

order they want from a Secretary of the Interior. In a word, the Committee's bill seeks to strengthen the hands of the President, though taking care to give him no arbitrary power, since Congress remains the final arbiter; while those opposed to it seem desirous of reducing as far as they dare the power of the Executive to protect the Nation's possessions. If they are wise, they will not press the issue.

The contrast between Mr. Ballinger's bill and the Committee's bill will reinforce the judgment of those who think that the Secretary is not the one to be intrusted with the protection of the public's interests in the public lands; not because he is corrupt—The Outlook repeats its belief in his integrity—but because he is not sufficiently in sympathy with the new movement. On the other hand, the Senate Committee's bill indicates a greater understanding of and sympathy with the Conservation movement in the Senate than the country had supposed.



During this time of investigation into the conditions governing the production of our meat supply much has been said about the hardships endured by stock-growers. There has been sharp criticism in Colorado and the adjoining States from those who chafe under the restrictions imposed upon grazing lands included within National forests. The lands included within these forests are (1) lands now covered with forest growth, (2) lands formerly forested and susceptible to reforestation, and (3) limited areas surrounded by forested lands which should be protected in order not to impair their water-conserving powers. The hurried surveys of previous years included small areas of arable land and also of purely grazing land within the boundaries of the National forests. But during the past year the Forest Service has been engaged in the work of determining the character of every acre of forest land, so that all agricultural and open grass land may be eliminated. This task is practically completed, and the proclamations eliminating lands not valuable principally for forest purposes are in course of preparation. It is interesting to learn that of the total area of the National forests not more than one per cent has been found to be of greater value for agricultural or

other purposes than it is for forest purposes. Over three-quarters of the forest land, however, has a grazing value. Take, for example, land covered by open stands of timber, such as yellow pine, or the exposed southerly slopes of otherwise timbered hills, or the narrow valleys along streams, or the areas above timber line, or the burned-over and cut-over areas—all these produce excellent crops of forage and are desirable grazing grounds for cattle, horses, swine, sheep, and goats. Under proper restriction the utilization of these forage resources may be allowed without serious injury. As a matter of fact, it is allowed. The Government's primary aim, however, is not a source of revenue for itself but for the stock-growers. To exclude stock from the forest would entail a great financial loss upon many stock-growers and settlers. To show that their interests are considered, we may mention that during the past year over one million five hundred thousand cattle and horses and nearly eight million sheep and goats were provided with range upon National forest land. On such an amount of stock the estimated annual product has a value in beef, mutton, wool, hides, and pelts approximating twenty-five million dollars. These figures are eloquent as to the magnitude of the stock industry dependent in whole or in part upon the National forests. As to the grazing fees charged, the administration of the National forests costs the Government a certain sum annually, and a certain percentage of this cost is due to the supervision of the grazing required to protect the forests from damage. It is but fair, therefore, that those who enjoy grazing privileges in the National forests should reimburse the Government at least in part for the cost of an administration necessitated because of such privileges. The grazing fee covers the cost of the grazing administration. If it had been designed to produce revenue, the fee could have been justly made larger, because for the use of State, railway, and private lands adjacent to the National forests stock-growers are paying much higher prices despite advantages in many cases inferior to those afforded by the National forests. A notable example is that afforded by the Indian Reservations, upon which grazing privileges have

been eagerly sought at prices two to five times those charged by the Forest Service for similar privileges.

pay an excessive revenue temporarily and then cease to pay at all."

FOREST TAXATION

Among the subjects considered at the recent meeting of the Governors at Washington was that of uniform legislation in taxation. In no domain is this more necessary than in that of forest lands, for four-fifths of our forests are privately owned and can be protected only by State laws. At present the general rule is to tax land with standing timber year after year under a general property tax as farm lands are taxed. But the farm lands produce an annual crop. The timber lands produce a crop once in many years. Thus the present tax system promotes forest destruction. As Mr. Charles Lathrop Pack, the forest expert, pertinently pointed out in his address at Washington, this kind of taxation was abandoned long ago by other great nations: "In fact, we are the only advanced nation with a crop of standing timber on its annual tax roll. As long as forests are taxed on the basis of an annual crop, the holding of young forests until they mature means financial loss to the owner. Under such conditions, the establishment of new forests cannot be expected. I believe that the taxation of forest lands should be based upon the yield when the timber is cut. The timber should be taxed separately from the land, and only, like other crops, after it is harvested. The land alone should be taxed annually." Not only would such a system be equitable in itself; it would insure, first of all, an increasing revenue from the forests. This would be specially the case in northern New England from the heavy cutters of timber there, whose incomes are out of all proportion greater than their taxes. Secondly, the tax receipts would be permanent, not temporary. As the report of the National Conservation Commission says, "An annual tax upon land itself, exclusive of the value of the timber, and a tax upon the timber when cut, are well adapted to actual conditions of forest investment and are practicable and certain. It is far better that forest land should pay a moderate tax permanently than that it should

WILL NOT CONGRESS SPARE THE BOYS?

Undoubtedly with the best of intentions, Congress is in the process of working a great injury to American boys. Already the Senate has passed the bill which is full of peril to childhood, and the Judiciary Committee of the House has it now under consideration. This is known as Senate Bill 1942, "for the establishment of a probation and parole system for the District of Columbia." The general purpose of the bill is excellent. It is to enable the courts of the District of Columbia to do something more civilized with the prisoner guilty of offenses except the most serious than to send him to prison. It empowers the supreme, police, and juvenile courts of the District of Columbia to suspend sentence upon any prisoner, except such as may be guilty of any one of certain specified kinds, and to put him on probation. It also creates a probation commission which shall have supervision of probationers. This establishment of a probation system is, of course, in accordance with the soundest principles of penology. It is this fact which has apparently led Senators, and may lead Representatives, to overlook those features of the bill which are fundamentally bad. When it is remembered how many human destinies may be determined for evil by the enactment of such a law as this, there is reason in urging Congress to stop before it is too late. The wrong lies in the fact that the bill treats the small boy of twelve or thirteen years of age just as it treats the adult of fifty. It puts him under the same machinery of supervision, it puts him under the charge of the same persons, it puts his records in the same office with the records of the adult offender; it even puts him under the stigma of being a prisoner. The unfortunate boy who has gotten beyond the control of his parents, or who, having no parents, is wandering about without any suitable care, when he is brought before the juvenile court for incorrigibility or vagrancy, is, by the terms of this bill, liable to the same treatment as if he were an adult, supposed to be self-con-