

The Philosophy of Freedom

An Open Forum for Single Taxers

IN RE BUCKLEY.

Editor Independent: I see in The Independent of June 9 an article in criticism of Mr. Buckley's previous one in relation to interest causing all of our ills. Mr. Paton has failed to understand Mr. Buckley's assertions at all.

Mr. Buckley sees no difference between interest and rent. Land rent is the same as interest; it is interest on monied investment. Rents of all kinds are only interest upon money invested. Profits from railroad investments are of the same nature.

Mr. Buckley's idea is that when interest ceases profits without labor would cease. He contends that government should furnish the necessary money to the people at cost, so that no one should be compelled to pay interest to the money lender. He thinks he can see how this can be accomplished through the referendum.

Mr. Buckley is a man about 84 years of age, and a most wonderfully preserved old man; and he is a grand and noble thinker. I saw him yesterday, and he was giving me his views; and, as above stated, I should be pleased to have Mr. Buckley meet Mr. Paton and to hear Mr. Buckley argue his points with Mr. Paton. I think he could give Mr. Paton some points and to spare. Mr. Buckley is a strong populist, and he is continually spreading the "gospel" of the upbuilding of the human family.

J. M. FOWLER.

Oakland, Cal.

(Because, forsooth, a man takes money and invests it in food; eats the food and converts it into latent human energy; then sells that energy to another and delivers it—that is no good reason for calling wages "interest.")

And the same is true of compensation for the use of land.

Mr. Buckley has the right idea, however, even if he does try to make it cover too much ground. The real curse of interest is that tribute which must be paid the banking fraternity not only for all—or substantially all—the coined dollars and paper substitutes which get into circulation; but also for millions and millions of what Albert Griffin calls "hocus pocus" dollars, known technically as bank credits or plain, every-day "deposits."

With that interest eliminated—and Mr. Griffin tells how it can be done—the little transactions between individuals would not be noticed. Send a quarter to Albert Griffin, Topeka, Kas., and get a copy of his "Hocus Pocus Money Book." It will be a power in the coming campaign.

But the rent question still remains. It seems to the Independent that a practical application of Henry George's single tax—to prove beneficial—must necessarily carry with it monetary legislation which would settle the questions of land and money together—or the problems of rent and interest, if you please.

While technically called "interest," payments for use of capital are really short time, temporary purchases of capital—because it eventually wears out. But the "interest" the banking clique receives by controlling the issue of money is really a polite form of highway robbery.—Associate Editor.

Declaration Of Independence.

Cincinnati, O., July 10, 1904.—In discussing this subject in the Vine Street Congregational pulpit, Herbert S. Bigelow, the pastor, said in part:

A Chicago preacher declared the other day: "There never was a more interesting falsehood than 'all men are born free and equal.' Freedom is something to be won. Men are not born free."

These words are taken from the public press. He may have qualified them. But as they stand, they seem to assume that either the authors or the readers of this Declaration are fools.

The men who put their names to that Declaration well knew that they might be signing their death warrant. They understood quite as well as this preacher that freedom had to be won. What made them great was the conviction that under God they were entitled to their freedom, and that the men who tried to rob them of it were offenders against heaven's laws.

A century and a half removed from the bullets of the red coats, does the preacher stand in his pulpit in security, and tell our youth that the men who bequeathed them their liberties "laid off upon the world interesting falsehoods which should be outgrown?"

There were greater need that preachers should earnestly commend to our

young men the eternal principles of this Declaration. What does it teach? Freedom is a natural law and the moral obligation rests upon human government to respect that law. It means that man's soul needs freedom as much as his body needs food. It means that liberty is a necessary condition of man's moral welfare. Every page of history bears witness to this fact. The centuries are clogged with warnings to those who ignore it.

If we know anything about God we know that he intended man to live in a state of freedom. If any obligation rests upon man it is the obligation to respect his brother's freedom. Shame upon the men who, while walking in safety above the graves of the martyrs of '76, seek to instill into the minds of their fellows the maxims of the Old World tyrants until they no longer understand the glory of that great Declaration which made the heart of man leap with hope when it was born, and which has sent a light down the centuries to guide nations now unborn.

This Declaration that all men are born free states as sober a truth as ever found its way into words. It does not declare the obvious absurdity that men are not born with different and unequal endowments. It was not referring to natural endowments, it was discussing political principles. It was disputing the right of any man to lord it over his fellows by means of unequal laws. When the children of queens are born with the stamp of royalty upon them; when the mine monopolist can show us his title deeds duly signed by almighty God; when the unrequited toilers are born without stomachs and the luxuriant and the idle are born without hands; then we may know that Jefferson was wrong in asserting that men are born with an equal right to political justice.

The child of an Astor comes into the world as naked as the wail of Five Points. Land monopoly makes the difference. Nature does not starve one and gorge another. Human law does that. To the stars above men are brothers, heirs of a common bounty, children of the same impartial father.

That government which exaggerates the differences of nature, making the strong stronger and the weak weaker, violates primary justice. This is the teaching of our immortal charter. It is the Golden Rule translated into politics. Let us teach our children to love it that in all coming days it may be, as Lincoln said, "a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression."

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National Committeeman A. J. McCain, Rapid City, S. D.: "Wherever The Independent goes we are sure to find a populist, even if it has to be hatched from a Bryan egg."

Joel Hendricks, Sturgis, Mich.: "Enclosed find payment for The Independent. I am taking the Missouri World; been taking it for about fifteen years and like it very much. I am a populist since 1876. I have followed the greenback party down to the present. I am a full-fledged mid-roader through and through. I like the ring of The Independent."

S. R. Wright, Brockton, Ala., reports that the populists of Coffee county have nominated a full ticket. Rev. John Talley for probate judge and W. G. W. Harper ("Uncle George") for circuit clerk.

R. Y. Lisco, Columbus, Neb.: "The democrats have done all they could to break up the populist party here; they have had the assistance of some of our populist leaders. One populist who was opposed to fusion had received a paid-up subscription to The Commoner for one year, and would not sign a card for The Independent."

Sebastian S. Clark, No. Weare, N. H.: "I am an old machine most worn out; been in motion most eighty-five years; not able to do much work; can talk populism to any old party man I meet. There are many who admit the people's party is on the right track, but for fear they will not do any better. Give them power, I tell them, and then they can decide better. Please find enclosed \$1 for good of the party for which you are laboring."

W. H. Burdyslaw, Jonesboro, Ark.: "I enclose \$1 to help pay expenses. There are many men in Craighead county who are populist in principle, but they voted for Jeff Davis in the primary. Of course the papers all were against Jeff. If Parker and Cleveland wins in national convention, and Jeff Davis goes with them, the pope will not support him. So I guess we are waiting to see what the national convention does. The democrats are badly split in this state."

G. A. Roberts, Edison, Neb.: "I am yours for a straight populist ticket, sink or swim, live or die. You are doing your best and I wish you success."

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