

die for the principle. Not a single valid argument could be advanced against the proposition that we should stand for what we believed in—stand politically, withdrawing ourselves for once and all from the parties of the House of Have (the parties of Get More by the same anti-social means) and declare ourselves for the House of Want (the disinherited). That Single Taxers should adopt the only method by which economic truth can be translated into terms of law, the method given us by the founders of this government, permission to express what we wanted at the polls, seemed so daring a proposition that some of us fairly gasped at it.

They told us that we should continue methods of education exclusively. Very well. We have educated the people so successfully that Messrs. Day and Davies do not fear to print what we have been telling them for forty years in little lecture rooms, before Chambers of Commerce, telling it not in terms of the great social revolution, but presenting it as a phenomenon of considerable interest to those who had the leisure to study it, for which the remedy is the gradual, very gradual, shifting of taxes from improvements to ground rents. And this was varied by a few anecdotes about fining men for building houses every year and fining men only once for robbing henroosts. And the hearers depart, greatly tickled with the natural facility of the speaker and his very humorous presentation.

No, the fault is not entirely with the people. It is in ourselves.

## The Ignorance of the Educated

JULY 22nd, 1922, should be a memorable date in history. For it was in the issue of *Collier's* of that date that the following momentous editorial paragraph was published:

"Jimmy Hopper adds an interesting chapter this week in his report of a physician's opinion that the state of our glands has a good deal to do with the state of business. We showed this article to one of the great gland experts of the world, and his opinion confirms our belief that it may prove to be an important contribution to the study of the business cycle with which Mr. Hoover's engineers in Washington are now engaged."

That any man with sufficient education, not to say intelligence, to achieve the position of editor of a "national weekly," should be capable of writing down and having put in type such drooling idiocy is perhaps the best proof that Americans are economic illiterates. Imagine the mental calibre of a physician, who has been properly "educated" and graduated from a medical college, who would indulge in the kind of "scientific" rot just quoted. Consider the kind of "engineers" employed by Mr. Hoover at the public expense to study business cycles, when they are expected to give attention to the weird conjectures of half-witted experts. And this is high-class journalism in the year 1922!

The saddest feature of such painful exhibitions of mental decadence is that even when the writer of the paragraph in question is told that he is an immortal ass he will not have intelligence enough to realize the justice of the description.

## Which Value Tax?

A TITLE to land is a franchise to use it and also a franchise to keep whatever (ground) rent the government does not take by taxation. When some portion of the rent is left to the land "owner," the land not only has a value for use, but also a value as a means of appropriating (ground) rent, and it then seems to have a selling value. When the government leaves no rent for the land "owner" to keep, his title is then only a franchise to use land. While such a title may change owners, when it does so, if there is any "consideration" at all, it will, accurately speaking, be paid, not for the land, but for something else. And the value that any land seems to have as a means of appropriating rent, is inherent in the franchise and not in the land; and what is called its "selling value" is merely the market value of a law-made privilege to appropriate (ground) rent.

Many advocates of the taxation of land value fail to see that the good results of such taxation cannot be gained by a tax levied on the so-called selling value. Why a tax on "selling value" will not do the good things which they think it will, may be shown as follows:

If a piece of untaxed land can be rented for \$60 a year, and the current rate of interest on money is 6%, the rent is equal to the interest of \$1,000 for one year; and because the use of this land is worth in the rent market \$60 a year more than the use of land which is free of rent, it is as good to the tenant as \$1,000 at interest at 6%, and the capitalized rent or rental value of the land will be \$1,000; and because the land is not taxed the owner can appropriate the whole amount of the rent, and the land is as good to him as \$1,000 at interest at 6%, and therefore the "selling value" also will be \$1,000.

If now a tax of 1½% be levied on the land, its value to the tenant for use will not be changed by the tax; the annual rent will still be \$60 and the rental value \$1,000. But, as the government takes \$15 of the annual rent, the land "owner" can keep only \$45 and his franchise to appropriate rent will be only as good as \$750 at interest at 6%, and therefore its selling value will now be only \$750.

If the tax be \$30 instead of \$15, the rental value will still be \$1,000, but the "selling value" will be only \$500.

If the tax be \$60, the rental value will still be \$1,000, but the franchise to appropriate rent has now vanished, and its selling value is zero.

If the law levies this \$60 tax on the rental value, that value will not be changed and there will be the same value to tax next year; but if the law levied the tax on the so-called selling value, there will be no value at all to tax the next year.

A careful analysis of rental value and "selling value" makes it plain that a land value tax should never be levied on "selling value;" for it always diminishes that value, and by so doing lightens the tax burdens that rented value ought in justice to bear, and tends to shift them more or less to other values and other things.

Rental value is the use-value of land; so-called selling value is merely the market value of the franchise to appropriate (ground) rent; and this value rises and falls with the variations of rent, interest, and rate of tax. To turn a part or all of (ground) rent into government revenue, is a very simple matter, but to undertake to do this by taxing a law-made privilege instead of rental value, creates a confusion of taxable values that complicates the collection of the tax on rent and makes the results of such an attempt very uncertain.

ASHER GEO. BEECHER

## Henry Bool

**H**ENRY BOOL died at his old boyhood home in the little village of Montecute, Somerset, England, on March 27. Although inclined to shrink from any publicity regarding his work to promote social justice, he was widely known in this country and in England among certain groups interested in reform. I had the pleasure of his friendship for many years when he lived at Ithaca, N. Y., the home of Cornell University. For some time he was one of Ithaca's most prosperous merchants.

I first remember him, when I was a boy living in the village of Ludlowville, ten miles from Ithaca. My father was a Presbyterian minister. Mr. Bool called at our house to see if we had any pictures which we wanted framed. He traveled on foot from door to door, lugging with him quantities of specimen mouldings. Whether he took any orders or not from our house I cannot say, but in a discussion which he had with my father he left in my mind some ideas as to man's inhumanity to man which have never been forgotten.

At that time he had a small shop, over Miss Ackley's news room on North Aurora street in Ithaca, where he executed his orders for picture framing with his own hands. From this small beginning the business grew into an art store, then a furniture store, and finally into a large house-furnishing establishment occupying one of the most prominent stores in the city. Later, he also established one of the first stores in the city for the sale of flowers and plants. He bought a farm on East Hill and there erected extensive greenhouses.

And then one day he woke up to a realization of the uselessness and folly of spending any more of his time at the money-making game. As rapidly as possible he sold his business property and gave his time to the books and magazines which he loved and to his ambition to promote saner living on the part of mankind.

I well remember how in 1886 he was intensely interested in Henry George's campaign for mayor in New York City. But his aversion for politics prevented him from giving a hearty approval to the methods then employed by the Single Taxers. Chapter IX of Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics" seemed to him the best statement of what he called the doctrine, "that all mankind have equal right to the use of the earth." Mr. Bool's interest in land re-

form was shown by a gift of \$1,000 to help along Luke North's fight for "Great Adventure" in California.

Mr. Bool was deeply interested in the career of Governor Altgeld, of Illinois. When the Chicago Anarchists were tried, convicted and hung, Mr. Bool was a subscriber to *Liberty*, published by Benjamin F. Tucker. *Liberty* was one of the comparatively few American publications which protested against this illustration of "truth forever on the scaffold." Mr. Bool from time to time extended liberal assistance to Mr. Tucker in his work. Horace Traubel was another publisher in whom Mr. Bool was greatly interested.

I remember how deeply Mr. Bool was interested in Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Gaol" and "The Soul of Man under Socialism," in Walt Whitman's poems, in all Thoreau's works, in the writings of Rousseau, in Thomas Paine, Henry D. Lloyd, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, Ibsen, Elbert Hubbard, Emma Goldman, John Galsworthy, Ernest Howard Crosby (and his Whim), Edward Bellamy, Max Eastman, Nietzsche, William Morris, and Mark Twain. The foregoing is only a fragmentary list but shows the authors he loved best.

After disposing of his business interests in Ithaca, Mr. Bool spent a year or two in Florida and then returned to England. At Montecute he was successful in getting enough land condemned to put up eight modern cottages for working people which were rented for a nominal price. He also built at Montecute a three-family apartment, one of which he occupied until the time of his death, his niece, Miss Mary Bool, keeping house for him. I believe he was about 75 years of age when he died.

He was ill only ten days with bronchial pneumonia. His body was cremated according to his wishes.

Mr. Bool was warm-hearted, impetuous, generous, prompt to make decisions. He loved his fellow-men and he spent much money and a large portion of his life in efforts to promote human freedom, and the happiness that flows from it.

Madison, Wisconsin.

CHESTER C. PLATT.

## Taxes the Foe of the Church

**A** NEWS story from Senatobia, Miss., printed in the Sunday *Visitor* from the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, says that at a meeting of the taxpayers held here William Carter of Tyro asserted that high taxes were not only driving capital from Mississippi, but that they were also undermining Christianity and churches. He says that there are six churches in Tate county without pastors, that there is only one Baptist preacher with about twelve or fifteen churches of this denomination in the county, that there is no Presbyterian preacher and three churches of this faith are leaderless. The Methodist churches had preachers because they were sent by the conference, he said. The cause of this lack of ministers in the county was laid by the speaker to high taxes and no money left to pay the preachers.

The *New World* (Catholic), Chicago, Ill.