

It is not timber that man has grown, or tended, or in any way cared for, but simply the natural timber that nature, unassisted by man, grew for the use of all men. That timber once belonged to the Nation, that is to say, to the people of the United States. Had it been husbanded and properly cared for, it would have furnished lumber for the country at a moderate price, and it would have been in better condition today than it was when cutting began. Instead, it has passed into the hands of private owners who, though they have cut wastefully, and allowed more to burn than they cut, have today holdings that will enable them and their heirs to levy tribute of untold millions upon their fellow men.



This is not to say that Frederick Weyerhaeuser was conscious of the enormity of his wrong to society. Nor is it to say that the statesmen who presided over the destiny of the Nation at Washington realized their error. He thought he was engaged in legitimate business; they thought they were building up a great nation. It all goes to show the infinite distance between the old political economy, which had no fundamental principle on which to rest, and the new political economy based upon natural law. And it makes plain the fact that the work of this and of succeeding generations is largely a matter of undoing the mischief committed by former generations. It is not a matter of railing at those who have been successful in acquiring fortunes from these public largesses, or of abusing those who threw them to the people. It is a matter of so readjusting the laws of the country that man's needs will harmonize with nature's supply.



We need not be niggardly. What Mr. Weyerhaeuser got from the timber that he did cut and bring to market his heirs may enjoy; but the timber that still stands, just as it came from the hand of nature, should be brought again under the control of the Nation. The earth and its natural forces belonged no more to the generations that have passed away, than they do to the generation that is here. Because former generations wasted their heritage through ignorance is no reason why this and succeeding generations should not rectify their mistakes. The fortunes won by individuals because of those errors may be forgiven, but the source of those fortunes, the earth in a state of nature, is just as rightfully the possession of the people of this generation, as it was of the generations that have gone before. Restore the earth and its natural forces to the people. That is the task

of this generation. How many statesmen now in the field measure up to the opportunity? s. c.

---

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

---

### A PASTORIZA THREAT.

Copy of a Letter to a Resident of Houston.

Houston, Texas, April 2.

Dear Sir: In conversation with me yesterday you stated that there was a sentiment among a few of the large taxpayers to contest the assessment of property in Houston for the year 1914, made in accordance with the Houston Plan of Taxation, and that these parties might possibly make an effort to return to the old plan, which meant that the fellow who had the strongest pull got his property in for less than the fellow who had no influence; or that they might insist upon assessing all forms of property instead of submitting to the exemption from taxation of certain species of personal property. You very patriotically said that as far as you were concerned you would not be a party to such a movement, notwithstanding your assessment would amount to more than a half million dollars. You said you would sign your assessment at the prices placed thereon by the taxation department of the City of Houston. As Tax Commissioner, I appreciated this statement because I knew that your property had not been assessed at any higher percentage of its value than that owned by any other citizen of Houston.



The matter of assessing property is not personal with me, but while I am Tax Commissioner of Houston I propose to pursue one of the following two courses:

First, I will do as I have started out to do, assess all property in accordance with the Houston Plan of Taxation. This plan, as you know, exempts from taxation all cash, mortgages, notes and evidences of debt, while it taxes improvements upon land at only 25 per cent of their fair present value—land being taxed at its fair value.

If any taxpayer in Houston sees fit to make use of the courts in an effort to destroy the Houston Plan of Taxation I will, of course, contest it as far as I can; but if I fail, then I will give the people of Houston the kind of taxation which I am authorized to do, and which I told them I would do in my announcement to the public three days before the election.

In other words, if I am forced to do it I will proceed to assess all forms of property at their full value. The first thing I will do will be to call before me every taxpayer and secure from him an affidavit as to how much cash he had on the first day of January. This will be pursued until every taxpayer in Houston has been made to swear to the amount of cash which he had. If the amount that I get for assessment by this means does not equal the amount which the banks have testified to the United States government was on deposit on January 1, I will then proceed to prove which ones of the taxpayers have rendered a false affidavit, and those who have done so will have to defend themselves before the courts

of this country for perjury. It is needless for me to remind you that such a procedure will cause people to withdraw their funds from the banks, which will create a panic, cause a general run upon the banks, and in effect destroy our city. All that I have to do is to announce that I am going to tax all the cash in Houston, and the people who know me know that I will leave no stone unturned to do it.

Next I will employ a force to take an inventory of the household furniture in every residence in Houston and assess it at full value (less \$250, which is exempted by law).

Next I will require every merchant in Houston to furnish me with an inventory taken in January, and I will assess his merchandise at its full value.

I have a complete list of sales of real estate made within the past two years, all of record in this office, and I will use this as a basis and assess every piece of land in the City of Houston at its full value computed according to the sales actually made and recorded in the court house; and the courts of the country will sustain me in this act.

I will search the records of Harris County and get a complete list of all the mortgages of record and assess them according to law, notwithstanding I am personally opposed to this form of double taxation; because you know as well as I do that mortgages are secured upon land which is already taxed.

I recently have had offered me a list of citizens of Houston who own stocks and bonds in corporations, upon the payment of \$1 per name. I refused it because I do not want to add another burden to our people. But if I am forced to I will get this list and I will assess every person in Houston who owns stocks and bonds in corporations up to the full value of his holdings; the law will also sustain me in this.

In other words, if the people of Houston are so very particular as to carrying out the taxation laws of the country to the letter, they never have had a Tax Commissioner who is better qualified to do it than I am.

Then after I have done that, I fear the trouble will not be over, because there are a great many people in Houston who prefer the modified tax plan, known as the Houston Plan of Taxation, and you will realize that no matter how hard I try I will yet be unable to comply with the law literally, so they themselves, I am advised, will resort to the courts, and thus we will have no end of litigation.

In addition to that I will exercise my right as a taxpayer of Harris County and I will enjoin Harris County from collecting its taxes, if such a thing can be done legally, because the assessments in Harris County are ten times as unequal as those in the City of Houston and I have the evidence in my office to prove it.



As a result of the above proceeding this is the condition which will exist:

The City of Houston will be destroyed commercially and the one or two hundred men who own over one-half of the wealth of Houston will go into bankruptcy. And instead of having a city which is being talked about and praised by the press of this country from New York to California, you will have a city from which its inhabitants will flee as though it had been stricken by the plague; and the very men

who have initiated the suggested proceeding will find that their land values, which are now great, will be depreciated, and owing to the fact of the lessening in the population of Houston there will be absolutely no purchasers for it. This condition of course will destroy our city and this result can be charged up to less than twenty-five men in Houston who do not understand the subject of taxation, economics or municipal government.

I am constrained to write you this letter so that you may see exactly the predicament we shall be placed in, if certain taxpayers object to having their lands assessed at the same per cent of value as those of the people in other parts of the city. I don't think you want this condition to be brought about, certainly I do not, because I will be destroyed financially with the other land owners of Houston.

There is this difference between me and the average man. I am willing to lose all of my wealth in order to demonstrate that the principles which I advocate are based upon justice and have for their purpose the building up of the greatest city in the South. I have lost all desire to accumulate wealth, and as long as I have my health it will be no trouble for me to secure the necessities of life. The wealthy men of this community should read history again. If they would, they would understand that no country can long exist, or no form of government can be continuous unless justice is dealt out to all alike.

Yours very truly,

J. J. PASTORIZA,  
Land and Tax Commissioner.

---

## INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

---

### WHEN WILL WE GET OFF THEIR BACKS?

New York City, March 28.

Here, in this city of five millions of people, several hundred unemployed men—mostly of the Industrial Workers of the World—cold, miserable, ragged and a-hungered, dragged through the snow-slush of the streets of New York demanding work at full pay or bread as their right without thanks to anybody. In utter violation of the common conception of the rights of property, in utter disregard of the "sanctity of the Organized Church," with entire lack of what is called "patriotism," in utter irreverence for the memory, the dignity and the character of The Father of His Country, this mob of the homeless and landless, this rabble of unemployed, invaded the churches of the Imperial City demanding bread.

The mob upon invitation entered even old St. Paul's church, sacred to the worship of God and to the service of the Prince of Peace, bearing in its structure the treasured Washington pew. For this is the church that Washington attended and here is unchanged the identical pew in which Washington worshiped while he was first President and New York was the capital of the United States.

The tatterdemallions came here invited to eat the bread of charity; but they mocked the dispensers of charity, made grimaces at them and railed, saying: 'This hand-out is ours, not yours, to give; we, not you, produced it—we, the workers of the world. You hand back to us a crumb from the loaf that our work