

argument might be as logically applied elsewhere. The people of Cincinnati, being stronger than Charles P. Taft, might conclude that the land he owns in that city could be made "more useful to humanity" if confiscated than "if allowed to stagnate under the conditions" which he allows to prevail thereon. The people of Texas might get a similar idea about the land he owns in that State, just as the people of Mexico already have concerning his holdings in that country. Then, again, the Times-Star's confiscation argument might impress some people sufficiently to cause its application to other lands than Taft's. In the strike district of Colorado, for instance, the argument might be very popular just now. Land monopolists, who can not calmly consider the suggestion of even the slightest application of the Singletax principle, ought to take notice of Charles P. Taft's endorsement of a measure far more drastic. S. D.



Houston Teaches New York City.

In fighting the movement to relieve congestion of population in New York City through untaxing of improvements, Mr. Allan Robinson, president of the Allied Real Estate Interests, saw fit to publish in the Wall Street Journal statements disputing the effect of a similar policy in Houston, Texas. He did not help his case by so doing, for Tax Commissioner J. J. Pastoriza published in reply the facts concerning Houston. Mr. Pastoriza showed that without figuring increase from annexation of suburbs, the population of Houston has increased 25,000 in two years. He showed that Mr. Robinson erred in denying Houston's building permits for the first six months of 1913 to have been greater by 55 per cent than for the same period of 1911. Mr. Pastoriza produced the official figures which showed an increase of over 66 per cent. Mr. Robinson had claimed that there had been but a small increase in Houston's bank deposits and that the banks of Dallas made a better showing. Mr. Pastoriza produced figures which showed a large increase in deposits and also that while Dallas, a larger city and the center of a richer country, should have larger deposits than Houston, yet she has not. Mr. Robinson had argued from the statements of Houston's handful of objecting land speculators that the people of Houston must be opposed to the Houston plan. Mr. Pastoriza enlightened him concerning the identity of these objectors.



Mr. Pastoriza also made very clear that one

effect of the Houston plan has been to lower house rent, the very thing needed in New York City to lessen congestion of population. Says Mr. Pastoriza:

The exemption of buildings from taxation to the amount of seventy-five percent of their value has had the effect to lower house rents, which is only another way of saying that it has raised wages. The following is a short list of houses (there are many more) showing the amount of reduction in rent since the Houston Plan of Taxation has been in existence. The plan has caused many new houses to be erected, thus creating competition and changing the condition which existed before the Houston Plan of Taxation was inaugurated. Before that time there were two or three tenants for every house that was newly built; as a result house rent jumped to the skies. Now there is never more than one tenant after a house when it is completed, and sometimes not that. The result is that the owners of houses, being anxious to rent, have reduced the rent until the revenue derived from improved property does not exceed very much the interest which you can get for money in the open market. I will ask if this is not a good thing for the people of our city? S. D.



Houston's Council Gets a Plain Statement.

Co-operation of a very unwelcome kind will be forced on Houston's land speculators should they carry out their threat to invoke the courts against the Houston system of taxation. H. F. Ring of Houston, one of the ablest and best known of Texas lawyers, will join in their efforts and add to their plea for full taxation of all improvements, full taxation of all other property including bank deposits, money loaned, stocks of merchants and manufacturers, and household goods. Mr. Ring has addressed a letter to the Mayor and Council calling attention to the fact that these forms of property are escaping taxation. Mr. Ring is already known as an authority on the principles of taxation and has done much to clarify that subject. His letter to the Houston Council is a plain statement of the case from a different viewpoint than his previous writings, and in a different form.



Mr. Ring takes the position of one who insists on strict enforcement of all existing tax laws. Since bank deposits and money loaned by banks are not taxed in Houston, he calls attention to the State laws requiring their taxation. He declares absurd "the vaporings of Singletax cranks to the effect that a systematic effort to tax credits—money loans—amounts to double taxation, since the land given as security is also taxed as well as the money loaned on it, and that the whole burden of such taxation in the long run falls upon the borrower in