

that those who do not understand our position might naturally guess as Mr. Platt did, that this idea is involved.

And yet what one of them ever referred to those who believe in the law of gravity as being influenced by any regard for things that are sacred because really of divine origin?" Who ever heard of a mathematician who accepts the law of square or cube root being described as being bound by reverence for sacred things?

That Mr. Platt's reference to sacred things "really of divine origin" was not a mere slip of the pen is indicated by the fact that he follows it up by a reference to another school of thought which, he says, thinks this belief "entirely inconsistent with modern evolutionary philosophy."

There is no need to take space here to explain what we mean by natural laws. Suffice it to say that, if the reader has a clear conception of what he means by the law of gravity, by the law of the lever, by the law of cube or square root, by the law of expanding gases, by the laws of refraction and other laws in nature, he is prepared to understand what we mean by the eighteen natural laws of economics which I include in The Economic Code.

To those who say that these laws are only tendencies or probabilities, I reply: Very well, no matter! Whatever your law of gravity is, that is what these laws of economics are. We are not the least concerned with your hair-splitting about these laws; for when you are all through and agree as to what they are, then that is what our laws of economics are; for all we claim is that economics is a science as exact as any.

The explanation of natural law found in Dr. Schilpp's "De We Need a New Religion?" is very satisfactory. He says that by natural law we mean the way we find upon careful observation and scientific analysis that nature behaves under this or that circumstance, or this or that condition.

Stockton, Calif.

L. D. BECKWITH.

## OUR LAND GRABBING FOERFATHERS

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Everybody, with the probable exception of Prof. Ely, knows that land speculation is the root of many unmitigated evils, too numerous here to mention.

But how many students know that in one case at least, the lust for land and speculation was productive of some good?

It will astonish many to learn that land speculation played a contributing role in bringing about the American Revolution. (I here consider the American Revolution as coming under the category of "good," although, I confess, I am well aware of the fact that the American people have failed to make use of this "good.")

But be that as it may it seems that the Mother Country was becoming jealous of her expanding offspring, and sought to curtail the growing power of the Colonies. Accordingly, the British Government, by a royal proclamation of 1763 ("Acts of the Privy Council," Colonial Series, The Unbound Papers, London 1911, VI, 513-8) forbade any governor "to grant warrant of survey, or pass patents for any lands beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from the west or north-west; or upon any lands whatever, which not having been ceded to, or purchased by us . . . are reserved to the said Indians, or any of them."

This proclamation was particularly offensive to the Virginians, who not only actually owned immense tracts of land, but held large charter claims to lands beyond the limits defined by the royal proclamation. Perhaps, this helps to explain the fiery enthusiasm with which Virginia entered into the spirit of the revolution.

By way of parenthetical interjection, it may be said that instead of owing a debt of gratitude to the Fathers of our Country, we owe them nothing but severe malediction for, with the exception of such thinkers as Paine, Franklin, Jefferson and a few others, the majority of the

revolutionary leaders were land speculators and slave holders, Washington being the chief culprit among them.

It seems to me that we American people have expiated long enough for the sins of our Fathers, so that the time has arrived for another revolution—this time, a bloodless socio-politico-economic revolution which shall restore the land to the people via the socialization of the economic or social rent of land.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

JOHN C. ROSE.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Prof. Tugwell wrote the biography of Henry George for the Encyclopedia of Social Science and succeeded in doing this without letting a word escape him that indicated an opinion concerning the work of the man whose history he was recording. That such an opinion, if expressed, would not have been complimentary may be inferred. It is a pity that he did not speak out. The followers of Henry George could not help but feel toward condemnation from such a source like Whittier in his poem, "The Exiles," where the tolerant liberal, Macey, responds to a clerical bigot's threat to curse him:

"Curse, an thou wilt" said Macey,  
"But thy blessing, prithee, spare."

Detroit, Mich.

SAMUEL DANZIGER.

## CALIFORNIA AWAKENS

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Initial steps have now been taken toward organization of campaign committees under the general title of "Tax Relief." One committee has been formed for Northern California and one for Southern California. The committee for Northern California has as its president Edward D. Vandeleur, who is president of the Labor Council of San Francisco; Edward Pomeroy, treasurer, and S. Edward Williams (83 McAllister St., San Francisco), secretary. Its vice-presidents are George Creel, Andrew Furuseth, Edward L. Hubbard, and Jackson H. Ralston.

In Southern California the president is George W. Patterson (2422 N. Alvarado St., Los Angeles); secretary-treasurer, A. J. Samis (1945 Lamba St., Los Angeles), and its executive committee consists of the above, with Jackson H. Ralston, R. E. Chadwick, Laurie J. Quinby, Paul Scharrenberg and Edward D. Vandeleur.

The advisory committees of the two organizations include: Louis Bartlett (ex-Mayor of Berkeley), John Beardsley, Judge Rube W. Borough, J. W. Buzzell (Secretary of the Los Angeles Labor Council), George Cartwright, Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Calkin, William L. Chitty, George Creel, John F. Calton (President of Los Angeles Labor Council) George F. Dyer, Harry H. Farrell, Andrew Furuseth (President International Seamen's Union), Hamlin Garland, T. Perceval Gerson, O. C. Heitman (President San Diego County Labor Council), Adolph W. Hoch (President California State Federation of Labor), Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Hoffman, Dean Glenn Hoover, Robert L. Hubbard, Dr. Charles James, Mr. and Mrs. B. F. King, Robert G. Loucks, Albert B. Nordskog, John C. Packard, Alice Park, Lona I. Robinson, Albert C. Rogers, Frederick W. Roman, Dr. E. P. Ryland, Paul Scharrenberg, George Winfield Scott, Harry See, George J. Schafer, John I. Siebert, Upton Sinclair, E. M. Stangland, Lincoln Steffens, S. S. Taber, Dr. Lincoln J. Taft, Clarence E. Todd, F. G. Volkers, H. J. Voorhis, Elsie J. Webster, Samuel S. White, S. Edward Williams, J. Stitt Wilson (former Mayor of Berkeley), Col. C. E. S. Wood, David Woodhead, Fred Workman.

Petitions asking that the amendment referred to should be placed upon the ballot at the election in November of this year have been prepared and are being circulated as rapidly as possible in various portions of this State. There is, however, an urgent necessity for a number of active friends to engage in this work everywhere in Cali-



fornia. Our present undertaking is to secure by about the first of July 110,000 signatures.

In such experience as I have personally had with regard to the circulation of this petition, certain matters of interest may be noted. At least nine persons out of ten are opposed to the existing sales tax, which was put over by the real estate interests of California without an appreciation on the part of our citizens of what was taking place. The tenth person, however, believes that his property taxes and taxes generally have been reduced through the institution of the sales tax. He is disposed to ignore the fact that every day he pays out an appreciable amount of money which at the end of the year becomes formidable and which replaces any possible advantage he may have gained through the diminution of the tax upon his property, save in the relatively rare cases of large holders of property. He also ignores the utterly contemptible features of the system which compels the milk of babes and the bread of almost starving people to be levied upon for the benefit of those who are holders of considerable amounts of property.

My experience so far confirms the impression that the Single Taxers of this country have never properly appreciated the strength of their position before the public. I find at least six or seven men out of every ten ready to accept the idea that inasmuch as land values are the only things which benefit the community from the operations of government, so should land values be the only things taxed, and furthermore, that any tax upon industry and its results, either in the shape of houses or tangible personal property, brings about a diminution of production which ultimately results in great damage to the community. There seems to be an instinctive acceptance on the part of the vast majority of these propositions which we Single Taxers regard as self-evident. Indeed, they are of this character.

It would be entirely too much to say that the public at large accepts or understands many of the implications of what we are pleased to regard as the Single Tax philosophy; nor from a practical point of view is it necessary that they should be convinced adherents of all the fundamentals of our beliefs. It is quite enough that the practical applications we would make meet with their very general approval. Our argument, therefore, in the coming campaign will be limited to calling attention to the principle of which I have spoken and which are so readily accepted by the vast majority, and we will not indulge in any theoretical argument as to what may or may not happen in a far distant future. It will be sufficient for us to point out that industry will be revived and men put to work everywhere through this partial application of our belief, while at the same time the interests of justice in taxation will be subserved.

Will the campaign succeed? About this one cannot be absolutely dogmatic. I personally believe that with practical support from the Single Taxers throughout the country, and we must have it, pecuniarily and otherwise, we can undoubtedly win. I am basing this belief upon several things; for instance, many years ago, the campaign for home rule in taxation which was widely denounced as a Single Tax measure, received forty per cent of the votes of the then Californians. Very much more radical propositions than either home rule or taxation or that now presented have received as high as about thirty per cent of the entire vote. The margin, therefore, between past success and defeat is not an unbridgeable one. At the present time we are presenting a moderate, although radical and reasonable, proposition which makes its immediate strong appeal to what I am sure is today a very large majority of the citizens of California.

We do not ignore the fact that the contest will be severe. The realtors will become frantic, and will have large support from the banks and the element. The great newspapers of the state are owned by holders of tremendous tracts of land—probably, between them, as much as two million acres, and it may be more. They will probably resist through their papers the reform for which we stand. To oppose this is the fact that the land connections of which I speak are thor-

oughly well known throughout the state and the influence of the papers correspondingly discounted.

As a very solid backing for the campaign we shall have the State Federation of Labor, with 150,000 members. Other organizations are not unfriendly. For instance, last evening the Palo Alto American Legion Post resolved unanimously to support our amendment, and I expect the Post of Veterans of Foreign Wars in our neighborhood to take like action. These Posts will urge other Posts of the neighborhood to follow their lead.

An illustration of the fact that the strength of this movement while having the backing of organized labor is by no means limited to its membership is shown by the complexion of the first eighty-eight signatures to one of my own petitions. Among this number there were but six, who, as it happened, were members of any union, and the others were my neighbors as I chanced to meet them.

I shall endeavor to keep you informed as this campaign progresses. I cannot too much stress its importance. It may well be the turning point of our entire movement. Certainly the time has come for us to gather some fruit from our labors over the past fifty years.

Perhaps a few lines may be added. Besides visiting Stockton, where a variety of factors unite to bring about a most favorable situation, I have addressed 100 delegates forming the San Jose Labor Council. They by a unanimous vote endorsed the action of the State convention favoring abolition of the sales tax, and of taxation upon improvements and tangible personal property and provided for a committee to superintend the circulation of the initiative petitions.

In my own county of Santa Clara the local Posts of the American Legion and of the Veterans of Foreign Wars have unanimously come into line for the proposition, though formal action has yet to be taken on the latter but is undoubted. From each body young men have volunteered to visit all the other Posts of this and adjoining counties and they have the gift of enthusiasm.

My personal experience convinces me that the California public at least is ready for the measure of Single Tax this amendment gives it.

In my own speeches I represent the amendment as exactly what it is—exemption to the extent indicated—and do not let myself be controlled by fancy or imagination as to the great social reform we might be excusable for expecting under the complete application of the Single Tax. Limiting the argument to the bare logic of the situation, we have not to fear any charge of false promises if a complete millennium does not ensue upon the adoption of this partial measure. But we may be justified in believing that its good results will be great enough to assist us to take the next step of our journey.

Palo Alto, Calif.

JACKSON H. RALSTON.

## NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS

MAYOR ELECT MCNAIR conferred with Alfred E. Smith before his inauguration on the question of housing and said later in an interview: "Mr. Smith has been through a lot of things that I am facing and has been very kind in giving me some advice."

THE death of John F. Scott of Hewlet, L. I., a subscriber to LAND AND FREEDOM, is noted in the daily press. He was a son of William B. Scott, and was connected for the last ten years with the well known real estate firm of Pease & Elliman. He had graduated from the University of the City of New York in 1872 and was a member of the New York National Guard and many fraternal organizations. He had reached the age of eighty.

WILLIAM H. HOLLY, well known Chicago Single Taxer, has been appointed by President Roosevelt as a federal judge for the northern district of Illinois.

IN the figures given by Willis Malone in his letter printed in LAND AND FREEDOM for Nov.-Dec. (page 196) the total of the rent on both