

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

ness as to the disposal of public resources at present in Washington. The water power legislation now before the Senate is too favorable to the men who, as Secretary Houston's admirable recent report shows, control through 18 corporations more than one half of the total water power used in public service throughout the United States. The water power men charge that Conservation hampers development. The Houston report shows, on the contrary, that the most rapid development is in the National Forests, where conservation is best enforced. On the other hand, 120 public service corporations own and are holding undeveloped and out of use an amount of water power equal to four fifths of all there is developed and in use by all the public service corporations in the whole United States.

As I said in an open letter of January 29 to the President:

"Natural resources lie at the foundation of all preparedness, whether for peace or for war. No plan for national defense can be effective unless it provides for adequate public control of all the raw materials out of which the defensive strength of a nation is made. Of these raw materials water power is the most essential, because without electricity generated from water power we can not manufacture nitrates, and nitrates are the basis of gunpowder. There are no great natural deposits of nitrates in the United States as there are in Chili. It would be folly to allow the public water powers, which can supply this indispensable basis of national defense, to pass out of effective public control."

A concerted movement is on foot to break down the Conservation policy. Feeble resistance or none at all is being made by official Washington. Unless the press and the people come to the rescue, the power interests are likely to win. This is a public matter wholly removed from political partizanship. Your help is needed, and that of your paper. For nearly ten years this fight for the public water powers has gone on. We ought not to lose it now.—
GIFFORD PINCHOT.

DO SPECULATIVE LAND VALUES INCREASE COST OF LIVING?

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

Something more than has appeared in the Review might be said on the question of the effect of speculative land values upon the cost of living. Suppose the matter of price is left out altogether, and, instead of asking whether rent adds to price or land speculation leads to land values which come to be added to price, let us consider merely the effect of land speculation upon human effort in production.

Opportunities vary in possibility of being used in production. If there is no hindrance to the use of opportunities, the desire to obtain results with the least exertion will lead to the full use of the more desirable opportunities. Production need not be carried on at all on less desirable places. In this situation we may say whatever productive effort is exerted by a population must produce the maximum result. The effort-cost of getting a living will be normal. Of total product a minimum quantity must be considered as economic rent.

If speculation in land steps in to withhold from use certain desirable places and force certain workers to locations of lower desirability and lower potential productivity, the product of these certain workers will be less than should be the case. The effort-cost to them of getting a living will be increased. Moreover, since the fact of their being forced to lower grade locations leads to a re-arrangement and increase of economic rent of all locations above the new and lower margin, and since "a living" must come out of net product, after rent is deducted, the effort-cost of a living may be said to be increased to the whole population and not merely to those forced to locations which should not be needed.

We are thus brought to the conclusion that land speculation undoubtedly increases to all workers the effort-cost of a living, whether or not it increases prices, and whether or not rent or land-value, either normal or abnormal, is ever added to price.—GEORGE WHITE.