

ENLISTS FOR THE RHODE ISLAND WAR.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

In a recent issue of the REVIEW Mr. A. J. Wolf of Fairhope asks for action.

Cannot we have a five year Concentration Battle, centered on Rhode Island?

Seems to me if all of us in this United States could be attracted to this one spot for attack, many would contribute freely to a specific effort of this kind.

I mean that the fight should be called off in all other places and no money or effort used except in this one place.

The object being to make one conquest where we can *demonstrate* and bring other communities into line, by the object lesson thus afforded.

My wordly possessions do not amount to \$100, but if Gov. Garvin and his fighters can focus the people on this point I am ready to pay \$10 per year for 5 years and will send the \$50 in advance.

GEO. McCRAITH.

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THE MONEY QUESTION.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

Like your correspondent, Mr. Steele, I think Single Taxers ought to consider the money question—not because I regard it as a question of any very vital importance; but because so many people do regard it as vital; and Single Taxers cannot afford to ignore any question of public concern.

It was a very careful and thorough study of the money question, over thirty years ago, that led me to the reading of Adam Smith and then to Henry George. I was a George man before Progress and Poverty was published, having read George's remarkable lecture given before the students of the University of California.

With your permission I will state a few propositions that seem to me to be fundamental.

I. It is not the business of government to furnish the people with money any more than with hats or coats, food, fuel or houses.

II. It is the duty of the government to conduct the public business in the simplest and best manner possible.

III. Whether its revenues are apportioned and collected justly or unjustly, every government has a certain annual revenue, against which it can draw, to pay its bills, just as you or I can draw against our bank account.

IV. In drawing checks against its revenues, the government, unlike an individual, should have its checks printed in the most convenient form for handling, in the most convenient denominations for meeting payments, and on the cheapest and most suitable material, so stamped or engraved as to offer the least inducement to counterfeiters.

V. Government checks so printed and issued, to meet payments for services and materials furnished to the government, and receivable at the government treasury for all dues to government, would as a matter of fact, provide a currency the most simple, safe and perfect, in every way, of any currency ever devised by the mind of man.

Note—These government checks would naturally be printed on paper, for all the larger denominations; but the smaller ones might better be printed on some cheap and durable metal. Inasmuch as their value depends wholly on the fact that they are never issued in excess of the revenues to be collected, and that they are always receivable for all dues to government, it would seem to be the height of folly to print them on metal of any great value. As, for instance, the U. S. Government printing its dollar checks on pieces of silver that cost about fifty cents for each dollar check. What would we think of the wisdom of a business man who bought pieces of silver to write his bank checks on—especially if he wrote thousands of bank checks for a dollar each, on pieces of silver that cost him about fifty cents apiece? Is such a practice any wiser because done by a government, and the checks called money?

VI. There would be no need of making such government issues legal tender for private debts. Everyone would be perfectly willing to take them so long as the government never issued them in excess of its revenues, and so long as they were

receivable at the government treasury for all dues to Government.

VII. These government checks, when received at the government treasury, would thereby be redeemed. What is to be done with them thereafter is a matter of no concern. They may be burned up, or they may be put safely away to be re-issued. If they are ragged and dirty, burn them. If they are whole and clean, pay them out again. Every time one of these checks is paid out, it is a new check, just as much as if it were printed or stamped for the express purpose.

VIII. There is no reason why the government should prohibit any person or association of persons from printing their notes and circulating them among all persons who may be willing to take them, but such private issues should not be permitted to resemble the Government issues so closely that anyone could be deceived thereby.

The above simple propositions seem to me to cover, in a general way, the whole field of government issues. All the money in circulation in the United States to-day except the gold coins is essentially of this character, being paid out by the government for services and materials and received at the federal treasury for all dues to government. This receivability for dues to government is what really keeps our paper and silver at par with gold. The so called gold reserve is rather a menace than a help as it furnishes a temptation to gold exporters and gamblers to raid the treasury for gold at the very times when such raids can do the most harm.

A low interest bearing, interconvertible bond would be far better and safer than a gold reserve as a means of taking care of any real surplus of outstanding government issues.

C. J. BUELL.

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DISHONEST PRACTICES OF HONEST MEN.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

Recently in a hastily written article, I made use of the expression, "it is only a change from the methods of the confidence

man and pickpocket to the methods of the highwayman or burglar." This sounds rather harsh to say the least, and I tried to tone it down, but in the interest of plain unvarnished truth, I had to leave it stand.

Let us suppose a pickpocket arraigned before the court, who should make the plea that his victim did not know of his loss, and therefore it was no hardship for him; or a pickpocket who should say that he performed a righteous action in relieving the bank messenger of his "roll," because it was keeping wealth out of the bank vaults, thereby he was making the bank richer—Or suppose a burglar after being caught "red-handed" in robbing a rich man, should say that after committing the robbery the rich man had plenty of wealth left, or a highwayman after the death of his victim, should say "alas! poor fellow, he is dead now, and has no use for his money, and then his heirs might spend it foolishly."

This all sounds ridiculous, of course, but do we not hear arguments every day in support of personal property taxation, that are not based on any sounder foundation than the plea of the supposititious criminals?

Right here is where I wish every Single Taxer to "sit up and take notice." The men who use these arguments for personal property taxation are not all criminals or defenders of crime, but on the contrary, are personally honest, and actually think they are doing right, in advocating their mischievous and immoral system.

One of the chief reasons why many of them do not embrace the Single Tax is because of their honesty, that is, they think it would confiscate the Landlord's property. "Eyes have they, but they see not, and ears have they, but they hear not."

These well meaning people would scorn to take any portion of their neighbor's wealth without his consent, but under the plea of governmental needs, would tax their neighbor's house, clothing, food, and savings during his life time, and even after death would demand a share of what he had saved for others.

It is men like this that we should make an extra effort to reach. They have honesty of purpose, but the trouble is that their