

cost the Federal government many millions of dollars. This method of channel deepening required that all gaps in the levees should be closed, and in certain sparsely settled regions, where the levee boards were too poor to do the work, the Federal authorities did it.

The Mississippi River Commission, which has this work in charge, appears to have been prudent, helping those only who were disposed to help themselves; but with this policy in force an elaborate system of levees has been created from Cairo to the Gulf.

So well was the work done that many people were disposed to think the problem had been solved.

But, alas for the man who wrestles with the Mississippi River—even though he be no less a person than Uncle Sam himself! The cry is now raised that the government must take charge of the whole levee system; and it grew louder and louder as the floods spread. That such a proposition—though it seems but yesterday that the people of the United States lifted their hands in horror at the idea of a One-Billion-Dollar Congress—will carry us far toward a Two-Billion-Dollar Congress cannot be doubted when it is known that it is proposed to spend \$30,000,000 annually for ten years.

Just what we are to spend after the close of the tenth year we are not told. One might hazard a guess, from the frequency with which the statement is made, that the problem of the river control is vastly greater than the construction of the Panama Canal.



There are a few points that the common citizen may do well to keep in mind.

First, the government will undertake this work. Waterways are popular with the people, and politicians are taking advantage of it to tap the public till.

Second, an effort should be made to have the owners of the swamp lands pay for the benefits conferred upon them. An excellent precedent, and to the very point, is to be found in the reclamation of the arid lands of the West, where the cost of the work is added to the price of the land; or, in case the lands have already passed into private hands, is met by a special tax on the lands benefited.

Third, a deep channel is not all, nor is it the chief thing required to revive river traffic. The proposed 14-foot channel from the Lakes to the Gulf will not restore commerce to the Mississippi river so long as the railroads are allowed to charge

more for a short haul than for a long haul. Even a 40-foot channel would not and could not be used so long as the railroads might cut rates to river points and recoup themselves by higher rates to interior points.

Let us have the Two-Billion-Dollar Congress if we must, but let us see that the money is expended for intelligent purposes; and, what is even more important, let us see that it is *collected from the people who derive the benefits*.

STOUGHTON COOLEY.



THE SINGLETAX IDEAL.

In all countries and ages the theoretical ownership of the land has vested in the people of the land; but while this has been and still is true, the benefits of ownership have gone and still go to holders of the fee. The Singletax proposes a practical reversal of this situation. It says, Let the *title* remain where it may, the *benefits* of ownership shall go to the theoretical (and rightful) owners—the people.

If rent is the measure of land values, and if the Singletax takes rent for the people, the benefits of public ownership are practically realized. They are also exactly realized *in proportion* to the exactness with which this proposition is actually carried into effect.



Let the inhabitants of a city or of a country be likened, for illustration, to the tenants of a skyscraper. A thousand people occupy this office building, we will say. It is a community in itself. There is a transportation system, the elevators. There are open highways, the corridors and stairways. There is a sewer, water, heating, gas, electric light and telephone system, and so on. There is also an elaborate service for the care of the building and the comfort of the inmates. The ground floor is occupied by large banking or commercial concerns paying large rents; there are commodious suites on the street front, and small inexpensive offices on the inner court, and for each is paid a proportionate rental. Many of the inhabitants of this building are employes of the tenants, or of the building management, and pay no rent.

Here is an almost exact parallel of the city community, the rooms of the office building corresponding to the building lots of the city.

We may now further suppose that each one of the one thousand inmates of our building, from bank presidents and members of law firms to sten-

ographers, elevator boys and scrub women, resolve to buy this building, valued at say one million dollars, and that each of them of whatever degree, contributes just one thousand dollars to the purchase fund. A million dollar company is formed with 10,000 shares of \$100 each, and each occupant takes ten shares. The building is bought and its one thousand occupants are exactly equal owners. They have precisely equal rights to the use of the building.

Now the situation is parallel throughout. The office building represents the earth; the thousand occupants stand for all mankind—with "equal rights to the use of the earth," as is so convincingly shown in Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics,"—and their natural birthright free, instead of property by purchase, as in the illustration.

How is that situation to be met? How is the "ideal of public ownership" to be practically realized?



Would any real estate agent consider the situation difficult or perplexing? Surely not.

Rents are collected as in the illustration. Each tenant pays in rent the value of the space he occupies or monopolizes, as tenants everywhere expect to do. Those who are not tenants, who monopolize no space, these pay no rent.

Out of the rentals are paid the expenses of operation, maintenance and repairs.

Each occupant, being an equal owner, has an equal vote at the stockholders' meetings. Each has an equal say in the management and upkeep. Here is equal suffrage and majority rule, with representative government through the board of directors.

After paying from the rentals all necessary and agreed expenses, the balance is paid in dividends to the stockholders. Each stockholder is an occupant of the building, so each has shared in its use and has benefited from its care. Each occupant is an equal stockholder, so each receives an equal share in the dividend.

Here we have the Singletax in perfect operation. It is a practical and exact realization of *common ownership of common property*.



With the Singletax in operation in the larger world, with its larger commercial needs, its unlimited social wants and ever increasing civic and national desires, there is no definable limit to the *common expense* of operation and upkeep except the *common income*. The equal stockholders of

our corporate earth may do what they will with their own.

If each holder of a plot, whether it be at a corner of Broadway and Wall street, or but a few acres of farm land in Dakota, would, through the Singletax, pay into the common treasury the rental value of his holding,—whether it be much or little, or nothing—and if each inhabitant of the country has, by the ballot, an equal say in the disposition of this fund, do we not secure exact justice,—equal rights?



If in applying this plan we only approximate that ideal, is not the mere approximation due to imperfect human performance and not at all to imperfect plan?

MARSHALL E. SMITH.



VOTES OF WOMEN.

What influence will the votes of women have upon the fall elections?

This is a subject which as yet has never been seriously considered by slate-makers and campaign managers, but the signs of the times present indubitable evidence that hereafter it will have to be.



This year the women will vote in six States, possibly in seven. Five of these States: California, Idaho, Utah, Washington and Wyoming, are Republican, and they cast 31 electoral votes.

Colorado is insurgent, and her six electoral votes are in doubt.

In Ohio the Constitutional Convention has provided for submission of the question of enfranchisement of women to the voters on the 3rd of September. It carried two to one in the Convention; if it carries in the State there will be 24 more electoral votes that may be controlled by women.

There are 531 votes in the Electoral College. It takes 266 to elect, and 61 of them may be dominated by women voters. If there is a candidate in the field who is an out-and-out supporter of "Votes for Women," there isn't much doubt among those who know the temper of the women voters, that it would be possible to turn a practically solid woman vote over to him.



When the Biennial convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs meets in San Francisco this month, there will be a conference among