

new owner as his title. This could be repeated each time the property changed hands. No matter who might own the house, the same obligation to pay the full annual rent of the land would rest and remain upon the occupier of the site. Just as the purchaser of a leasehold house today takes over the obligation to pay the agreed ground rent upon which the lease was granted, so the purchaser of the house (or other building or fixed improvement) upon the site would take over the obligation to pay the rent of the land.

If Mr. MacDonald really means what he wrote, let him have the courage to abandon the time-serving "Land Policy" of his party—a policy framed in the interests of the Land Lords—and come honestly into the open as an opponent of these parasites upon the community. Today, in spite of his words, he is fighting on their side.—*Commonweal*, London, England.

EVERY permanent improvement of the soil, every railway and road, every bettering of the general condition of society, every facility given for production, every stimulus supplied to consumption, raises rent. The landowner sleeps, but thrives. He alone, among all the recipients in the distribution of products, owes everything to the labor of others, contributes nothing of his own. He inherits part of the fruits of present industry, and has appropriated the lion's share of accumulated intelligence.

—THOROLD ROGERS.

THE justice of the Pittsburgh tax plan rests upon the principle of equal rights to the earth that has been recognized by such great statesmen and philosophers as Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Henry George, and upon the fact that land values are socially created, growing with the growth of population and the extension of public improvements, and are, therefore, in a peculiar sense, a natural and logical source of public revenue.—PERCY R. WILLIAMS in *Kiwanis Magazine*.

## The Stupidity of Officialdom

HOW the official mind works—or does not work—is exemplified by an extraordinary report furnished by the Paris correspondent of the Central News Agency. A ten-year-old girl named Piot, playing near the River Isere, fell in. Her younger brother ran to a kennel, unchained a dog and sent him to the rescue. As the animal was crossing to the water, a gendarme seized it, declaring that as it was not on the leash the owner must pay a fine. The boy pleaded, but the official refused to release the dog till the fine was paid. While the argument was going on, the girl was drowned!

And our politicians of every stripe are outbidding each other in their eagerness to burden this community with more, and yet more "officials!"

—*Commonweal*, London, Eng.

FIFTEEN years later Henry George, Jr., made a trip to Japan. I gave him a letter of introduction to Baron Tsuzuki and addressed a separate advance epistle announcing the date of his arrival.

The ship upon which the George party were passengers was met in the harbor of Yokohama by a Japanese gunboat and received a salute. During the whole tour through Japan the George party were showered with courtesies and made to feel at home. Tsuzuki afterward wrote me a gracious letter apologizing for what he called the "meagerness of the reception" and expressed keen regret that Marquis Ito had departed this life and rejoined his ancestors without having the great privilege of greeting my friends on behalf of Japan.

When Japan bursts into bloom she blooms all over.—"Bob Davis Recalls," *N. Y. Sun*, June 9.

## Watered Land Values

THEY used to say in Connecticut that the actual value of a good 100-acre farm was a roof over one's head and a job for life at \$3 a day. As economic capital, it is probably true that farm lands have always been overvalued and are overvalued even now. Farm lands present one of the most flagrant illustrations in history of watered stock. Watered stock does not hurt the consumer. The only one it hurts is the person who invests in it in the belief that it does not contain water.

Farming has never been, on the whole or in anything like a universal way, a remunerative employment of capital. But under the illusion created by the wholesale watering or inflation of farm values, there is at present a vast amount of capital actually invested in farm lands. It is a capital that has to pay interest and taxes, and it is only the most efficiently and economically employed farm capital that can do this.

In short, the illusory mirage of high farm values, followed with delight by the unfortunate farmers a few years ago, is one of the grave underlying causes of their present pitiful state. It is a situation calling for the most sympathetic and enlightened treatment.

—MCCREADY SYKES in *Commerce and Finance*.

## British Poverty

THE tremendous cost of poverty to the nation (as far as figures go, apart altogether from social and economic injury to all concerned) is shown in reply to two questions in the House of Commons on the 6th of December. In the eight years, 1918 to 1925, there have been paid out in unemployment benefit the sum of \$1,161,280,000. In the same period and in addition, the total expenditure on poor relief in England and Wales was \$1,249,103,700.

—*Land and Liberty*, London.