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"Know the Truth and the Truth shall make You Free"—St. John, 8, 32

THE BULLETIN

OF THE MANUFACTURERS AND MERCHANTS FEDERAL TAX LEAGUE

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SHEARER STIRS UP THE UNITED STATES SENATE

The employment of William B. Shearer, "naval expert," for a reported fee of $300,000 by three large shipbuilding corporations to sabotage the disarmament conference in Geneva in 1927 is another good illustration of the propaganda methods that are used by large special interests to attain their objectives. Whether the propaganda be used in the schools to mislead young people regarding the principles of economics or used in the capitals of the world to promote war instead of peace, the ultimate effect is the same. It is fortunate, indeed, that there are in the United States Senate men who insist that activities like this be probed to the bottom. Investigations, of course, are not remedies but they are necessary to give the public the facts and are useful in proportion as they lead up to remedies.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA TEACHES US A LESSON

Florida now has an epidemic of bank failures, an aftermath of the super-epidemic of land speculation. *One can not lend money on inflated values and get it back after deflation.* It was by making loans on such values that the banks helped the game of inflation and so worked for their own ruin and the ruin of their depositors. If Florida had adopted the policy of taking the rental value of land for public use in lieu of all taxes there would have been no one interested in inflating values, no loans made on them and no failures due to such loans.

SHALL CHRISTENDOM EMBRACE POLYGAMY?

A Lutheran divine has declared that legal polygamy would be preferable to the present chaotic state of marriage and of the unmarried relations between the sexes. That is not so strange in a Lutheran divine, but there is a significant think. He arrives at his conclusion by what he terms a study of historic tendencies!

In other words, he seems to have grasped the truth, though rather vaguely, that in an age when the price of permission to live and to work is being constantly raised by the "owners" of the earth, the security of life is constantly decreasing; that in such a world, women being the weaker sex are at a disadvantage and are forced to resort to barter to pay their rent—and, naturally, are forced to barter what Nature has given them, they not being able in such a world to get anything else as a stock in trade. Accordingly, as our so-called civilization mounts to more and more glorious heights, land value increases, rent increases, life becomes more and more insecure, and polygamy becomes more and more certain.—Forum (Stockton, Calif.)

The Story of Chicago's Reassessment

By OTTO CULLMAN

(President, Manufacturers and Merchants' Federal Tax League of America.)

[The following article was prepared for and published by the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, 11, Tothill Street, London, S. W. 1, in advance of its International Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland, July 29 to August 4, 1929. Listed as Paper No. 13 under the title "The Scientific Revaluation of Real Estate in Chicago and Cook County."—EDITOR.]

Two years ago, Cook County, Illinois, in which Chicago and some seventy smaller towns and cities are located, had as unequal and unfair a method of assessing real estate for taxation purposes as can possibly be imagined. Today, however, Cook County has practically completed the installation of as uniform and scientific a system of assessing real estate—both land and improvements separately—as can be found anywhere on the face of the earth.

How such a far-reaching reform was brought about in so short a time, against overwhelming odds and by the smallest handful of people, constitutes, I think, one of the most interesting little chapters of history.

Here is the story in a nutshell.

One day in March of 1926, we received in the office of our Tax League a telephone call asking us if we had any information regarding a scientific system of real estate valuation—particularly the Somers' System. The call came from Miss Margaret Haley, Business Manager of the Chicago Teachers' Federation—one of the most outstanding figures in Chicago's political life and a veritable dynamo of human energy. Our Mr. Jorgensen advised Miss Haley that we had such information and promptly took down to her office the Cleveland land value maps, John Zangerle's new book on the "Principles of Real Estate Appraising" and some small pamphlets published by Walter W. Pollock, President of the Manufacturers' Appraisal Company in Philadelphia—the owners of the Somers' System. Feeling that a situation of outstanding importance had arisen, Mr. Jorgensen set about getting Mr. Pollock and Miss Haley together and within a couple of weeks succeeded in doing so.

Space will not permit me here to give any of the details of the events that followed. Suffice it to say that within two weeks after Miss Haley and Mr. Pollock had first met Mr. Pollock received a contract from the city and the Board of Education to appraise the Central Business District of Chicago—a district known as the "loop." This appraisal required six months. The most glaring inequalities in assessments were uncovered—both with respect to land and to improvements—and a total of more than $600,000,000 of property values were found to be escaping taxation.

A wail of public indignation arose. So in October of the same year (1926), a resolution was introduced into the County Board to have all real estate in Chicago and Cook County appraised by the same methods as had been used in the "loop." The resolution passed and an appropriation of $450,000 was set aside by various governmental bodies to cover the cost of making such an appraisal. Owing, however, to the powerful opposition of the Board of Assessors and the Board of Review, which had now become thoroughly aware of the fact that their "preserves" were in danger the opportunity fell through and the money was never used.

But this did not end the matter. With the coming of 1927, the assessors proceeded with their old hit-or-miss plan of making the quadrennial assessment—for property in Cook County, it should be said, is revalued for taxation every four years. While this was going on surveys were started by various private bodies over the city to determine the extent of "tax-dodging"—private surveys that disclosed a most shocking state of affairs. The fight now took a new turn. Under the driving power of Miss Haley the Chicago Teachers' Federation got the ear of a body that few people seem to have heard of—the State Tax Commission. This Commission began to hold hearings. The hearings showed the situation to be positively disgraceful and the State Tax Commission thereupon ordered the asssesors to publish the tax lists for the whole County—a duty prescribed by law, but which had not been performed for twenty-nine years. The assessors declined to act!

In March of 1928 the Board of Review finished in its chaotic way the quadrennial assessment of 1927 and the people got their tax-bills—with a 50 per cent. increase in taxes. A terrific hue and cry now arose. Deluged with complaints the State Tax Commission set its jaws, declared the 1927 assessment invalid and ordered the assessors to make a new assessment. The assessors, after getting an opinion from the Attorney-General of the State that the Commission's order was "premature and of no effect," again declined to act.

What to do? Aided by a few prominent men and women, such as George O. Fairweather and William H. Malone, Miss Haley appealed to the Governor to call a special session of the Legislature to put "teeth" in the State Tax Commission's orders. The Governor hesitated. He had been defeated at the last election, two special Sessions had already been called, it was hot and the national political conventions were close at hand. However, after getting through Miss Haley promises from a majority of the legislators that they would attend a third special Ses-

(Continued on page 4)

HAWLEY TARIFF BILL IS MAKING 'EM THINK

Whatever the results of the present tariff fight may be in our own country the Hawley Tariff bill appears in other countries to have been of some use already. In Europe it seems to have aroused a movement for an "economic alliance." That is a movement for free trade between European nations such as exists between American States. European international tariffs have had much to do with fostering wars and aggravating economic distress. A United States of Europe would be a tremendous step in advance and would make world-wide free trade a near future prospect.

FOURTH HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS IS HELD

On September 23-25 the members of the Henry George Foundation of America met in Pittsburgh, Pa., to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty." It was the fourth annual convention of the Foundation and by general acclaim was one of the most interesting and inspiring conventions of its kind that has ever been held. Some 300 delegates from various parts of the United States and Canada were present and the speakers included such notables as Mrs. Anna George de Mille (daughter of Henry George), Mr. George E. Evans, Hon. Thomas C. McMahon, Miss Grace Isabel Colbron, Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy, Mr. Frederic C. Leubuscher, Hon. Peter Witt, Hon. Edward Polak and the Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow. The conference was characterized by complete harmony throughout and the utmost courtesy and tolerance was shown to all who participated. It is hoped that a full report will be made of the congress in order that the valuable lessions arising out of it will be preserved.

TAX CUT ON "EARNED INCOMES" IS URGED

The demand for a further reduction in the federal tax on "earned income" as distinguished from the "unearned" is steadily increasing. Both President Hoover and Secretary Mellon have publicly acknowledged themselves in favor of making such a reduction. Meanwhile the Hearst newspapers are rolling up a prodigious petition which will be submitted at the next session of Congress urging it to take action. Several million signatures, it is reported, have already been secured to this petition. Included in it are the names of many of the leaders of civic, commercial and professional organizations.

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Emil O. Jorgensen, Editor

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THE INTERNATIONAL SINGLE TAX CONFERENCE IN SCOTLAND

Someone has said that the "Americans are fast, but the British are more thorough." How accurate this observation is may be a debatable question but in the field of economic reform it would seem to hold perfectly good.

During the week July 29 to August 4 there was held in the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, the Fourth International Conference to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade. The conference was called by John Paul, A. W. Madsen, Ashley Mitchell and their faithful associates and stands as a great monument to their genius and enterprise. Representatives from 27 countries were enrolled and every important topic dealing with the philosophy and economics of Henry George was thoroughly discussed from the platform. A more unique and valuable feature of the occasion, however, was the printing and publication in advance of 36 conference papers—papers prepared by well known followers of Henry George residing in different parts of the world and covering a great variety of subjects, such as land tenure, taxation, valuation methods, land reclamation, agricultural relief, tariffs and so on down to the economic causes of war. In his opening address, the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy, President of the International Union which called the conference spoke in part as follows:

One of the purposes of this Conference is to celebrate in suitable manner the Fiftieth Anniversary of the first publication of that immortal classic, "Progress and Poverty." Recently Professor John Dewey, noted American philosopher, writing about this book, declared that he found in it "the analysis of the scientist combined with the sympathies and aspirations of a great lover of mankind." It was fifty years ago that Henry George first revealed the insidious forces and tendencies that seemed to him to threaten the progress of any civilization which aims at the elevation and happiness of the human family. At the very heart of the way of life of the organized peoples of the world he found ominous signs of the canker of decay. He demonstrated the cause and proposed the cure for what was and is the matter with the world. He vividly delineated the enigma of the persistence of poverty amid increased and increasing wealth. Where civilization was manifesting itself in vast accumulations in the hands of individuals, in great institutions devoted to learning or to religion, in stores of the book knowledge of the ages, in the progress of the arts and sciences, in the inventions and discoveries designed to magnify the effectiveness of labour, to improve communication and facilitate co-operation between peoples, to lighten toil and brighten human lives—there, where these things were most in evidence, he pointed to the anomaly of millions of people in every country struggling for a living, or steeped in degrading poverty. To the widespread social and economic dislocation which he revealed, it was not difficult to trace the unspeakable slums of great cities, the warfare of classes, the prevalence of vice, crime and preventable disease, as well as most of the ills, material and spiritual—even unto the curse of War—from which the world has suffered and is suffering.

It is impossible here to comment on any of the 36 papers which were prepared for the conference, much less to calculate their immense value to the education of the people in the world-wide struggle for economic and social justice. We can only urge our readers to write to the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, 11 Tothill Street, London, S. W. 1, and get these precious documents for themselves. The price (which includes a 64-page handbook of the Conference) is $2.50.

THE TARIFF ISSUE BOILED DOWN

When foreigners send goods into the United States they demand pay for them. To pay for them somebody must perform productive work here. The more goods imported the more work must be done to pay. Consequently a claim that importations reduce opportunities and wages is obviously untrue and absurd.

Now what is the result of putting on a tariff? To pay it also requires that work be done, but since the tariff adds nothing whatever to production the work done to pay is pure waste. The result is that more work must be done to get the same amount of wealth that can be procured with less effort under free trade. Consequently a claim that the tariff increases the wealth and prosperity of the nation is obviously ridiculously false. Congressmen, senators and presidents ought to have sense enough to know all this; but possibly they find it more profitable to conceal their knowledge.—Samuel Danziger in Stimuli.

TAXATION AND BLACKMAIL

Some one figured recently that racketeering has cost business interests in Chicago $136,000,000 in one year. This sum, it is declared, consumers must pay. Racketeering then is similar to the taxes levied by government upon industry and its products. Whether one pays it as blackmail to criminals or as taxes on personal property or a license to do business to the government is immaterial. Its effect on business and on the consumer is exactly the same. Anyone who thinks that suppression of racketeering is going to relieve business of an expense has another think coming. Rents in Chicago will probably increase $136,000,000 or more as soon as the need of paying blackmail will be eliminated while the cost of the elimination will not be borne entirely by landowners who will collect the additional rent but to a great extent by tenants who pay it. That is the way the general property tax works.

Dry congressmen who are protectionists also and support the Hawley bill should realize that however sternly they set their faces against bootlegging their votes for the tariff make them guilty of giving aid comfort to loot begging.

MISCELLANEOUS

The "Taxpayers' Bulletin"—a paper published monthly by the Taxpayers' Association of Chicago—is printing in installments the article on the "Pittsburgh Plan" written by Bonta and Williams.

Charles G. Baldwin, Munsey Bldg., Baltimore, Maryland, has published an interesting collection of songs and parodies by Samuel Danziger, Will Atkinson, Robert Burns, Mother Goose and others. Price $1.00.

The Machine Age

Since 1919 we have been making extra-technical progress and have been applying this new knowledge on an extensive scale in a number of industries. Steel has been introducing new methods and machinery. Where sixty were employed to cast pig iron under old methods seven can now do the same work; two men can load as much pig iron as formerly required 128; where 42 were formerly needed in operating open hearth furnaces one is now sufficient. Fifteen years ago it required from a day and a half to three days to turn out a pair of locomotive tires; now six pairs of tires can be turned out in eight hours by the same working group. Automatic plating machines enable three workers to do the work of seven. A tram rail crane enables three men to do the work of 28; five men with tractors can replace 18 men working as crane loaders. With conveyors five men can in one day do three days' work.—William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor.

Who Owns the Land?

Speaking at a meeting in Glasgow recently, the Hon. Mrs. Smyth, of Ness Castle, related a story to her audience which gave one good reason why young men left the Highlands:—A worthy Highlander emigrated to New Zealand and having succeeded in the Antipodes after a number of years made a visit to his native land. The hills of his native country were dearer to him than ever, and on climbing one of the northern bens and standing on an eminence he was so delighted with the prospect that he held up his hands and recited the passage from the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" containing the line: "This is my own, my native land." On finishing the quotation with the line referred to, a sturdy gamekeeper, who had been watching him and listening to his patriotic outburst, rose up from the heather behind him, and, tapping him on the shoulder, said: "That's beautiful poetry you've been quoting, but this land belongs to the Laird, and the sooner you're off it the better."—The Liberator, Auckland, N. Z.

Power to the Fore

Last week from the progressive camp came a sharp attack on Mr. Hoover for his failure to get as excited about the power trust propaganda as he had over the proposal to push prohibition propaganda into the schools. He was called "tender-eyed" toward the power people. Perhaps he is—I do not know.

What I do know, however, is that before his administration is very much older he will have to say or do something pretty definite on this subject. He will not be able to evade it. In my judgment, it is apt to overshadow prohibition and everything else in the next national campaign. There are many signs to confirm this idea. In the regular session of congress which begins in December, a heavy barrage will be opened on the power company activities, and it will, I think, be fairly continuous for some time to come. The effort to control newspapers secretly, the indefensible nature of the propaganda methods, and the growth of these giant holding companies, combine to make just such another political issue as was made by the railroads 20 years ago.—T. R. B., in The New Republic.

THE STRUGGLE FOR HONEST EDUCATION

By EMIL O. JORGENSEN
Director of Information, Manufacturers and Merchants Federal Tax League)

[The following address was delivered before the Fourth Henry George Memorial Congress held in Pittsburgh, Pa., Sept. 23-25 and also formed the basis of a talk given over Radio Station WCAE.]

It is a deep pleasure to me, as I am sure it is to you, to visit this historic city of Pittsburgh—this city where the Henry George idea, at least so far as our own country is concerned, has secured its strongest foothold. It is a greater pleasure yet to be permitted to listen to the many men and women who have come to tell, out of the experience of their own lives, how the Henry George idea can be still further advanced.

I want to talk to you for a few moments, however, about what I am convinced is holding back the single tax idea in the United States more than anything else. It is not because the veteran disciples of Henry George, one by one, are passing away. It is not because funds for the carrying on of the work is difficult to get. And it is not because there is anything inherently defective in the single tax theory itself. The single tax idea, in my opinion, is being held back chiefly because our public schools and colleges—those institutions which we have naturally expected would teach the truth after it had once been definitely established—are being captured by the interests opposed to the single tax, and the textbooks used in these public schools and colleges are being loaded with propaganda against it.

At the International Conference on the Taxation of Land Values held in Edinburgh some two months ago, Mr. John J. Murphy of New York, as some of you may know, spoke on "The Progress of Henry George Ideas in the United States." After giving an excellent account of this progress Mr. Murphy went on to say—

"So far I have dealt with what may be called the credit side of the work. It would be disingenuous to ignore the existence of hostile forces. These may be divided into two main groups, the business and the intellectual.

"As might have been anticipated, the prevalent craze for organization and centralisation in the United States has brought into the field Chambers of Commerce and Real Estate Boards which have begun to direct public attention to what they call the overburdening of real estate, and have opposed the laying of additional taxes on land values. So far they have not had any very clear purpose except the protection of property in general from what they dimly diagnose as socialism.

"The intellectual group is more dangerous, because it better understands our purposes and is working to poison the wells of knowledge by injecting into the textbooks of the schools and colleges of the United States false doctrines, upholding the claims of monopolies, not only in land, but in the various public services and power franchises now constituting the most burning questions before the people of the United States. Propaganda was but dimly understood before the war, but since the cataclysm it has assumed undreamt-of proportions. I do not know that any computation has been made of the money cost of the propaganda industry, but it is of huge proportions like secret service money used by governments, it is used surreptitiously and insidiously, and hence its proportions are difficult to gauge. It is the most serious menace that popular government faces to-day. As long as government was based upon honest public opinion, even though mistaken, there was hope that democratic institutions would correctly solve popular problems. But if the very basis of popular government, which well-informed public opinion is, be attacked, where shall we look for salvation?"

Mr. Murphy is entirely right. If the very basis of popular government, which well-informed public opinion is, be attacked, where shall we look for salvation?

Some years ago I took occasion to examine a large number of college and high school textbooks which had been in use during the last fifty years and I found to my utter amazement that the average amount of space devoted to a favorable discussion of the single tax was steadily declining. I do not mean by this that all the authors of these textbooks were unfriendly to the Henry George idea but the big majority of them were and the average amount of favorable discussion in all of the books was slowly but surely tending towards smaller proportions.

Similarly, I recently went through all of the economics textbooks found on the approved list in the city of Chicago and I again discovered to my great distress that practically every one of them was hostile.

Let me now give you an illustration how all this is brought about.

One of the high school textbooks on the approved list in Chicago is Ely and Wicker's "Elementary Principles of Economics,"—a textbook that is not merely found in Chicago, but in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Milwaukee and hundreds of other cities throughout the United States.

Now this textbook is not only opposed to the single tax idea but favors those measures and policies which many thoughtful people are strongly against, such as the taxation of sales of goods, the private ownership of public utilities, etc. And yet the very ideas that the author now favors he was absolutely opposed to up to about eight years ago!

What has caused the senior author—Prof. Richard T. Ely—to change his views? The answer is precisely to be found in what Mr. Murphy has suggested—special privilege and monopoly.

A few years after the close of the world war Prof. Ely—who up to this time had been an outstanding opponent of sales taxation, the private ownership of public utilities, and the like—organized in Wisconsin University his privately-financed "Institute for Research in Land Economics and Public Utilities." This institute had from the very beginning the support of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, the private power companies and similar corporations. Whether these corporations went to Prof. Ely first or he went to them is something that we may never know; at any rate from the time that their financial support began Prof. Ely's views began to change.

As soon as his Institute was formed Prof. Ely proceeded to launch one of the most ambitious programs for influencing public opinion in favor of the corporations back of him that has ever been conceived. He laid plans for the writing of fifty text and reference books of which some sixteen have already been completed, he started a large quarterly journal, he began post-graduate courses for the training of teachers, he established connections with colleges and universities from one end of the country to the other—all for the purpose of advancing the ideas he had previously opposed and of opposing the ideas he had previously advanced—the most amazing prostitution of the human intellect in behalf of special interests of which our history, probably, has any record.

We discovered the program that Prof. Ely was launching about five years ago and we were frankly afraid. For, as Mr. Murphy has well said, "if the very basis of popular government be attacked—if our public schools and colleges be corrupted for the benefit of privilege and monopoly, where shall we look for salvation?"

So after thinking it over carefully for several months we decided to expose the professor. We wrote books, pamphlets and circulars about him and sent them throughout the nation by the thousands. We asked various teaching bodies to investigate him and two of them did investigate—their findings harmonizing completely with our own. The net result was that Prof. Ely had to move his Institute out of Wisconsin University where he had been for more than thirty years. However, he is now in Northwestern University and although his reputation has been badly damaged he is still going strong.

But the fight is not yet over. Last winter we discovered the fact that Ely's "Elementary Principles of Economics"—a high school text which had not been used in Chicago for many years had suddenly been placed upon the approved list. Since this textbook has lately been changed by Ely to fit the views of the corporations back of him our Education Protective Association addressed an Open Letter to the Superintendent of Schools, William J. Bogan, and in a 26-page printed pamphlet filled with quotations, charts and documentary evidence of all kinds, laid the case carefully before him, requesting at the same time that the book be dropped from the Chicago schools. Supt. Bogan promptly referred the matter to a committee of teachers for investigation. What has this committee done? Fearing evidently that the issue contained dynamite and that the dropping of this one textbook from the Chicago schools would discredit the whole Ely organization, the committee has done everything it could to postpone action and to hush the matter up. In the five months since the committee was appointed it has not asked our Education Protective Association, either by letter or by telephone for a single extra copy of its 26-page pamphlet or for any further facts or information bearing on the subject which it has in its possession.

On the other hand the Association has received letters from certain leading teachers in Chicago—teachers who have professed to be very friendly to it but who we have good reason to believe are members of this committee—pleading with the Association to cease its opposition to the poisonous Ely and Wicker text.

Last week, therefore, the Education Protective Association took the matter up with President Caldwell of the Board of Education practically charging a conspiracy on the part of the committee and requested him to give the matter his own personal attention. What President Caldwell will do we cannot say but if he takes no action after a reasonable length of time we shall, provided our friends stay with us, take another step which we believe will bring the matter nearer to a close.

It has been a long and bitter fight as you can well imagine. But it is a source of great satisfaction to say that we have received the full moral support of those whose judgment we value the highest. Here, for instance, is a letter—typical of many others—which has recently been received from a man whom we all hold in the highest esteem—Sir George Fowlds, President of the Auckland University College in Auckland, New Zealand:

AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
Auckland, N. Z.

From the President, 13th July, 1929.
The Hon. Sir Geo. Fowlds, Kt. C. B. E.

Dear Mr. Jorgensen:

I am deeply interested in your fight for the elimination from the approved list of the Chicago High Schools of Professor Ely's propaganda text book "The Elementary Principles of Economics."

Your fight in Chicago is the world's fight to prevent the prostitution of the sacred cause of Education to the interests of private monopoly and exploitation in all its varied forms.

Your exposure of the mutilation of Professor Ely of the earlier editions of his book to meet the demands of the monopolistic interests reveals the most base surrender of mind and learning to material interests which I have ever known.

It will be a reflection upon the honour of American Scientists and Educators if they fail to rally themselves to the fight to redress this great wrong. Your **success** means the liberation of the mind of man in the field of Education, your **failure** means the enslavement of the race for a lengthened period, giving a great instrument and impetus to the revolutionary forces of the World.

* * * * *

Wishing you every success in your great work, I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) GEO. FOWLDS.

Such, then, is what we believe is holding back the single tax movement in the United States more than anything else and such is what we are trying to do to overcome it. It has been, we assure you, a long and bitter fight. It has tried our patience to the utmost and we feel sure it has greatly tried yours. But it is a fight that none of us dare to lose. For, as Mr. Murphy has truly said, if the very basis of popular government be attacked—if our public schools, colleges and universities on which we most depend for the dissemination of truth, are to be captured by the monopoly interests and used against us, where shall we look for salvation!

THE STORY OF CHICAGO'S REASSESSMENT—Continued

sion, the Governor called them together—and the Bills passed unanimously!

Having thus been infused with full legal power to enforce its orders the State Tax Commission again called upon the assessors to publish the tax lists for the whole county. The assessors obeyed—the first time, as I said before, this had been done in twenty-nine years. Within two months, 1,050,000 lists were mailed out, each list showing the value of each taxpayer's lands and buildings as compared with his neighbors. The disclosures were appalling. A continuous stream of photographs and comparisons were published in the newspapers and the people were stirred as never before.

The State Tax Commission, for the second time, next declared the 1927 quadrennial assessment invalid and again ordered a reassessment. **More than that, taking the Somers' System as its model the State Tax Commission laid down the rules and standards by which this new assessment was to be made.** The assessors reluctantly obeyed. $850,000, to begin with, was appropriated for the work and Harry S. Cutmore—then on the staff of Mr. Pollock's Manufacturers' Appraisal Company—was appointed Director-in-Chief. Under the guiding hand of Mr. Cutmore—and in the face of innumerable obstacles, law suits, injunctions and court decisions (one of which, for example, compelled the bankers of the city to come forward with a gift of $250,000 so the appraisers might be paid)—the work of revaluation has proceeded.

Briefly, the city has been divided into forty-four districts, and for seven months a staff of from 300 to 1,400 employees have been at work, measuring, computing and recording on cards the values of 900,000 buildings and 1,300,000 pieces of land. Tentative land value maps of the whole city have been prepared and published in the newspapers, public meetings for discussion have been held and the taxpayers urged to send in any complaints—all to the end that errors might be eliminated and a just and equitable assessment secured.

The question will now be asked, "Will the new system be permanent?" I firmly believe that it will. First of all the public has been thoroughly aroused and largely educated in the matter. Second, the County Board has just provided for a permanent Director of Appraisals with twenty-five assistants to continue the work that has thus been started and Mr. Cutmore has been appoined to this position with full authority to "hire and fire" his help as he sees fit. Finally, the State Tax Commission has just laid down and incorporated into law strict rules and safeguards for the maintenance of public records which are to govern the assessing authorities in the years to come.

Of course, the unexpected can still happen. It is believed that a final effort will be made, as the assessment nears completion, to get the whole task thrown overboard and the 1927 quadrennial assessment restored. This effort may or may not prove successful. If it does not prove successful—and I do not believe it will—Chicago and Cook County, with their 4,000,000 inhabitants will have, as soon as its minor defects have been ironed out, as scientific and uniform a system of real estate valuation as can be devised—a system that will be a model to the whole world.

GOOD PROPAGANDA WORK

Said President Hoover the other day:

"Every American has the right to express his opinion and to engage in **open** propaganda if he wishes, but it is obviously against the public interest . . . to **secretly** attempt to influence public opinion or public officials."

President Hoover is right. Open propaganda is permissible for the simple reason that it is honest, whereas secret propaganda must be condemned for the simple reason that it is dishonest.

As a good example of propaganda that is being carried on in an open and straight-forward manner take the case of the Dr. Mary D. Hussey Fund in New York City (Room 1604, 1860 Broadway). Dr. Hussey—an ardent disciple of Henry George—recently died leaving a bequest of $5,000 to be used in awarding prizes to the students of the graduating classes in high schools for the best essays on the Single Tax. The members of the committee appointed to carry out the provisions of Dr. Hussey's will are Hon. Edward Polak, Grace Isabel Colbron, Charlotte O. Schetter and Ami Mali Hicks.

Last winter, therefore, this committee laid the proposition before the Superintendent of Schools in New York City and received permission to hold the contests. As a result the first $1,000 in prizes has been awarded, many speakers have talked to high school classes on the Single Tax, over 800 copies of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" have been given to the students, and more than 1,500 essays have been submitted to the committee disbursing the Mary D. Hussey Fund. That is certainly good propaganda work. As a means of reviving the declining interest among the young people in Henry George's great reform it cannot, in our opinion, be beat and Messrs. Polak, Schetter, Hicks and Colbron are to be congratulated on the frank and open fashion in which they are executing this exceedingly important task.

But there is other propaganda work going on among high school students in New York City and elsewhere regarding the Henry George idea that is not so commendable. Certain large interests are opposing this idea but they are not doing it openly; they are doing it secretly. The leading interests back of this secret propaganda are the National Association of Real Estate Boards and the particular location of the propaganda is in the text and reference books which the high school pupils use in their daily study. Take, for instance, the "Elementary Principles of Economics" by Ely and Wicker. This textbook—which is used, not merely in the high schools of New York but in the high schools of Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston and hundreds of other towns and cities—opposes the Henry George reform from every angle and at the same time advocates an extension of other forms of taxation, such as the sales tax. If Prof. Ely's views represented his honest convictions nothing would be said, but they are views that in the most important aspects have been absurdly changed by him since he began accepting the financial support of the real estate and public utility interests. Such secret propaganda must, as President Hoover well says, be condemned. But the question now arises, how can it be condemned when most people, including even the school authorities, do not know just where is exists?

We fear that the trustees of the Dr. Hussey Fund will not be able to do much to counteract the great volume of secret and underhanded propaganda against the Single Tax which is being injected into textbooks by writers in the pay of large monopoly groups, but we cannot, nevertheless refrain from extending our congratulations to these trustees for the earnest and excellent effort they are making.

"THE HUMBUGGERY IN ALABAMA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM"

Once in a great while somebody writes a book that is as invigorating to the soul as fresh air is to the nostrils. Such a book is "The Humbuggery in Alabama's Educational System" just published by Prof. S. M. Dinkins, Selma, Alabama. In this book of 150 pages Prof. Dinkins undertakes to show that the fundamental trouble with public education in Alabama, at least so far as the social sciences are concerned, is about the same thing that is the trouble with it in every other state—namely, humbuggery and moral cowardice on the part of the leading school and college authorities.

Dinkins is an old professor himself but he shows little tenderness for most of the men in his profession. He is not discourteous and he is not rude but the way he operates on those charged with the education of Alabama's youth, flaying their hide off in large strips—and he mentions the college professors and school officials by name—is a caution to behold.

"Economic truths," says Prof. Dinkins (p. 32) are more important to our boys and girls than any others except the matter of health. Yet economic truths are not taught in any public school or college in Alabama." Why? Because, he says, "All of these schools practically follow Dr. Richard T. Ely, a man who has sold his influence and learning in order to propagate lies about Henry George's writings. If some of our schools do not actually use Ely's books, they use the books of men with the Ely outlook on economics. So what they teach is error instead of truth."

That is certainly a serious indictment of the teaching fraternity but Prof. Dinkins has only pity to bestow. That most educators in Alabama follow Ely and reject George is due more, he thinks, to ignorance than to anything else. "If Henry George had been a university graduate with a degree tacked to his name," he states, "these learned professors would believe in him and quote him with approval. They cannot for themselves, however, distinguish between right and wrong. They wait for the bosses to decide for them."

But why cannot the Alabama professors distinguish between right and wrong? Prof. Dinkins' answer (p. 37) is short and to the point:

"The fact is that these learned doctors can not really read. They can not or will not get the meaning from the printed page. Denny can not read, for he shows the fact by upholding Dr. Lee Bidgood in his error. Knapp can not read, though he dislikes to admit the fact. Willingham can not read; to hear the words single tax throws him into a fit. Shackelford of Troy can not read, and he seems to be really proud of it. Daugette is the worst of all. He can not get a thing out of the George book that he says he reads. Dawson of Howard College is as afraid as Willingham of the single tax. Snavely of the Birmingham-Southern is so afraid to go on record on the subject that he called on his professor of economics to answer my letters. And Dr. E. Q. Hawk, Snavely's professor, can read as much nonsense into George's books as Ely himself can. So I take it that Dr. Hawk can not really read. Dr. J. W. Scott, head of the department of economics at Auburn, hesitated to express an opinion, though he promised one later and then forgot all about it. My letters intended to refresh his recollection failed to wake him up. Perhaps he is still asleep or else trying to decipher George's books. But one of his assistants, Mr. Burley, does have the courage of his convictions, though his convictions are worthless. He believes in Ely's nonsense and calls untouched mineral land potential wealth. So I find that he can not read. I learn, however, that one normal-school president, Dr. G. W. Brock of Livingston, has mastered reading above the third grade. His school uses Ely's books. At first he had the Ely view and was opposed to the single tax. But he has progressed to the point where he now says that Henry George is nearly right. He promises me to discard Ely's book after the current session. Hurrah for Brock!"

Prof. Dinkins certainly isn't backward about stating what he thinks. Just listen, for example (pp. 43-44), to this:

"If it were not so pitiful, it would be amusing to hear these learned men that can not read talk about 'stamping out illiteracy in Alabama.' Now, there are two kinds of illiterates, the educated and the ignorant. The educated illiterate is boastful. He is proud that he thinks he knows so much. The ignorant illiterate is humble that he knows so little. To teach the educated illiterate one must first drive out of his head a car load of conceit, much half-backed knowledge, and a great deal of down-right ignorance. For he is a Ph. D. or an LL. D., that curious animal that thinks a title carries with it great wisdom. But to teach the ignorant illiterate one does not have to clear the ground before beginning to work. Of the two, commend me to the ignorant fellow. He is receptive and eager to learn. The other fellow's head is so full of nonsense that he rejects truth."

We only wish we had more space to devote to "The Humbuggery in Alabama's Educational System." It is a book that has excited our admiration more than any other in many a long day. The spirit of democracy fairly oozes from its pages and every paragraph sparkles with wisdom and truth. As an intellectual treat alone it is worth its weight in gold. And the price is only 50 cents!