

of loading charges on those of their subjects who are the most careful and the most industrious to increase the value of their possessions; at the same time they impose less taxation on those whom idleness has rendered more miserable. Change this mischievous method which punishes the good and rewards the evil, and which introduces a negligence which is as disastrous to the king himself as to the whole state. Place the taxes and fines, and even, if necessary, other rigorous penalties, on those who neglect their lands, as you punish soldiers who abandon posts during the time of war. On the contrary give favors and exemptions to those who increase the culture of their lands."—W. A. DOUGLASS.

IS "OUR" HOUSE BUILT UPON THE SAND?

(For the Review)

The Bible story of the foolish man who built his house upon the sand, may have been told solely to direct the individual toward the building up of individual character, but I can not help but think that it has a larger meaning and was given for our guidance in collective character-building.

Upon what kind of foundation have we built our house of government? We have, in so far as our constitution is concerned, done well in this matter. Free speech, free press, political equality, and religious liberty are some of the beautiful columns that support our structure, but on what do these columns rest?

If these columns rest on insecure foundation, if they do not rest on the solid foundation of just economic conditions, they cannot endure. A time will come when the winds of involuntary poverty and the storms of anarchy will beat upon our house, and it will fall, because it was built upon the sand of special privilege and unearned wealth. We have an immense area of land, rich in mineral wealth and in agricultural possibilities, that only require

the mind of enterprise, the hand of labor, and the opportunity to free exchange of products, to create wealth beyond the imagination of the most enthusiastic patriot.

Do our present economic conditions show a desire on our part to encourage wealth-production, by holding out the certainty of just reward to the forces, and the only forces, which can change the raw materials of Nature into the finished product of desirable and exchangeable wealth? We do not encourage enterprise by giving over to monopoly the great public utilities (which are made valuable through collective demand) with the power to use for selfish advantage, rather than for the public interests.

We place a detainer on the hand of industry by a system which taxes, in some form, all that industry produces, thus tending to decrease the demand for wealth-production by increasing cost to the consumer.

If this were all, it might be possible, in a great and rich country like this, to build our structure and maintain it with some hope for its endurance, but it is not all. With a wholesale disregard of "equal rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," with no just conception of collective morality or moral conception of collective justice, we have established a system which hands over to the forestallers and the idlers the earned profits of the enterprising and industrious. In other words, we have made land private property. Land is the element on which capital and labor must produce wealth. Is it right, just or moral to permit non-capitalists and non-laborers to charge a price before they will permit capital and labor to do the things we want them to do?

This is the kind of foundation on which our structure rests. Can it bear up under the pressure of increased population? Will its trend, which has already, with our 100,000,000 of population made it profitable to hold land out of use, be towards more liberty or more slavery for the masses—when our population reaches 300,000,000?

The great Teacher has told us, by way

of contrast, of the wise man who built a house on which the winds blew and the storms beat, but it did not fall—because it was founded on a rock. Let us therefore build our government house on the rock of Justice. Justice requires that each child of man born into the world, shall have an equal right with every other child, in the opportunities of earth; if for any reason, he is deprived of these rights, our structure will remain insecure for the want of a secure foundation. If this be not so, then morality, religion, brotherhood and the high ideals of mankind, are only the result of vain imagination or the work of scheming fakirs—and are impossible of realization.

We must make land common property. We must collectively recognize, and collectively incorporate into law, the right of all men to the use of the earth. Nothing short of this will suffice to stop the greed and selfishness of some of our number—who will take advantage of the future increase of population. In order to make land common property it is not desirable or necessary to disturb the possession of the present holders, provided they are willing to pay the entire rental value of their holdings into the public treasuries.

"Great was the fall of it." Will this be our epitaph when this nation has taken its place in the cemetery of Republics, or will it be—"And it fell not because it was founded on the Rock of Justice"—OLIVER MCKNIGHT.

THE recent address of Clarence Darrow at the Denver auditorium given under the auspices of the Single Tax association of that city, was listened to by over 2,000 persons.

A MEMORIAL meeting for the late James Bellangee was held at Fairhope on Sunday, January 30. Mr. E. B. Gaston paid a tribute to Mr. Bellangee and letters were read from B. O. Flower, Louis F. Post, Herbert Quick and others. Mr. Bellangee was, as most of our readers know, one of the founders of the Single Tax colony of Fairhope, Alabama.

CORRESPONDENCE

FROM GIFFORD PINCHOT

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

I write to ask the help of Single Taxers to defeat a most serious attack on our public resources. Since the fight over the Alaska resources was won there has not been so pressing a threat against the Conservation policy as the present effort in Congress to give our public water powers for nothing into monopolistic control.

The Shields Bill, now before the Senate, gives to the power interests without compensation the use of water power on navigable streams. The amount of water power these streams will supply is larger by far than all the power of every kind now in use in the United States. It pretends to, but does not, enable the people to take back their own property at the end of fifty years, for in order to do so under the bill, the Government would have to pay the unearned increment, and to take over whole lighting systems of cities and whole manufacturing plants. Private corporations are authorized to seize upon any land, private or public, they choose to condemn.

Bills which gave away public water powers without due compensation were vetoed by President Roosevelt and President Taft. The Shields Bill will do precisely the same thing today.

Another water power bill, the Ferris Bill, relating to the public lands and National Forests, was in the main a good bill as it passed the House. As reported to the Senate, it encourages monopoly by permitting a corporation to take as many public water power sites as it may please. Under it the corporations could not even be kept from fastening upon the Grand Canyon, the greatest natural wonder on this continent. This bill takes the care of water powers on National Forests from the experienced and competent Forest Service, and gives it to the Interior Department, thus entailing duplication and needless expense.

In my opinion, there is undue carelessness