

faction. Every petition for legislation must submit to the scrutiny of House or Senate attorneys. Chairmanships of legislative committees, in my time, were largely under lawyer-leadership. The Committee on Bills in the Third Reading—where final form, phraseology and principles are set up—likewise was under lawyer-control. The very powerful Committee on Rules was almost entirely composed of law-trained minds. The largest single faction, in either House or Senate, was that of law.

Times without number I have seen the lay-members of the legislature blindly follow the law-trained orators through parliamentary debate, even when a farmer-legislator or a factory-employee legislator had much more horse-sense to expound.

The influence and prestige of the law profession cannot be completely comprehended except by extended research and observation. In fact, this fraternity has been vastly more powerful than that of medicine or any other so-called profession among the ostensibly learned men who profess to guide the Ship of State. This power, added to the authority which legislative control gives to it, renders the lawyer-group the makers or breakers of society.

As between educated and uneducated peoples, the Duke of Argyll succinctly has covered the matters of responsibility for social peace or chaos:

"If the upper classes, with all the advantages of leisure, and of culture, and of learning, have been so unable, as we have seen them to be, to measure the effect of the laws they made, how much more must we expect errors and misconceptions of the most grievous kind to beset the action of those who—through poverty and ignorance and often through much suffering—have been able to do little more than strike blindly against evils whose pressure they feel, but whose root and remedy they could neither see nor understand."

I have yet to read of a profession, or trade, which lauds itself, impersonally, as often, as unblushingly and as naively as does that of law. Its convention speeches and literary efforts present a refreshing brand of conceit.

At their own behest, our lawyers have gone into politics early in practice and have assumed civic leadership, the captaincy of the Ship of State, both local and national. Upon the captain of the ship falls full power and authority for good or evil regardless of this assumed or real worth. Upon him depends the course to be followed.

My numerous years of inquiry, into the subject and field of law, has been without concern for individuals—among whom are many Single Taxers, which fact is proof enough of their sterling worth and unusual abilities for comprehending.

Not long ago the voice of Senator Borah rang out on the night air: "Congress does not know how to solve the economic problems. We are groping in confusion and delving hopelessly in the field of economics and legislation, seeking a way out of this catastrophic ordeal."

Premier David Lloyd George, whilst frantically imploring the engineers safely to push Great Britain through the World War, confessed that his profession (the law) is "The strictest and most jealous trades union in the world."

Congress is composed 60 per cent of lawyers.

Macaulay, Bacon, Kant, St. German, Swift, Quincy, Adams, Jefferson, Carlyle, Myers and Lincoln are but a very few of those who long ago paused to point out the futile activities of our civic leader, the profession of law—the profession which holds in the hollow of its hand the captaincy of the Ship of State and the welfare of humanity.

As pointed out by Mr. Carroll, the masses very likely would strongly oppose economic reforms, because of the fact that a drowning man has no more sense than to fight his rescuer. When, moreover, the law-profession life-saver has made so many futile "rescues" from the economic seas during the past several centuries, it is now not unnatural for the ignorant mob to take the helm under the name of C. I. O.

Education in general—legal education in particular—is being hoisted by its own petard, and society is caught in the maelstrom.

"If the conclusions that we reach runs counter to our prejudices, let us not flinch; if they challenge institutions that have long been deemed wise and natural, let us not turn back."—GEORGE.

THOMAS N. ASHTON.

THINKS McNALLY INCONCLUSIVE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The article, "What is Interest?" by Raymond V. McNally in your May-June issue is to say the least inconclusive, if not contradictory and altogether unsatisfactory.

I am not impressed with the question, "Is it not significant that while there is a general agreement among economists on the law of rent, there is none on the question of interest?" It seems to me that in the first place, Adam Smith and Henry George alone are worthy to be dignified by the name economists; and second, that the only thing the other so-called professional economists have agreed on is the determination to so befog the science as to try to prevent all people from seeing that they are being robbed of their rent by the landlord.

In the fifth paragraph Mr. McNally says, "During all this time, however, in spite of ecclesiastical denunciation and civil laws, the phenomenon of interest persisted in industrial life, because it was a natural part of the economic organism and could not be abolished by men." Now the scientific definition of the word phenomenon is "a fact of knowledge." Therefore, by Mr. McNally's own statement "Interest" is a fact of knowledge and "a natural part of the economic organism" and beyond the power of man to abolish. To me this is a very strong statement as to interest being a definite and important factor in the natural laws of the natural science of Political Economy and one with which I agree entirely. But in the last sentence of his article Mr. McNally says, "The burden of proving that there is such a thing as interest in the economic sense, therefore, and that it is unjust, rests entirely with the Marxist and other opponents of interest." If language means anything then this last sentence would indicate that Mr. McNally denies "that there is any such thing as interest in the economic sense" and defies Marxists and other opponents to prove that there is and that it is unjust. Now a thing that does not exist can not be unjust nor be anything. Also "a phenomenon that persists because it is a natural part of the economic organism beyond the power of man to abolish" must be a very definite natural economic fact that has been proven to exist already, and it can not be unjust because Nature is supreme and there is no appeal from her so far as man is concerned.

Now whether we know what interest is or not does in no way cast any doubt, in itself, on the fact of its existence. No one knows what either magnetism or electricity is and yet both are phenomena which we make use of very effectively.

To my mind Henry George very clearly and satisfactorily established the laws of rent, wages and interest, defined them as well as land, labor, capital and wealth and demonstrated that Political Economy is a natural science as exact as any. L. D. Beckwith of Stockton, Calif. has very ably supplemented and clarified George's work.

Also capital and its derivative interest are very important factors in political economy. Without capital (labor saving implements, tools and machinery of all kinds) men, women and children would be condemned to hopeless labor and poverty, there could be no time for the arts and sciences, and civilization would be impossible.

I can not see what all the shooting is about as to capital and interest among true Georgeists, anyway.

The socialist type of mind is not worth wasting time over, as it seems incapable of clear thinking.

Chestnut Hill, Mass.

EDMUND J. BURKE.

RENT IN PRICE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Two apparently inconsistent facts are quite generally accepted as obviously true: First, that all Rent must be included in the determining of cost; second, that no rent (as such) is included in the determining of price.

And there is nothing really paradoxical in accepting the "second"