

den is so great that the weaker and the less fortunate fail, and become dependent upon their stronger and more fortunate brethren. These men who fail are not to be relieved by being put on farms, for conditions on the farm are as hard as anywhere else. They can be relieved only by making production easier.



It is not a question of getting access to the land. We are now on the land. We cannot get off of it. But we can make this occupancy harder or easier by law. At present the terms upon which industry occupies the land are very hard. The system of taxation in vogue, by laying most of the cost of government upon industry—and to that extent relieving the land-owner—encourages speculation in land. And land speculation, by taking large quantities out of the market, enables the owners of land that is used to exact an exorbitant toll for its use. Singletax, by shifting the cost of government from industry to land values, will force all unused land that has value to be placed on the market, which will cause a fall in the values of used land. Industry that is now able to pay inflated prices for land, and in addition support the government, will, when receiving the same land at a lower rate, be much more prosperous. And men who are now unable to make headway against adverse conditions will be set upon their feet. The solution of the problem of the unemployed is not to be found in sending him out into the wilderness and setting him at work for which he is not fitted; but in employing him where he is at work for which he is fitted. Our correspondent must dismiss from his mind the idea that land means farm land only. Land in the sense used by economists means the material universe outside of man. It means minerals, waterfalls, forests in a state of nature, and city lots. Since all opponents of the Singletax admit that it will reduce the price of land, and since all men are now on land and using land, does it not follow that land will be more accessible; and being more accessible will not this better the condition of the users?

s. c.



Simplifying the Railroad Question.

One of the greatest obstacles to the solution of the railroad problem is a factor that is not ordinarily connected with it at all. That is the shifting of land values. Men commonly say a road should be run through a certain territory because it would "build up the country," and "make property more valuable." That is true in part. It

makes some kinds of property more valuable, when the question arises as to what the rate shall be to pay for the road and to keep it running. No distinction is made between one property owner and another, or between property owners and non-property owners. Manifestly, the owners of property benefited by the road will profit at the expense of those who are not so benefited. This introduces another factor in routing and in operating the road. Instead of being built where it will best serve the whole country, it may be bent this way and that in order that it may serve the influential beneficiaries. President Ripley, of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad, instanced as an example of waste in operation the four and five duplicate trains on as many roads from Chicago to Kansas City, Omaha and St. Paul. Although the lines from Chicago to Omaha are closely parallel the whole way, the attempt to use one road to serve all the territory reaching the cities now served on the other lines by means of branch roads, would cause a shifting of values; and vigorous protests would follow. Each community wants the best possible service, without considering the general cost to the community.



If a way can be found to lay the cost of building and operating the road on the individuals whose property is enhanced in value by the road, the extension of railroads can be put on a legitimate commercial basis. In other words, if the owners of property especially benefited have to pay into the public treasury all the value over and above what comes to all property, there will be no sinister influence at work to divert the enterprise from the commercial needs of the community. Such a result can be secured by increasing the tax on land, irrespective of its improvements, until it has covered into the public treasury the whole value that the road brought to the land. This is demanded by the simplest dictates of justice, and by the far-reaching demands of expediency. Goods, houses, and personal property are not enhanced in value by the coming of the railroad. The road is a benefit to the owners of this kind of property, but they have to pay for the benefit to the owners of land, in higher prices and rents. And since the owners of the land can and do collect from the owners of other kinds of property a larger toll for the use of their property they should be required in their turn to give it to the agent that created the value, the public acting through the railroad.



The same logic applies to street cars, drainage,

pavements, and all manner of governmental services. All confer a value upon land owners in addition to what is conferred upon other citizens; and this special interest constitutes one of the chief sources of political corruption, and inefficiency of public management. Remove this special interest of one class of citizens, and the way will be cleared for the legitimate extension and operation of all kinds of public service. Continue this special interest, and public service will be clogged and stalled in spite of all the good intentions in the world.

s. c.

Exploiting Misfortune.

To engratiate themselves in public esteem newspapers are ever ready to demonstrate their faith in the virtues of advertising by seizing upon every striking event. Oftentimes these enterprises are of public benefit in righting wrongs and in relieving suffering. But occasionally they are of questionable merit. The keen rivalry between the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Herald is responsible for a venture whose wisdom may be questioned. When the Herald hit upon the idea of sending a Christmas ship to Europe with presents from the children of America to the children of the war-afflicted countries it caught the public imagination. The press throughout the country took up the idea, and the response has been such as to warm the heart of the veriest cynic. But now the Tribune, eager to do something to offset this happy stroke of the Herald's, launches a plan to bring the "war orphans" to America. It proposes to send to Europe "a corps of physicians and nurses who will see that no children are accepted except those free from taint of every sort—strong, sturdy, bright-eyed, clean-limbed children such as can be welcomed in the Tribune homes with safety."

Without questioning the motives or the propriety of such an undertaking, its justice and wisdom are doubtful. If the act be urged in behalf of the unfortunate children of Europe who have been orphaned by the war then no discrimination should be made against the ill-favored, the sickly, and the crippled children. It is, indeed, these doubly unfortunate little ones who should receive first consideration. Were the Master who so long ago cried, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," to carry physical succor to the war orphans there is little doubt as to which He would select first. But if the act be urged on behalf of families in this country who are in need of chil-

dren then it is of doubtful wisdom to deprive those countries of their "strong, sturdy, bright-eyed, clean-limbed children," and leave the others. The greatest of the hardships to the warring countries will be the lowering of the standard of the physique of their people. The strongest, sturdiest, brightest-eyed, and cleanest-limbed men are being killed off at an unprecedented rate. The general size and strength of the races are being lowered. The proportion of defectives will be much greater than they were before the war. It is not to the interest of this country that those nations should deteriorate. On the contrary, it is of the utmost importance to the world at large that they recover as quickly as possible from this awful calamity.

How ill advised, then, would be a movement to bring to this country the finest of the children. That the children, both the favored and the ill-favored, should be aided to the utmost power of our resources goes without saying; but the best way to help all the children is to serve them in their own lands and among their own people. One dollar will go as far there as three dollars here; and every sturdy son and daughter matured there will to that extent help to redeem the blighted nations. Let the Tribune do its utmost to save the war orphans—and may great success attend its efforts—but let it do so with a view to saving the unhappy nations as well as the children. And should it be found that the warring nations object to our sifting their seed and culling the best, as they might most naturally do, let not the generous hearted Americans, who would help the best of the children as their own, withhold their hand from the less favored.

s. c.

Observing Treaties.

Some of the Americans who are pointing the finger of scorn at Germany for disregarding the treaty with Belgium should pause now and again to recall the effort required to keep this country from repudiating its treaty with Great Britain regarding the Panama Canal. When we had throttled the Philippine Republic, we were estopped from protesting against England's destruction of the Boer Republics. Had we exempted American ships from Panama tolls in defiance of our treaty with England, we should have had to be silent in the presence of the invasion of Belgium.

s. c.

William Denison.

A quiet and unobtrusive, but none the less effi-