May 11th, 1914.

Dear Mr. Kiefer,

I have just received press bulletins No. 575 and 576 of the American Economic League; being the first bulletins which I have received for some months. I notice that both of these refer to the Ohio State Board of Commerce and I suppose this is the reason you are sending them to me.

For your information and in order to save you postage, I am writing to say that, in the first place, I receive the Ohio Journal of Commerce by the courtesy of the publishers, and, in the second place, that my friend Mr. Allen Ripley Foote is no longer connected with the Ohio State Board of Commerce and is not directly or indirectly shaping its policies.

I note in press bulletin No. 576 that you quote a statement made by the Journal of Commerce to the effect that the new constitutional amendment proposed by the Board will "make the single tax impossible", and you comment to the effect that this statement of the Journal, "while not strictly true, shows further amendment will be necessary to get the single tax. 'By making single tax impossible' as far as the amendment can, a severe blow is aimed at every useful industry in the State." I am very much pleased to find that you are at last waking up to the bad effects upon industry of putting obstacles in the way of the single tax through constitutional restrictions. I can only regret that you were not alive to this injury at the time that your friend, the Rev. Herbert Bigelow, was making his grandstand play in the constitutional convention for an I.and R. amendment, to which he willingly sacrificed, according to his own statement, such changes in the constitution as might make it possible ~~not to get the single tax, but~~ to get some relief for industry and business through gradual tax changes, and without putting any obstacles in the way of the single tax should the people wish to go so far.

Since your friends succeeded in nailing down the uniform rule in Ohio even more firmly than it had ever been nailed before by plutocratic interests, I have, to a considerable degree, lost interest in Ohio, except as a horrible example, and you need not therefore, trouble yourself to keep me informed of the troubles you are having with constitutional amendments; these troubles being, to a considerable degree, of your own creation. Therefore, I think you are the one "who should worry."

Very truly yours,

ARP

Mr. Daniel Kiefer,
Blymyer Bldg.,
Cincinnati, OHIO.

11482

P. B. No. 576

EDITOR:

You are free to use this article without any cost. We should like, however, to be put upon your exchange list that we may see the use made of what we are sending you from week to week.

THE AMERICAN ECONOMIC LEAGUE,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

DANIEL KIEFER, Manager.
OFFICES: BLYMYER BUILDING.
SAMUEL DANZIGER, Editor.

A MENACE TO BUSINESS.

Hostility to true business interests is displayed by the Ohio State Board of Commerce and its organ, the Journal of Commerce. The State Board is an organization of privileged interests which thrive by levying tribute on useful business. It has prepared a taxation amendment to the Constitution to be submitted through initiative petition. The amendment provides for classification of property for purposes of taxation, but cunningly restricts the classification so that while Privilege may get whatever benefits it wants, Useful Business will get as little as possible. That this will be the case is admitted by the Journal of Commerce in the issue of April 15 in the following words, "This amendment makes the Single Tax impossible." The Journal's statement, while not strictly true, shows further amendment will be necessary to get the Single Tax. By "making Single Tax impossible" as far as the amendment can, a severe blow is aimed at every useful industry in the State.

"Making Single Tax impossible" means making it impossible for Ohio industries to be relieved of unjust and burdensome taxation. It means that every manufacturer, merchant and other business man must continue to pay heavy taxes on the building he occupies. It means continuation in some form or other of taxes on machinery, stock, fixtures and output. It probably means that odious license and occupation taxes must be levied. It means discouragement of useful industry and a premium on idleness. It means subjecting of business men to payment of exorbitant rents and inflated prices for land. It means that they must continue to be objects of extortion on the part of privileged monopolies. "Making Single Tax impossible" means making it impossible to tax properly the franchises of monopolistic corporations. It means insufficient taxation of the vacant land owner who holds up the manufacturer or merchant in need of additional room for his business. It means limiting the purchasing power of consumers and consequent limitation of business. It means, in short, continuation of the struggle of the average business man to make ends meet and avoid bankruptcy. All this—that holders of franchises and of unused and partially used lands may not be disturbed in drawing of unearned profits. How do the business men of Ohio like it?

It is not only the business men whose interests would be betrayed. Farmers and laborers would suffer even more. The system would be continued under which farmers must list for taxation their crops, live stock and other labor products. Yet one of the objects of announcing that it "makes the Single Tax impossible" is to fool the farmers. It is based on the belief that farmers are under the absurdly false impression that Single Tax will increase their burdens when it would, in fact, lighten them. It is thus a demagogic appeal to ignorance, and known to be such by prominent officials of the State Board of Commerce and by the Journal of Commerce. Land values on farms, exclusive of improvements, are very small compared with land values in cities and values of franchises. So, of course, under the Single Tax the smallest share of taxation will fall on working farmers. Now Ohio farmers are asked to support a proposed amendment on the ground that it will make a system impossible that would lighten their burdens. Laborers are asked to vote for an amendment that will make impossible a system opening to them more opportunities for employment and increasing the purchasing power of their wages. If the proposed amendment has any merit at all the Journal of Commerce does not mention it. It only points out a very serious objection and tries to palm it off as a recommendation.—The Public (Chicago).

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SELF-HELP IS BEST.

"Self-help, not charity-help, is the sure foundation for sustained betterment in the condition of any person."

So says the organ of Ohio's monopolistic interests, the Journal of Commerce, in its issue of April 15.

The statement is strictly true, but would not the monoplies howl if it were actually applied? Suppose government help were withdrawn from every tariff-protected business on the ground that self-help is a surer foundation for sustained betterment than charity-help? Suppose public service corporations were told to depend on themselves and not on any government grant of franchises? The Journal of Commerce speaks for constituents who very properly want to be relieved of taxation on their personal property but very improperly want taxes reduced on their lands through taxation of the personal property of other people. They are in deadly fear lest through adoption of the Single Tax their power may be broken to get enforced charity help from the people whose industry and enterprise makes their land valuable. They object to being reduced to depending on what their own labor creates. They want to continue appropriating the labor of others. The Journal of Commerce does not intend to apply to them that self-help is the sure foundation of sustained betterment. On the contrary it throws a fit at any suggestion of any approach to application of the Single Tax. For its monopolistic constituency it construes "self-help" to be power to help itself to the earnings of others.

It is only to workingmen that the Journal of Commerce wishes its doctrine of self-help to apply. That workers should be relieved of the necessity of giving enforced help to holders of privileges is farthest from its thoughts.