mo. John Gerard, Carthage, N. Y. W. J. Fuller, Cadams, Mich. Wm. Reaghard, Miola, Pa. Wm. Maxwell, Knightstown, Ind. Jacob Nicholson, El Reno, Okla. Frank D. Lyford, Campton Village, N. H. Dr. A. L. Davis, Findlay, O. E. Gay, Laporte City, Ia. H. C. Gwynn, Lexington, Ind. B. F. Yocum, Rochester, O. J. P. Hammond, Newkirk, Okla. Thos P. Withers, Monett, Mo. Rev. Adam Kern, Marysville, Mo. H. B. Hewitt, Stafford, Kas. John Deeds, Pataskala, O. Abner De France, El Reno, Okla. L. F. Ellsworth, Rose Hill, Ia. John Parson, Hillsboro, Ore. I. A. Ferguson, Lapote City, Ia. Alva Mackey, Palmyra, Mich. Jesse Ruland, N. Springfield, Pa. S. G. Hankins, Avilla, Mo. John Hughes, Patriot, Ind. Wm. Spalding, Murray, Idaho. A. G. Francisco, Albion, Neb. Jno T. Rawlins, Buffalo, Mo. Wm. Hussfeldt, Chickasha, I. T. G. W. Phifer, Findlay, O. W. O. Joynes, Louisburg, N. C. James McGraw, West Almond, N. Y. F. W. Anthony, Mattawan, Mich. James Dillon, Atwell, Ind. Henry Roeder, Evansville, Ind. J. P. Clough, Salmon, Idaho. S. E. Penn, Lebanon, Ore.

Suggests a Name

Editor Independent: I was an Abe Lincoln republican and would be yet, with several of the populist principles adopted in the platform. I wish to suggest a name for the party and that is, "People's Union Party"—the "union" part to be made up of all the best people of all parties that are in favor of reform.

As to fusing with any party, that is child's play. It won't do. The people's party tried that, and had it not been for it, it would have been at the head today. It is time for a new party, and the name should be the one I have suggested. JOHN J. DEEDS.

Pataskala, O. (The Independent is opposed to any change of name. People's party cannot be improved upon. It is the principles advocated that attract or repel—not the name. Plutocrats would fight just as hard against the party, no matter what the name might be, if the principles of the Omaha platform were still advocated.—Ed. Ind.)