

people from such swindles. Governor Donahey, in vetoing the real estate bureau bill, declared against having special laws to prevent special brands of dishonesty. A general law against fraud ought to be enough. There is too much duplication and complexity in government. It causes confusion and needless cost, gives opportunity for graft, and tends to build up a high bureaucratic and political machine.

Superintendent Tannehill publishes the following amazing statement as his own belief:

"The building and loan association is the greatest instrumentality that the human mind has ever devised to aid men and women to secure homes."

If this be true, why is it that, after 36 years' experience with this state-regulated instrumentality, a majority of families are paying higher and higher rentals for smaller and smaller space? Mr. Tannehill draws a picture of present housing conditions utterly inconsistent with his idea that building and loan associations "aid" in home-owning:

"Over half the wage-earners and men on salaries in our cities pay half their incomes for rent. . . . A great many of these rented houses are not homes. They are mere places of abode with none of the conveniences of modern life. The renter who is paying two dollars rent per day for an old shack cannot be expected to spend anything additional for improvements."

The only remedy for such sad conditions, according to Mr. Tannehill, is to "help a large proportion of these renters to become home owners," an assumption for which there is not the slightest foundation. He says that the building and loan associations "must have additional funds if they are to render this indispensable service to the rent-oppressed citizens."

Mr. Tannehill has not thought his proposition out. He needs to make a study of the science of political economy, and learn of the natural laws which control wages, ground rent, and interest. Capital is not, as he mistakenly thinks, the only or even the chief element in the problem of building houses. Even if money were supplied at one per cent, or if it fell like manna from heaven, the housing problem would remain just as difficult as ever; for the landowners and speculators would absorb in higher land values all the benefit of the more abundant capital. Mr. Tannehill gives no hint that he has ever thought it necessary to secure a site or location before a house can be erected. He ignores the land question.

It may not be amiss to recall the fact that Superintendent Tannehill, who now says more money for home-seekers is needed, was last year one of the leading advocates of a tax measure, under which it was proposed to tax bank deposits "automatically." He wanted \$40,000,000 additional revenue annually derived by the State from taxes on money, notes, mortgages, stocks and bonds. This is a glaring inconsistency. To make it easier to get money, no tax at all should be levied on any form of capital.

Why is it so difficult to own a home? Well, the State of Ohio maintains a bureau to watch the building and loan associations. One tax on the home-seeker! The building and loan companies maintains a bureau at the capital to watch the State, and for lobbying and publicity purposes. Second tax! The home-seeker must bribe a land speculator. Third tax! The State taxes all the building materials; often several times. Let's call it the fourth tax, although it amounts to several. The borrowed money is taxed. Fifth tax! The State taxes the house every year at nearly full value. Sixth tax, which alone doubles the cost of the average dwelling during its lifetime. Everything that goes into the home in the way of furnishings is taxed. Seventh! Not contented with this, our beneficent legislators impose all sorts of taxes, too numerous to mention, which fall on food, clothing, medicines, amusements, etc.

There is no mystery at all about the housing problem.

—HOWARD M. HOLMES.

## Santa Fe Railway Approves Single Tax in California

THE annually increasing prosperity of the Santa Fe Railway in California has caused it to discover the advantages of the Single Tax. Its lines extend the entire length of the San Joaquin Valley, to San Francisco, a distance of about 250 miles, one continuous garden of cotton, oranges, figs, peaches, olives, grapes, almonds, alfalfa dairies and numberless other farm products.

The Colonization Department of that Railway in its pamphlet, "San Joaquin Valley, California," rightfully gives credit to the irrigation districts for this wonderful transformation of the Valley, within a period of seventeen years, from an almost desolate waste of exhausted grain farms to one of the most beautiful regions of the world, and, after telling about the organization and development of the districts, says:

"Another progressive step is taken, also, in the matter of taxation, for, while heretofore the irrigation districts have taxed improvements, the prevailing practice now is to tax land values only."

The Santa Fe owns no speculative lands in California.

In 1909 the Legislature of California passed the act permitting the five old irrigation districts, and compelling all new districts, to collect all assessments by a tax levied solely on land value. The fifteen other districts had failed, leaving less than 500,000 acres in the five remaining ones, with probably not over 50,000 acres in fruits.

Today, 17 years later, there are over 100 irrigation districts in California organized under this Single Tax law, the total area of which exceeds 4,000,000 acres. All of this land is rapidly being brought to the highest state of cultivation, as each district taxes its land according to

value, without regard to the character of its improvements or whether improved or unimproved.

Irrigation never would have been the success in California that it is today without the exemption of improvements and personal property from the irrigation tax. Under the old system, prior to 1909, of taxing land and improvements, the farming of all but one of the districts was confined almost exclusively to wheat and other grains, although most of the districts had existed for over twenty years.

The limiting of the irrigation tax solely to land value removed from the backs of the progressive farmers of the districts the heavy tax burden imposed upon them whenever they planted a tree or built a house, thus enabling them to freely develop their farms. The success of these Single Tax farmers of 1909, and the years following, gave confidence to others, who planted more trees, bringing increased freight traffic to the Sante Fe Railway and consequent larger income.

It is noteworthy that of all the railways in California thus benefited by the Single Tax irrigation laws, the Sante Fe is the only one to make this graceful acknowledgment of the value of the Single Tax.

—E. P. E. TROY.

## A Great Ohio Paper

WE have cause to regret that there is no Metropolitan paper like the Coshocton, Ohio, *Tribune*, whose recent discussion in several editorials of Thomas Jefferson and the principles he stood for are worthy of more than passing mention. These are in refreshing contrast to the school-boy compositions that during the period of the celebration of the Declaration of Independence have found place in the editorial columns of our papers here, in which what Jefferson really stood for is obscured by meaningless platitudes.

We can perform no better service to our readers than to cite extracts from these editorials from the Coshocton *Tribune*. In its issue of June 27 under the title of "The Man We Honor," the *Tribune* says:

What the philosophical teachings of Plato were in a magnificent effort to encompass the entire range of human life, so are the teachings of Thomas Jefferson in his elucidation of popular government and its relation to the individual. And as the teachings of Plato and his master, Socrates, and his greatest pupil, Aristotle, will serve as finger boards for thousands of years to come, pointing to correct human relationships, so will the teachings of Thomas Jefferson endure until every government on earth will be firmly established on the political principles which he both preached and practiced.

Lincoln said, "I have not a single guiding principle I did not get from Thomas Jefferson." And Lincoln, a young man of eighteen when Jefferson died, unconsciously absorbed from his great teacher, those underlying democratic principles that kept him true to the common people until the hour of his death. And Bryan, however far he

may unwittingly have deviated from the Jeffersonian principles, was a true and sincere disciple all his days. He said of him: "I regard him as the greatest democrat that ever lived, the first great democrat, the greatest constructive statesman the world has ever known. Wherever men are trying to establish a government in which the people rule, they speak the words and strive for the principles of Thomas Jefferson."

On June 29 we cite the following from another editorial on Jefferson:

He knew, as we are now beginning to realize, that government in a republic can rise no higher than its source; that a lazy, indifferent citizenship can only beget an evasive, shifty government and, in the end, an extravagant, corrupt and flabby government; that if the citizen is unmindful of affairs locally the far-away government will be wasteful and expensive; and that as we think and act here at home, so will our agents act in distant Washington. There are indications that we are beginning to open our eyes to the seriousness of this situation. If we are we owe thanks to Thomas Jefferson who, dead, is exerting more influence in the governmental affairs of mankind than any living statesman.

And on June 30 from a longer editorial we cite the following:

Only one thing was lacking as America took her place among the nations to make her position wholly impregnable. She had forever done away with the entailment of estates and made provision for all heirs to take equally in the partition of land. This alone was a tremendous advantage and had there been some statesman at the time to have introduced the complementary reform in land laws advocated a century later by Henry George, by which the value given to land by the expenditure of public funds and by the presence of population should be drawn upon in turn by society to defray public expenses, the world would have been spared every international conflict from the Napoleonic wars to the present time and human society would be immeasurably advanced today beyond its present position.

Hamilton, indeed, came near to a realization of George's great truth, nearer in fact than any intervening statesman, for he early saw and declared that "taxes can only be imposed on land or commerce," meaning that local and state revenues must arise either from imposts upon the value of land or taxes on the products of labor. And had this great financier devoted sufficient time to the analysis of the problem of taxation to have arrived at George's basic principles and thus to have caught the vision that "The Prophet of San Francisco" saw in the following century it would have been possible to have started here in America with a social compact as nearly perfect economically as it was politically.

However that may be, and regrets are nearly always vain, it is due Jefferson to say that he destroyed aristocracy quite as effectually, altho in an entirely different way, as Don Quixote destroyed knight errantry two centuries before. The accomplishment was sufficient in itself to have consigned Jefferson to immortality. It is also sufficient proof to us that the advancement of mankind does not come all at once and easily and quickly, but by evolutionary processes, slowly and thru great travail.

There is no question that the next great step forward will be the consummation of the economic philosophy of