

have been almost entirely tabooed by investors, owing not only to the heavy financial burdens imposed upon the property by reason of the cost of the improvements, but by the threat of the passage of the Singletax amendments to the city charter. Already this threat, it seems, has caused a serious financial injury to a considerable class of people, who have borne a heavy tax burden without serious complaint, while without income from their taxable property to aid them in doing so.

To the "P. I." that seems a typical case. We suppose it is; we hope it is. Seattle Singletaxers should welcome the confession. Even the *bare expectation* of the Singletax is here confessed to be producing the beneficent effect which its adversaries "of mart and college" have been contending that it would not produce though in full operation.



What is that effect? That investors are made shy "by the threat of the passage of the Singletax amendments." What kind of investors? Investors in unimproved land, of course, for the above quotation notes "the difficulty in finding a market for *unimproved* property in Seattle." Why the difficulty in finding a market for that kind of property—vacant building lots? The same quotation confesses that it is because the price has fallen. "Already this threat," says the "P.-I.," "has caused a serious financial injury," etc., etc. That is, the land speculators cannot get the profits on their land monopoly which they expected to get. And the Singletax—a mere "threat" of Singletax—has done it. "Good for the Singletax!" is what every workingman, every home owner, every builder, every storekeeper, every other producer in the city of Seattle ought to say, and if wise will say by his vote on the 5th of March. Since the Singletax would exempt improvements from taxation, and would squeeze the "water" out of the price of places to improve upon, the Singletax amendments would surely bring prosperity to the *improvers* of Seattle. And isn't it improvers that Seattle wants to make prosperous?



Seattle may defeat this amendment. We can hardly think the intelligent industrial population of that progressive city will be so easily fooled by land speculation interests, but they may be. If they are, however, sadly will they rue the day. For above the Canadian line Vancouver is going ahead with a stride, under the fostering influence of the Singletax in operation there; and Vancouver will apply it more instead of less. To the south of Seattle, Oregon is about to vote for the

Singletax in her counties, and Portland is almost certain in consequence to follow Vancouver's example. There will then be two large cities, one a little to the north of Seattle and the other a little to the south, in which improvements are not taxed. What effect on the flow of *productive* capital will that have, think you? With two such competitors, both of them exempting all industry, all production, all homes from taxation, Seattle will have little left for it, if she defeats the Singletax amendment, but to change her vote or "dry up and blow away." *Productive capital* will not go to Seattle to be taxed to death, if it can go to Vancouver and Portland and be *tax free*. Under those circumstances, the only kind of investments Seattle could attract would be those that do no city any good. They would be investments not in the production of desirable property that isn't there now, but in boosting the prices of a kind of property (the site of the city) which has always been there and can't get away. Even these blighting investments wouldn't long continue going to Seattle; the turning away of productive capital from Seattle to Vancouver and Portland would make even the site of Seattle a drug in the market.



### "Ten Men for Nine Jobs."

There are at all times in Chicago 100,000 men who want employment but can't find it. So says the official report of the free employment commission of Illinois filed at Springfield last week. Yet idleness is explained by laziness, poverty by unthrift, labor tyranny in conserving jobs by crafty labor leaders, and labor dynamiting by wanton wickedness. "What fools these mortals be," to be sure; these mortals who, when their own hearths are heated and their own bellies filled, think the whole world warmed and fed.



### The Movement Toward Canada.

Now and then are heard hysterical demands that the migration of Americans to the farm lands of western Canada be checked. But why check it? And if there is a Why, what then about the How? Conditions in Canada attract some American people more strongly than conditions in the United States; else Americans would not migrate. If we would hold our population, we must do more than bewail the departure of those that are now leaving, and we must propose something less vague than "checking" them. Why not ask how it comes that Canada has a greater appeal for certain Americans than America has? American citizens

don't go to Canada because they lack patriotism, and they will not stay here in response to sentimental appeals to national pride. Movements of population always take place in response to the stirrings of self-interest. The tide of migration that populated our own West flowed thither from the Atlantic States and from Europe. Why? Because easy access to land meant high returns to industry. The tendency of population away from our once "golden" West into Canada has the same fundamental cause. But our West is not all settled and overcrowded. The present tendency of Americans toward Canada is not due, then, to lack of good land in America. It is due to the fact that all the best unoccupied land in the United States is held at a high price. Land speculation, like a great wet blanket, has at last chilled the industrial life of the West as it has long chilled the industry of the East and of Europe. Moreover, Canada and other British countries are already turning towards a more intelligent land policy than that which prevails in the United States. May it not be better to "check" migration to Canada by checking land speculation at home, than by trying to "check" it with wishbone incantations?



#### A Presidential Weather Vane.

The Hearst papers have started a Presidential boom for Mayor Harrison, a pretty good sign that Speaker Clark's chances have improved.



#### Capital Punishment.

Five men were strangled at a legalized hanging in Chicago last week. The gallows-trap was sprung by the people of Illinois; for it is true, as one protestant writes to his newspaper, that what we as citizens require of the sheriff, in conformity with the law upon our statute books against which we make no protest, nor any attempt to alter or abolish it, we do ourselves—all of us and each one of us.



Not many reasons appear for perpetuating these barbarous laws. One of them is that the hanging of murderers is necessary as a deterrent of murder. The weakness of that excuse is well illustrated in this very case. Swift and relentless was the law's execution, and notorious the fact. Yet "hold-ups" with deadly weapons, the very crime in committing which those hanged men had resorted to murder as an incident, were perpetrated on an ambitious scale (and under circumstances

which made murder almost an incident in one and within the intention of the criminals in both) twice within 48 hours after these horrible executions and within the sphere of their influence. Legal homicides do not prevent those that are illegal. The former foster the latter, if there is any influence. So completely is this indicated by experience with both, that it is difficult any longer to consider the contrary contention as at once in good faith and intelligent. As an argument it has become only an excuse for that real motive for capital punishment which is rooted in the spirit of revenge—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. If the vicious spirit of revenge were exorcised, and love for morbid excitement were given vent through some less brutal sport, all arguments for capital punishment as a preventive of crime would be abandoned.



The sentimentality which pities the murderer on a gallows regardless of his crime, is bad enough to be sure; but the sentimentality which hangs him out of pity for his victim is worse. If the one is spineless, the other is revengeful. Never should it be forgotten that the great fact which tells against capital punishment is not that it is a disagreeable experience for the murderer, but that where tolerated it is degrading to the community both individually and collectively.



#### Diplomatic Impoliteness.

Whether or not the Colombian minister at Washington has been technically impolite to gentlemen of the American State Department in publishing his letter of protest against Secretary Knox's proposed visit to Colombia, he has at any rate earned the gratitude of the American people by letting them know why the United States of Colombia is aggrieved at the United States of America. It seems that our public servants are keeping the people of this country in ignorance of the important fact that Colombia asks arbitration of a controversy over treaties, and that those servants offensively ignore the request. As they have seen fit to conceal this fact from the American people, the Colombian minister has done the people a favor by publishing it. Of course it is delightfully euphemistic for them to denounce his publication as an insult to the people when it is at the worst an insult only to servants of the people—somewhat such an insult as a guest might be guilty of who took occasion to inform the host that his butler was pawning his silverware. Impoliteness