

able. Shocking as it is, it need occasion no surprise. So long as police efficiency is measured by the number of arrests and convictions, instead of by infrequency of occasion for them, it will require self-restraint on the part of the police to avoid frame-ups. In this case the convicted man had wealthy and influential friends who were able to call public attention to the judicial murder about to be committed. Had it been otherwise it is not hard to imagine the final result. Even as it is, action by the Governor is still necessary to prevent commission of the crime; but it is unthinkable that he will not act, in spite of the disregard for precedents and of solemn rulings of courts that will be involved. After such an experience, no infliction of capital punishment can take place, especially of a poor and friendless individual, without leaving open to question whether it was not the successful carrying out of a frame-up.

S. D.



### A Neglected American Interest.

Why has there never been a statesman at Washington with the broadness of vision, the depth of understanding, and the cleverness of insight, to rise in his place in Congress and demand protection for one of the most deserving classes in this country? Our coastwise shipping is protected by a law that excludes all foreign built ships. Our manufacturers are protected by duties on imported goods. Our laborers are protected by Asiatic exclusion laws. But the American suitor who aspires to the hand of an American heiress must meet the competition of the world. As the American workman is unable to meet the competition of laborers accustomed to a lower scale of living, so is the American suitor helpless in the presence of a foreign title. Nobles from abroad are every year carrying away our wealthiest heiresses. And so far are our statesmen from rising to the occasion, and placing an embargo on this exchange of dollars for titles, that rumors are current from time to time of a contemplated tax on bachelors. Handicap the runner, and then punish him for not winning! Is there no sense of humor or justice in the American statesman?

S. C.



### Misapplied Energy.

In the life of Frederick Weyerhaeuser, whose death on the 4th, at the age of 79, marked the passing of one of the richest of men, the country is treated to a striking example of the good and the bad features of our economic system. A man of keen intellect, bold initiative, and tireless energy,

he offers a fine example of the men who do things; and the vicissitudes of his fortunes, as he ran the industrial gamut from a \$4-a-month brewer's helper to a multi-millionaire, touches the imagination. Had this man of rare executive talent lived under normal conditions, he would have been of inestimable value to his fellow men.



But he did not live under normal conditions. He came upon the scene at a time when the Nation was distributing the richest largesses that a profligate sovereignty ever threw among its people. The Nation owned millions of acres of timber that had never known the hand of man, and of such quality and extent that with proper care it would have outlived the race. Some of this timber was needed for building purposes, and it might have been assumed that lumbermen would be given permission to cut what was required, as demand arose. It would seem, indeed, looking back upon those mighty statesmen, whose speeches reverberated through the Halls of Congress and filled the pages of school book readers, that some such policy would at least have found consideration.



Such an idea, however, did not enter the mind of the statesmen of that day. One thought seems to have actuated them: Give the timberlands to whomsoever would take them, prohibit by tariff duties the importation of foreign lumber, and let the woodsman cut where he would, as he would, and when he would. Did he waste more than he marketed? There was plenty left. Did he charge exorbitant prices? That mattered not to people who received high-tariff wages. Did he crowd out the small holders? What did it matter, so long as we "built up the country"? The one thing for the Government to do, in the minds of those revered statesmen, and do as quickly as possible, was to get rid of its timber lands.



This is where the peculiar talent of Mr. Weyerhaeuser came into play. He was as eager to acquire timberland as the statesmen were to give it away; so it changed hands very rapidly. He marketed some lumber—and to that extent he served his fellow men—but his great work, and the work that made him one of the richest men in the world, was not in marketing lumber, but in acquiring timberland. And the enormous wealth of which he died possessed does not consist of mills, or boats, or railroads, that might be used in marketing lumber, but in millions of acres of standing timber.

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.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### 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