

A Trustless Industry

DESPITE the claim of the Socialists that the economic laws governing the development of industry make inevitably toward great combinations of capital with power to extort monopoly prices, there is at least one field of productive and distributive activity that has shown no evidence of taking on the form of competition-destroying trusts. This is the great fishing industry, that employs many thousands of workers on sea and shore, and contributes so largely to the world's supply of food. While there are some great companies engaged in catching, preserving and selling the products of the ocean and fresh water lakes, they are all keenly competing with each other and thousands of small concerns. Efforts have been made at various times in the United States to form great central combinations that would dominate the industry, but so far they have not been successful in either raising prices or driving out competition. The consolidation of the sardine-packing interests of Eastport and Lubec, Maine, and the attempt to perfect a national organization handling the bulk of the oyster supply, both failed because of the fundamental conditions that made limitation of production impossible.

The reason for the failure of price-fixing combinations, or of trust methods of abolishing competition, to develop in the fishing industry is found in the basic fact that the ocean is free to all. Anyone who can secure enough capital to build and outfit a staunch schooner or small trawling steamer can go a-fishing on his own account. Very often co-operative ventures are formed by men of small means, who are part owners of the fishing vessel. The much-talked of "equality of opportunity," exists now so far as getting wealth out of the sea is concerned. Any serious attempt to corner fish production would be promptly met by new competitors, attracted by the prospect of profits, and the additional supply would soon bring down prices to a fair and reasonable point. There is a lesson in this for the trust-buster and corporation-baiters. If they would only apply themselves to securing the enactment of legislation by which the natural resources of the land can be thrown open to all who are willing to work in developing them, the power of great industrial units to charge monopoly prices would quickly disappear.

IF Mr. Ogden had come from heaven with flesh on his bones as we now see him and said that the Heavenly Father had given him a title, we might then believe him.—RED JACKET (Indian Chief), Stone's "Life of Red Jacket," chap. V, p. 227.

HERE is the fundamental error, the crude and monstrous assumption, that the land which God has given to our nation is or can be the private property of anyone. It is an usurpation exactly similar to that of slavery.

—PROF. E. W. NEWMAN, Lectures on Political Economy.

Suggestions For Single Tax Bequests

THE paragraph in last issue of the REVIEW referring to the friend who desires advice as to how a bequest to the movement should be administered has called forth a number of letters. As these are of interest both to our friend and others who may be considering the same question, extracts from some of these letters are appended.

A new subscriber, J. R. Williams, of Manitoba, writes:

"The friend who is considering leaving a bequest, and how to use it has touched a subject that I have given a good deal of thought. In my air castles I often think what I should do if I had a million. I should first protect my family and use the remainder to advertise the Single Tax. I should use the regular mediums, the same as business does, advertising Henry George's works, with short extracts from his books, and endeavor to show that, without the Single Tax, the more we progressed, the worse off we should be. Not one dollar, in fact not one cent, would be spent to help elect any one, and this would include the finest Single Taxer in the country.

When an election was on, I should stop all advertising, and if five cents would make Single Taxers of the whole members of the Senate as well as all the legislature, I should not spend it. My idea is to have the people force their representatives to put in Single Tax, and not the representatives to force it on the people. I should discourage any Single Taxers running for office, as I consider he can do much more good outside than inside. As soon as a man gets elected to a political office he is an unknown quantity to me and I think the past proves this."

Mr. J. H. Kaufman, of Columbus, Ohio, writes as follows:

"Referring to the November-December issue on page 163 I note that 'A friend of the Single Tax desires to leave a bequest to the movement * * *,' and asks for suggestions as to how such bequest might be administered.

I do not know the amount of the intended bequest but I once heard a great person of this country say 'One great unselfish soul in each community would actually redeem the world.' I believe this, and taking each State of the U. S. as a community, I know a man in Ohio who, if given \$50,000.00 or possibly just the income from \$100,000.00 to finance a program for a period of five years—possibly less—could put across the Single Tax in Ohio. When Ohio does that all other States will follow.

If I had a bequest to make in support of the Single Tax movement I would seek out that man and put him to work. There are likely other men or perhaps women of the same type.

Single Tax can be made effective by constructive educational activity. Opponents would have no case if brought to the bar. Our methods and failures in regard to taxation constitute the most stupendous blunder of our history. The greatest monument in the history of the world will be erected by a grateful people to the person or persons who make effective the remedy. In doing it, actions will speak louder than words tho words such as appear in the REVIEW and other publications from time to time are very inspiring and are needed to bring us to action. I often wonder why we allow this perjurious, criminal, death-dealing taxation procedure to go on."

Howard M. Holmes, of Cleveland, Ohio, alive to the dangers that beset such bequests, voices this caution, which seems to us one to be heeded:

"You ask for opinions which may be helpful to 'a friend of the Single Tax' who 'desires to leave a bequest to the movement.'

My advice is DON'T.

There is harm in college, church and charity endowments. No one is wise enough to *decide* how his wealth, or his legalized power to take wealth, can be used to advantage after his death.

The best way is to give as wisely and as largely as his judgment permits, and during his lifetime, to whatever form of Single Tax propaganda most appeals to him, and watch the results.

Single Tax endowments are almost sure to cause trouble. We have two wings in the movement, and bitterness between them is already appearing. I want them to keep good-natured. If a large fund were left for them to quarrel over, the feeling would be intensified.

Single Taxers should pay for their propaganda as they go along. They will make mistakes enough without spending endowment funds; but the giving does us good, and probably every form of Single Tax work is helpful in some degree.

If he feels he must make such a bequest, the best way is to put his stocks, bonds, money or lands into the possession of some younger Single Taxer in whose judgment and honesty he has confidence, and do it as secretly as possible, so that other Single Taxers will not be tempted to quarrel over its use. And it should be done without legal restrictions."

Grace Isabel Colbron, known as a gifted and devoted worker for the cause, favors the REVIEW with this thoughtful comment:

"The little notice in the last number concerning a friend who wished to leave a bequest to the Single Tax and did not know how to secure it properly, comes near to many of us.

I find myself in the same dilemma. Some years ago while the Fels Fund was in existence, it had a provision for such bequests, and I made my will, leaving a part of any money of which I die possessed to the Fund for Single Tax educational work. Now that the Fels Fund is no longer in existence, I do not know what to do about it. There is no existing organization that seems to me to do exactly the same thing. And I cannot put in a committee of individuals to administer my bequest for the simple reason that, . . . even did I want to bother some of my good comrades with that extra labor, those who would do what I want done with my money are mostly my contemporaries in years and there is no particular reason to expect they would outlive me if I can keep out of the way of automobiles!

I have spoken to one or two younger friends, but do not like to saddle the responsibility on them.

Cannot those of us who find themselves worrying about this very same matter get together and devise some sort of a central committee which can administer bequests and which will be self-perpetuating? Which will also have, in the forms to be used in wills, provisions that the donor may state whether he wishes his (or her) money to be used in political propaganda work? For that is the point of difference which divides us more than it should. There

is room for all kinds of work and all kinds of workers in the vineyard!

Will you agitate for something of the kind in the REVIEW?"

W. R. Whitelaw, of Toronto, suggests that the bequest of our friend "be the nucleus of an endowment fund having as its object the demonstration of the simplicity, effectiveness and justice of raising public revenues by a tax on the unimproved value of land."

"For this purpose select some old established town of about five thousand population favorably located for trade and residential purposes. When the fund is subscribed and invested in State government bonds, propose through some agency to the said town or municipality that on certain conditions they were authorized to pay the interest on the consolidated debt of the town for from three to five years, the conditions being as follows: First that the town or municipality secure, if necessary, a special act of the State legislature authorizing it to substitute for its present or Municipal Council, a Board of Directors, elected by the shareholders (taxpayers) using the Proportional Representation system. The elected Board to choose its own chairman (Mayor) and employ a manager trained for the service the town must provide for. Also that the said town raise all its revenue from a tax on the unimproved value of land."

Mr. Whitelaw presents this as "a mere outline of a suggestion," and we in turn give it for what it may be worth.

Making the Farmers Prosperous by Lending Them Money

IM an editorial published in the last issue of the REVIEW, we labored earnestly and at some length to point out the "Farm Credits Delusion," with particular reference to the recommendations of Mr. Bernard Baruch that the farmers be given better credit facilities. We think we presented the economic objections to his proposal clearly and fully. But one of the newspaper humorists puts the argument in a phrase. Under the well-known "Abe Martin" cartoon appears this gem:

"It's goin' t' be interestin' t' watch an' see how th' gover'ment is goin' t' git th' farmer out o' debt by loanin' him money."

'Nuf sed!

THE widow is gathering nettles for her children's dinner: a perfumed seigneur delicately lounging in the *Oeil-de-Boeuf* has an alchemy whereby he will extract from her the third nettle and name it Rent.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

THE notion of selling for certain bits of metal the *Iliad* of Homer, how much more the land of the World Creator, is a ridiculous impossibility.—CARLYLE.