

Edward H. Boeck

Some fifty-two years ago a young American stopped in New Orleans on his way to Australia. The boat on which he was to sail was delayed and while awaiting its arrival this young man decided to earn a few dollars at his trade, which was working on poles used for stringing telephone and electric wires. On the third day on the job a fifty-foot pole on which he was working, and which had rotted at the base, fell. The agile and strong worker rode the pole until he had cleared a large ditch and then pushed clear of it. A stay in the hospital with two broken legs was the immediate result.

His father who had read "Progress and Poverty" when it first appeared, had urged him to read this book. With time hanging very heavily on his hands and the trip to Australia definitely postponed, he decided now was the time to find out what it was in Henry George's writings that had so excited his father, a pioneer farmer in Nebraska. He read the book with understanding, and "found out." Desiring to meet some single taxers in New Orleans he wrote a letter to the paper attacking the single tax doctrine. Sure enough, an answer appeared signed by a local citizen. Mr. Boeck contacted the man and soon was in the midst of the single tax movement, from which he never departed.

Mr. Boeck was no "parlor" Georgeist. He wanted action, and where there was action there was Mr. Boeck. He raised a fund of over \$400 for the use of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values and in recognition of this received a number of books by Henry George with his name imprinted on their cover. He supported the Denver, Colorado, fights and all the California campaigns. No follower of Henry George ever gave of themselves or their

means with greater devotion and less hope of personal reward than did Mr. Boeck.

One of the crowning efforts of his long years of battling with every means at his command was his work in securing the adoption of the Initiative and Referendum in Missouri. This move was initiated by Missouri single taxers and was, on the third trial, approved by the people of Missouri. A few years later this same group sought to have a single tax amendment made a part of the Missouri Constitution, but without success.

Mr. Boeck was a member of the first class of the Henry George School of Social Science and was a graduate of the School. He was proud of his certificate and proud of the School. He made sacrificial contributions to the School until the end.

Mr. Boeck was born in Nebraska, November 15, 1864, and died in St. Louis, February 8, 1942. He was of a family of single taxers. He requested that a single taxer speak at his funeral and this task was beautifully accomplished by Mr. Joseph Forshaw, prominent St. Louisan and a friend of Mr. Boeck for many years. Mr. Boeck also requested that copies of "Thy Kingdom Come" by Henry George be presented to his friends at his funeral. On them was printed the following: "Presented to you in memory of Edward H. Boeck to whom 'Thy Kingdom Come' was not an idle prayer. Profoundly influenced by the writings of Henry George, Mr. Boeck worked to bring the 'Kingdom' to humanity on our earth 'as it is in heaven'."

NOAH D. ALPER.