

worried by their money, then do our wise men start whittling on a tariff which, no matter how high or how low, can have no appreciable effect on the result of such a system, but merely shifts some gratt from one set of pockets to another. Such is the present quality and measure of our civilization.

In the rudest of social and industrial stages, the labor of the people provided them an abundance of necessary supplies, save in times of elementary misfortunes—and allowed them leisure besides. If such had not been the case, the race would long since have perished. With our modern appliances multiplying, by hundredfold and thousandfold, man's power to produce wealth, we may confidently expect that all will be bountifully provided for, when a just and natural economic system releases the resources of the land to the energies and ambitions of its workers of high and low degree, in a manner which secures to each the fruits of his labor.

INTEREST AND THE TIME ELEMENT.

BY THOMAS HUNT.

In the Symposium on Interest in the June REVIEW perhaps there was something left unsaid when the causes for interest were given. The active powers of nature, the principle of growth, etc., may be the chief causes.

But it deserves to be noticed that most of the people who claim that interest is unscriptural and wrong because they say that money has no power of growth, forget that money is interchangeable for all the instruments, products and forces of nature and art, and that as a matter of fact when a man borrows money he proceeds at once to exchange it for the materials and forces of nature which he needs in the pursuit of the business for which he borrows it.

Money itself is useless and unproductive unless exchanged for those things which are needed for consumption, or for those things which contain the active powers of nature or the principle of growth.

But these facts are not known or are forgotten by the people who oppose the payment of interest. They would consider it wicked if I should lend a man four thousand dollars cash to build a house and insist on his paying me two hundred dollars per annum for it, but these same people would say that it would be entirely just if I would furnish the man with stone, brick, lumber, hardware, etc., of value of four thousand dollars sufficient to build a house and insist on being paid two hundred dollars per annum for same until the principal was paid. They entirely forget the interchangeability of money for all kinds of productive wealth.

But to come to the unmentioned cause of interest. It may be stated in these words: Borrowing and paying interest enables a person to obtain NOW, AT ONCE, the enjoyment of something very desirable which otherwise would have to be postponed perhaps for years. This might be instanced in the building of a home. If a young man has saved money enough to buy a lot and wants to marry and begin making a home NOW he can do so if there is someone who

will lend him money to build at once, and he would be glad to devote several additional months of his labor to paying the interest on what his home costs for the immense satisfaction of making it such a home as his taste may dictate. He would be willing to work the additional amount of time to pay the interest if there were no other advantages than the enjoyment of making and living in the home that suits him, beginning NOW. But if he has land enough he might plant an orchard NOW which by the time the interest has to be paid would bear fruit enough to pay said interest, so that he might not have to work any additional time to pay it. This would be a case of the productive forces of nature, etc., being made available.

Doubtless the young man and his family would say that the lender did them a favor and gladly would pay the interest because of the ability to enjoy from the start the opportunity to make and adorn a home according to their taste. Even if they had lived in another man's house until the head of the family had earned enough to build his own he would have to pay interest under the name of rent, for the owner of that house would not let him live there for nothing.

I do not know of any proposed organization of society that would furnish a beginner of small means a house without the necessity on his part of borrowing enough to pay for the building of his house. The proposition that would come nearly half way to do this is the Single Tax, for in a country where ground rent would be taken in taxation he would have to pay perhaps only six months future tax to get the ownership of the land on which he would propose to build his home, so that he would devote what he had already saved to the purpose of building, and would have to borrow and pay interest on much less. This reason why interest persists is evidence of a progressive tendency of society, a desire for better things, a sign of elevation of sentiment and a disposition to have the better things NOW. This same reason for the payment of interest at a higher rate in new countries is due to the fact that nearly everything in the shape of betterments and improvements is needed there, and of course they want them NOW. But the additional and stronger reason why interest is higher there is because each settler or inhabitant wants to get MORE land. No matter if he already has as much as he can use himself he knows that increasing population will increase the value of land, and the more he has of it the greater wealth will he obtain by the increase in the value of his acres. Doubtless we can prevent this influence from raising the rate of interest by enforcing the Single Tax, and perhaps we ought to do so.

CAN INTEREST BE DESTROYED BY THE USE OF THE PUBLIC FUND (LAND VALUE)?

BY EDWARD GATES

In the last number of the Single Tax REVIEW there were several articles on the subject of Interest. The writers of these articles refer, some of them in a somewhat hesitating and doubtful manner, to the cause which Henry George assigns for interest.