

LAND GRABBERS SCORE A VICTORY THROUGH RULING OF JUDGE

The decision of Judge Dooling, at Los Angeles, overturning the withdrawal by the government (under the Taft administration) of more than 1,000,000 acres of oil lands in California, is a severe blow to conservation of natural resources in the United States. The opinion appears to be that the land grabbers, monopolists and trusts have gained an enormous victory and that the people are now to lose all their God-given rights to a fair share in the billions of dollars' worth of natural products remaining in unexploited lands. In the California case, the Standard Oil Company has gained values that run anywhere from a hundred million to a billion dollars. Here are the alarming statements written by two noted authorities on conservation:

BY GILSON GARDNER,

Leading Newspaper Advocate of
Roosevelt's Conservation Policy.

Washington, June 6.—The decision of Judge Dooling, if allowed to stand, means that the withdrawals of oil lands in California for the use of the navy as well as phosphate lands and oil lands in Colorado and Wyoming, are illegal.

It means that the executive orders issued for these withdrawals are held by the district court to be invalid. If the decision stands it will nullify the efforts of the conservationists to save the remainder of the nation's natural resources, because other executive orders affecting other lands can be invalidated and the lands thrown open to acquisition by grabbers.

In this case the title to lands worth anywhere from one hundred millions of dollars to one billion dollars, in California, is open to land grabbers.

The decision in point refers to lands claimed by the Standard Oil and the Mid-west Oil Company, a creature of the Southern Pacific.

It means that the people must continue paying tribute to the oil trust; that the navy is deprived of a possible public oil supply; that a precedent is set for declaring other withdrawals invalid, and that the conservation policy is set back for years.

BY GIFFORD PINCHOT,

U. S. Chief Forester Under Roosevelt.
Without having read the decision of Judge Dooling in the California oil

land case, it would appear from the press dispatches that this is a very serious blow to the rights of the government and to the future of conservation.

Any decision nullifying the withdrawals made under the act of congress by President Taft will have the effect of opening vast areas of valuable mineral and other lands to acquisition by private interests.

Unfortunately these private interests are also the Standard Oil monopolistic interests and the Southern Pacific Railroad interests which have been fighting the government's title to lands estimated to be worth more than a hundred million dollars in the California oil field.

The attorney general ought certainly to carry the case to the Circuit Court and from there, if necessary, to the Supreme Court, in order to protect the people's title to these lands.

— O — THAT "L" ROAD STOCK

Commonwealth Edison Co. has taken over all "L" road stock. The Economist quotes Sam Insull as saying that the aim is to "dominate power interests of Chicago." It says the only game of the C. E. Co. is "selling power," and when surface and "L" lines are merged and the C. E. has long-term contracts, aggregating \$125,000,000, it will let go all its traction holdings. Back of Insull in Chicago operations, it is stated is the National City Bank of New York.