

who are confined for the most part to the data gathered within their own limited territories. And he suggests the formation of a general bureau, embracing all European nations.



Why should it be necessary for a meteorologist to make such a suggestion in this day and age? Why has there not been from the beginning a general bureau covering the whole of Europe? Is it not perfectly apparent that the work of each country will be enhanced in value by the work of all the others? Is it possible that the protective spirit has taken such deep root that the people of each country prefer the imperfect service of its own meteorologists to the vastly better service that would result from the co-operation of all the meteorologists in Europe? One would say at once that that was impossible, were it not for similar action along other lines. The tariff walls that have been erected between countries to prevent the freest exchange of the products of labor have robbed industry of a large part of its power. The chauvinistic patriotism that holds all foreign countries to be enemies, and that teaches that no good can come to them without corresponding harm to their own country, has deprived the world of a large part of the good that would have come to civilization through universal fellowship. Yes, as well protect weather predictions as minerals, water power, or any other natural force—and with similar results.

S. C.



Henry Ford's Confession of Social Faith.

Of the representatives of great business interests who testified last week before the Commission on Industrial Relations, the only one who displayed more than superficial knowledge of economic principles was Henry Ford. Probably it is on this account that he could see his way clear to tell the commission that liberal treatment of employes is good business policy and should not be credited to philanthropy. Even clearer were his statements in an interview in the New York Evening Sun on the following day, January 23. Asked about the effect of tariff on business, Mr. Ford replied:

I think that the tariff should be abolished entirely. I believe in free trade all over the world. If we had it, things would adjust themselves and we would all be better off.

Such a statement must be startling to most business men—big and little—who consider it inconsistent with good business methods to follow a sound principle to its logical conclusion. But if Mr. Ford's declaration for absolute free trade

proves shocking, it is hard to imagine the effect on noting his comment on Daniel Guggenheim.

Where does Mr. Guggenheim get his money, anyway? Out of the ground, doesn't he? Well, I hold that all that should go back to the State. I believe in the public ownership of natural resources, such as mines and water power.

Of course Mr. Ford knows that all wealth is derived from land. Guggenheim's case differs from others only in that he deals in raw material taken directly out of the earth. It requires no great stretch of imagination to assume from what he has said that Mr. Ford must see that the State is entitled to the entire rental value of land. That logically follows from his remark about Guggenheim, which taken in connection with his outright declaration for absolute free trade, places him very nearly in accord with Henry George.

S. D.



Natural Law Versus Statute Law.

Houston, Texas, is trying to serve two masters. The Constitution has commanded the officials to tax personal property, and all other products of labor, the same as though they were special privileges. Nature commands them to exempt personal property and the products of labor, and to lay the taxes only on privileges. On the theory that two winds make a calm, these conflicting laws produce business stagnation, and utterly derange social conditions. If some way could be found to repeal or suspend the natural law, the statute law, hourly amended by the advice of scientists and boards of experts, might be made to accomplish some result along the line desired. But since no way has yet been discovered of repealing or suspending the natural law, and man persists in his desire to progress industrially and socially, and since the opposing forces of statute law and natural law produce stagnation, it really begins to look as though the statutes would have to be modified. This is a difficult thing to accomplish; for few men have yet been convinced that the world would not have been far better had they been present to offer advice on the day of creation. Houston, however, is blessed with a citizen who, happening to be Tax Commissioner, has undertaken to obey the natural rather than the statutory law.



This sensible act of Tax Commissioner Joseph Pastoriza was a bold thing to do. Some might think it a presumptuous thing. But he is as honest as he is bold, and announced before election what he would do if elected. His fellow citizens were then enabled to defeat him if a majority thought differ-

ently. Nay, a single citizen could, if he so desired, call upon the law of the State to restrain him after election. The majority concluded to take a chance on natural law. They felt in a dim and half conscious way that if natural law had held the planets in their orbits and had made two and two, when added together, four since the beginning of time, possibly it would sustain Houston during one man's term of office. Besides, any citizen could stop him at any time with an injunction. The plunge was made. Pastoriza suspended as much of the statutory law as he thought his fellow citizens could stand—for he had to consider the solitary chucklehead who might swear out an injunction. The heavens did not fall. Houston did not sink into the earth. The milk in the cows' udders did not curdle. A great many people lived in momentary fear that these and other things would happen, but they were restrained from action by the opinion of their neighbors. A man may feel in his own mind that the earth is flat, but he will hesitate about swearing out an injunction against a ship that proposes to sail around it.



Mr. Pastoriza shut his eyes tight when he looked for personal property, and opened them just a little bit when he looked for houses; but when he came to vacant lots his eyes were wide open. This of course was very naughty; for statute law commanded him to keep his eyes open all the time, and he was putting his office in jeopardy by giving any heed to natural law, which forbade him even to squint at houses or any other products of labor. The strangest thing about it all was that no citizen of Houston could be found with sufficient courage to go into court and attempt to prove that the earth was flat. A good many still thought so, and a few said so; but none had the audacity to take their belief into court. They chose rather to wait till the next election, when the secret ballot would enable them to oust Mr. Pastoriza without themselves betraying the fact that it was their heads, and not the world, that was flat. But when election day came it was found that a greater number of voters than before expressed approval of the natural law. Then the popular Tax Commissioner squinted worse than before in making his assessment—except when he came to vacant lots. When he assessed lots he used the Texas measuring stick. Still no one had him enjoined, though a fewer number talked louder than before. Now this audacious man approaches another election. He again announces his allegiance to natural law, and challenges any one to

enter the lists with him—and no one dares to pick up the gage he has thrown down. By suspending some of the Texas statute laws, and permitting natural law to operate, Houston has found it easier to do business, and the flattest-headed man in town is ashamed to interrupt it. One man, backed by natural law, is a host. s. c.



The South Dakota Legislature's Duty.

In abolishing capital punishment the South Dakota legislature has made a beginning at following the recommendations made by Governor Byrne in his remarkably sound and progressive message. But the most important recommendation remains still to be followed, the one in regard to a change in the tax system so as to differentiate between land and products of labor. This is the more important because it will be not only a wise fiscal measure but the beginning of a badly needed social reform. The Governor has done his duty in pointing the way to place the State in the van of progressive and prosperous commonwealths. The legislature's plain duty is to follow. s. d.



Conserving the Rights of the People.

Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, makes a clear statement of the people's rights in the water power on the lands controlled by the Federal Government. The ownership of this power, he says, must not be permitted to pass into private hands, as has been the previous policy of the country; but should be leased to developing companies on terms that will permit a fair return to capital, and at the same time secure the lowest rates to consumers. Secretary Lane thinks the Ferris bill, which has passed the House and is now pending in the Senate, conserves these rights, and meets the present situation as nearly as present knowledge and conditions will permit. That phrase, "as nearly as present knowledge and conditions will permit," should not be lost sight of, either by the public or by its representatives. It is because legislators in the past have ignored such limitations that we are now having so much difficulty in righting the mischief that has come from their ignorant actions. By presuming to grant in perpetuity rights that morally they could hold only during their own lives, they have so bound the world that the people can secure no relief today except by repealing laws that have hitherto been looked upon as unrepealable. The Secretary himself verges upon this error when he says: "With possibly few exceptions the valuable power sites on lands not