

Well, what do you make of it all? We have at least learned that an income is a pleasurable sensation. We can only suggest that the pleasure is in proportion to the size of the income, that the larger it is the more pleasurable the sensation. But did it need a professor of economics to tell us that?

How can one deal with this extraordinary gibberish? Are these men thinking? *Can* they think? Or do they just start their mouths going and then go away and leave them to chortle on? Is it automatic writing of a sort? Is it a phonograph going of itself, left to its own devices, so to speak, and instinct with some impish motive power undirected by any human intelligence?

And then the naive and almost impudent assumption that this clotted nonsense is needed for the guidance of the legislator lest he go astray and "flounder" in the usual way of legislators. After this we suppose there is no excuse for further floundering. Fortunate lawmakers! Their task is now made easy.

The Lesson of Prohibition

FOR many years the proposal for the suppression of the liquor traffic was anathema among Single Taxers whose philosophy made them consistent supporters of personal liberty in its most extreme form. They felt that the elimination of the drink evil, which they viewed all the more adversely because the great majority of them were total abstainers, would greatly benefit human society, but they also recognized that bad social conditions lay at the root of intemperance and they preferred to see intemperance eliminated by the curing of the bad fundamental conditions rather than by artificial legislation.

A new aspect of the case began to force itself upon many of them, twelve to fifteen years ago. They found the liquor interests lined up solidly with the monopolies in every political contest, evidently with the expectation that the monopolists would stand by them whenever an attempt was made to put them out of business by legal enactment. In this expectation the liquor people were badly deceived; they would have been wiser to have remembered the warning, "Put not your trust in princes." They were thrown to the wolves, if such a simile may be permitted when one is referring to the godly. Monopolists have such bad consciences that they are looking over their shoulders all the time, and don't want to assume the burden of other people's sins. For generations liquor dealers have been held up to public reprobation as the real causes of all the poverty and misery afflicting humanity. A large proportion of the public came to believe this legend in spite of the disturbing fact which the general public took no notice of, that poverty and misery exist among nations and races whose faith prohibits the use of alcohol in any form and who live up to their beliefs, and we think it is true that most of them concluded that while they could not consistently support a policy of repression, they would not on the other hand fight for the salvation of their enemies.

One fact, however, emerges from the Prohibition fight, assuming that the Eighteenth Amendment stands, and that is the recognized legality of an Act which confiscates, without compensation, property whose value depends upon legal rights conferred. A most weighty objection urged against the taxation of land values has been that it was confiscatory, but what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and some of our most powerful and influential property owners support prohibition on the theory that the consequences of the traffic are shocking to humanity. If the principle underlying the statement is sound, then another institution which has similar effects may be subjected to like treatment. Never in its most prosperous days did the liquor traffic exact a tithe of the tribute levied by land monopoly and all the horde of young monopolies of which it is the prolific and legitimate parent.

Blind Leaders of the Blind

ONCE more the lair of the Sacred Codfish furnishes us with an illustration of the dictum, "With how little wisdom the affairs of men are governed." Under the holy seal of the City of Boston, which bears as a motto in Latin, the stand-pat prayer "May God be as good to us as he was to our fathers!" there has been issued a "final report of the *Committee on New Sources of Revenue*," signed by nine men who doubtless incarnate the civic wisdom of the Hub. We do not print their names for we have high hopes that some day they may wish to disclaim association with their findings and we would place no obstacles in the path of their progress toward a merciful oblivion.

The fact that the City found it necessary to appoint such a committee makes it clear that present revenues are inadequate. It has made preliminary reports to the Mayor and out of its wisdom evolved a tax on cleanliness by raising the water rates, a tax on itinerant merchants, which we presume is Bostonese for peddlers, a tax on transportation in the form of a tax on special taxicab stands and motor vehicles in general.

An increase of fees in the Building Department, and finally an additional tax on intoxicating liquors sold by druggists operating under sixth-class licenses; the report sadly adds, "Nothing has come of this suggestion," probably because drink in Boston costs quite enough already. Well may Boston stand in amaze at this monument of fiscal wisdom!

But perhaps the committee is not entitled to so much blame when it is considered that the Mayor who appointed it, put in his letter: "The burden on real estate is already heavy and should be diminished rather than increased." This dictum naturally closed the gate leading to the only alley in which relief might hopefully be sought. But to do the committee justice, it finds itself in harmony with the Mayor. Hear it: "Real estate in Boston . . . pays much more than its fair share of the total burden of taxation." How the committee arrives at a computation of "real estate's fair share" is not revealed. Not only so,