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## *“A World to Live and Love In”*

Despite Asquith's disclaimer of single-tax intentions in 1911, the hopes of Fels and his fellow believers had been very high at that time that England was at last on the move in the right direction. These hopes had been further buoyed by Asquith's appointment of the Land Enquiry Commission. But the Government in two years' time had moved at a distressingly slow pace to implement land-tax reforms. The land valuation ordered by the Finance Act (1909-10) was proceeding, but the Government's approach was cumbersomely slow, burdened as it was by the requirement to ascertain no fewer than five values in land and debilitated politically in its capacity to carry out its own program. Occasionally Fels derided the Liberals as the "fake Liberal party," yet he made a further effort to prod Lloyd George along. "I know you are a busy man, but I should like very much to meet you personally before leaving for Canada and the United States the beginning of next month," he wrote to the Chancellor on November 10, 1913. "It would help the fight for economic reform across the water if I could take with me your personal good wishes." Mollie appended a note

to the bottom of the file copy of this letter: "Joe came back from breakfasting with Lloyd George with lessened regard for the man." Not until his Glasgow speech of February 4, 1914, did Lloyd George commit himself to push for the taxation of land values, and not until April did he begin to carry out his pledge.

The Fels had a U.S. sailing booked for December 3, and George Lansbury was going with them for a lecturing tour in the United States, but Fels and Company's partners were still at loggerheads. On October 4, Sam had written in a response to his brother's latest appeal:

I do not think that the suggestion you make as to an agreement on my part "not to part with any of my holdings" would be workable. It would tie me up worse than now, and although I have no idea of any such sale yet no one can tell what the future may bring forward. Your further idea about the control passing from one to the other would complicate the matter still more.

To which Joe replied, moving toward an agreement:

Will you now, in turn, set down just what you wish and what you think the settlement between us should be. After all, since the desire for a change in business relations between us is yours, it should be yours to say in frank, definite terms what the change should be and how it can be brought about. I want to do everything that is right and reasonable, and I will do my best to see the reason and the right in anything you propose, so as to do right accordingly. . . .

Am glad to say I'm in pretty good shape now and have more or less carefully considered the position and especially your suggestion of your having control through a majority holding of stock. What you suggested is

really reasonable under the present circumstances, and therefore if it can be worked out so that I automatically assume the majority position in the event of you no longer wishing to hold this control, and you agree not to undermine in any way your control by parting with part of your holdings, I am willing it shall be arranged that way. . . .

I probably didn't make myself clear. Of course you should be free to do with your holdings, or do anything you please with your stock, but what I should have said was that I should have the first refusal in case you wish to sell. As to the point [of] my taking over in case [of] anything happening to you, there again I should have the first refusal, as I should wish you to have were the cases reversed.

Upon returning to his native land in mid-December 1913, Fels' optimism seemed to radiate in all directions. He was touched "in the right spot" upon reaching Philadelphia by a letter from Earl Barnes, who was traveling in the Middle West at the time, and he replied:

Things seem to be going on fairly these days with us. . . . I'm busy. We're all busy, of course, but I'm happy as a boy with a boil on his sit-down. I can see the coming of the Lord.

He and Sam consented to an arbitration of their difficulties to be undertaken by Louis D. Brandeis, Esq., of the Boston bar. Joe agreed with the appraisal of the tangible assets of Fels and Company at approximately \$3,000,000, and he did not object to the transformation of their partnership into a corporation, but he maintained that an equivalent estimation at \$3,000,000 of the intangible assets was insufficient. "I was not influenced by the nominal or par value of the stock

certificates," Sam swore later in an affidavit, "but regarded the actual value of the shares as equal to the value of all the assets of the old partnership, and it was clear that the tangible assets of \$3,000,000 were transferred for one-half of the stock issue, and the intangible assets of \$3,000,000 were transferred for the other half of the stock issue."

It developed that reform activities had not been the only drain upon Joseph Fels' resources, nor possibly even the largest. Among other enterprises, he had invested heavily, at the urging of Walter Coates, in a peat-coal factory which was not yet making any profits. "I've learned one lesson from peat which I shall not forget . . . ," Coates wrote to Mary Fels.

Don't try to get friends or relatives interested by investment in anything you may yourself believe in, but raise your capital from the public. I'm glad peat is O.K., but it's my last experience in such things. I'll attend to my own investments and leave others to attend to theirs in future.

In seeking to reconcile the two brothers, Coates attempted to shed light on each brother's viewpoint:

It is more than likely Jennie [Sam's wife] who is insisting on Sam making a final severance, because she knows what he has—whether with real cause or not—suffered thro [sic] the situation, and she now wants to see Sam in a legal position to snap his fingers at Joe or anyone else so far as business is concerned. . . . You must to an extent, Mary, agree with her, for it's just the position, I imagine, that you would take in trying to protect Joe from unnecessary suffering & worry.

Coates recalled that Joe had been instrumental long ago in making Sam a full partner in Fels and Company.

"Now he must not expect Sam to be satisfied to go on in a way paying toll all his life for something that Joe did for him when he was a boy, particularly as Sam disagrees with the work Joe is doing."

In the middle of January 1914 the Fourth Annual Joseph Fels Fund Commission and Single Tax Conference met in Washington. At the conference, Newton D. Baker, now Secretary of War, avowed himself a firm single-taxer, and lauded Tom L. Johnson for having enabled him to grasp the truth of Henry George; and Daniel Kiefer reported enthusiastically that both Texas and Colorado had placed single-tax legislation on their statute books, and promised that Pennsylvania and New York were going to do likewise.

Fels himself stated only that he intended to depart shortly on a month's trip lecturing through the South. Otherwise he remained so quiet and subdued that many delegates scarcely noticed his presence. Though composed and outwardly serene, he was strangely withdrawn. His close friends, his wife observed, "noticed and wondered at that strange calm."

When the conference ended he and Mollie returned to Philadelphia, where they stayed with Earl and Anna Barnes at 3640 Chestnut Street, as was their custom. But Fels was weary, and he grew depressed by the nagging negotiations to settle his business affairs, which were not completed until February 10. He had a cold and it worsened. By February 19 he was battling pneumonia for his life, though two days later he improved perceptibly. He talked animatedly of his plans and hopes and then, during the night, his fever soared, and early in the morning of February 22, he died. He was sixty years old at his death.<sup>1</sup>

The funeral services in his brother Maurice's home

returned Joseph Fels outwardly at least to the faith of his fathers. His friend, Rabbi Henry Berkowitz of Rodef Shalom Synagogue, recited the Ninetieth Psalm, "A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God," and then spoke of the moment of sorrow:

Silence rests like a benediction upon him who, stricken in the meridian of his days and at the zenith of his endeavors, now reposes in the soft embrace of painless sleep. The work of his hands has slipped from his grasp; the busy mind has suddenly halted in its earnest planning; the eloquent lips are hushed; the glowing heart has ceased its throbbing; and we stand in the presence of this supreme mystery, awed, benumbed, and humbled. Thousands upon thousands in this and other lands are present with us in spirit, chastened by the sense of sudden loss.

The burial was in the family lot in Mount Sinai Cemetery at Frankford in northeast Philadelphia. The honorary pallbearers, old friends and newer comrades, were Lawson Purdy, Lincoln Steffens, Frederic C. Howe, Bolton Hall, S. G. Rosenbaum, John T. McRoy, Benjamin W. Huebsch, Henry George, Jr., Warren Worth Bailey, Louis F. Post, Francis Fisher Kane, Earl Barnes, Francis I. duPont, Daniel Kiefer, and Samuel Milliken. At the grave, Rabbi Eli Mayer read the Twenty-third Psalm, and Frederic C. Howe, the Assistant Secretary of Labor, spoke briefly. The services concluded with the eulogy of Louis F. Post.

He was a man devoted. His devotion to the cause of the disinherited, which lay nearest his heart, seems to me to have been almost without a parallel. Perhaps he did not die for the cause as men so understand; but he did that which was more difficult—he lived for it. . . . The cause

of justice to which he gave his fortune, his energies, himself, is beginning to be understood by the world. As that understanding grows, with it will grow understanding of him, appreciation of him. And as long as the world remembers the names of Henry George and Tom L. Johnson, it will link with them the name of Joseph Fels.

The first memorial meeting was held in Boston at the South Congregational Church, on Saturday, March 7, where the crowd was addressed by Josiah C. Wedgwood, the Reverend Levi M. Powers, William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., and Professor Lewis J. Johnson of Harvard. Philadelphia's memorial was staged at the Forrest Theatre on the next night and was attended by 2,500 persons. At this memorial Wedgwood threw all the power at his command into his speech, his words thundering across the auditorium, with an unmistakable pathos in them:

I'm here because I loved Joseph Fels. He was a fighter against injustice, a lover of freedom. He hated the one as he loved the other. Any monument to him should have graven upon one side "Free Speech," and upon the other, "Free Land."

The other speakers were Mrs. Rudolph Blankenburg, wife of the mayor, Professor Scott Nearing of the University of Pennsylvania, Louis F. Post, and Francis Fisher Kane, United States District Attorney. "I do not know of any other man in the city of Philadelphia who would have this tribute paid him," exclaimed the Central Labor Union's delegate. New York City, Washington, Chicago, Cleveland, and Toronto followed with tributes and memorial meetings.

Across the ocean there was profound bereavement also. "His coming into the movement here in Great

Britain marked a new era in our activities," John Paul recorded.

It was the signal for strenuous effort by voice and pen, and the opposing forces of every kind had to reckon with a volume of sentiment for land values taxation for which they were ill-prepared, and when he passed beyond our ken our more far-seeing opponents had to admit that he was the direct means of advancing our ideas quite beyond their power to gauge or control.

"The telegrams say nothing of how he died, but I feel that it was the work that killed him . . .," Signe Bjørner said in Copenhagen. "How well I remember in one of his speeches he said: 'I want to give back to the people what has been taken from them. I will get them justice, or die in the attempt.' And he has kept his word, another martyr to truth and justice." In Stockholm the grieving Mrs. Johan Hansson wrote: "The conservative press here has very sympathetic articles, and says he was a man worth [*sic*] to be admired and honoured by all. Now he is called a real idealist not only by friends but by enemies."

Israel Zangwill expressed his sorrow:

In Mr. Joseph Fels the *Ito* loses its only English-speaking capitalist, but it is on moral grounds that his loss will be most deeply lamented, for his cheeriness and good humour and breezy American speeches (always working round to the single-tax panacea for poverty) lent inspiration to every *Ito* gathering that had the privilege of his presence. Of the loss to me personally it is more difficult to speak, for to know Mr. Fels was to love him. The career of this "parvenu Jew," who rode third-class so as to have more money to squander on his ideal, affords a nobler example to our children than the careers of many of our celebrities who have sold themselves to the Philistines.



Joseph's intimate friends, Walter Coates, the Lansburys, Keir Hardy, John Orr, among others, were stricken with their private sorrows. At the same time, the Central Conference of American Rabbis split over a resolution of sympathy to Fels' widow, something that probably would have delighted Fels. "I refuse to canonize the single tax," one indignant rabbi complained. Others observed that Fels' life was spent willfully outside the synagogue, and some denounced him as anti-Semitic. A resolution was finally passed recognizing that, with the death of Joseph Fels, "there has passed away a noted philanthropist and a lover of humanity."

Margaret McMillan remembered Joseph Fels as "small like St. Paul, curious like Nicodemus, impetuous like St. Peter, full of traits and eccentricities which estranged and bewildered, but consumed by a burning thirst for righteousness."

Equally admiring, if not so biblical, was the characterization of Fels by C. R. Ashbee, who likened him to a gnat.

One pictured him thus, a little forcible, insistent man, ever hovering around, and ready to pounce and sting. The spot to be stung was always the British land system. The gnat was very harmless and gentle when you were not a landlord. His sympathy for the English labourer had in it a tenderness almost sublime.

Ashbee, of the Guild of Handicraft at Chipping Campden, a beautiful little Cotswold town in Gloucestershire, along with several associates was endeavoring to reestablish centers of fine craftsmanship as strongholds of life and artistry against an all-devouring industrialization. He had met Fels in 1907 through their mutual friends Patrick Geddes and Sidney Webb, and

had arranged for Fels to meet the guildsmen and hear what they thought to say. The session took place in an open-timbered room at the Woolstaplers' Hall, and lasted long past midnight. There around the great Gothic fireplace sat Fels and the craftsmen, cabinet makers, carvers, jewellers, silversmiths, blacksmiths. Their conversation rambled over land reform, soap, single tax, and cooperative socialism in the countryside. Late in the evening, a guileless artisan with dreamy blue eyes, looked up and said: "Well, Mr. Fels, you've seen our work, you see what we're aiming at, what do you think is the first thing we'd best do to get what we want?"

Ashbee never forgot the soapmaker's quick response. "I guess you'd better get some damned fool like me to find you the money," Fels replied. Thus the Guild Handicraft Trust was founded, with Fels as one of the trustees.<sup>2</sup>

It was only during the last decade of his life, after 1905 or so, that Joseph Fels became a prominent public figure, and it was only during the five or six years before his death that he became *the* leader of the single-tax cause. At the end of his life, he was one of a small group of Americans whose deeds, energies, and personalities were manifest in every corner of the world. He had made his mark on every effort he undertook to eradicate the plague of poverty among mankind, not only with his financial assistance, but also with his businessman's flair for publicity and organization, his indefatigable correspondence, and his willingness to approach any man for help and cooperation.

He multiplied the driving force of the Georgist movement many times over. "To have been instrumental in precipitating the most dramatic political event of re-

cent times, and to have raised the interdependent questions of land and taxation to a place of vital discussion in Parliament and throughout the country is an achievement which might have satisfied the mind of any ordinary enthusiast, but to Joseph Fels it was only an episode in a worldwide campaign," an admirer wrote, describing Fels' role in the struggle in Great Britain. "Wherever the instincts of men revolted at the servitude forced upon them by the self-styled owners of the earth, Joseph Fels was ready to go at a moment's notice with a copy of *Progress and Poverty* in one hand and a check book in the other."

His work in the United States and Canada to introduce the single tax, particularly through the fund which bore his name, was equally impressive. He declared that he deserved no credit for his labors in behalf of social justice, since he enjoyed this occupation above all others. "The years that I have spent working for the single tax have been the happiest of my life," he told the conference in Washington in January of the last year of his life.

The question inevitably arises, however: Did he really accomplish anything? Did he do anything more than release a great sound and fury by temporarily revitalizing the Georgist movements of the world shortly before his death? What endured, if anything?

Lincoln Steffens was skeptical in the extreme:

My opinion is, and I think that of most of the commissioners, including Joe Fels, was, that the Fels Fund hurt the single tax. It first speeded up the movement by raising hopes, centralizing efforts, and releasing the workers from the labor of collecting money. As time went on the workers came to want more and more and much more money; they either relaxed their efforts or elaborated their ma-

chinery till its purpose was lost sight of or at least diminished. With money to use as a force, they did not depend so much on persuasion. Even the fanatics slackened their propaganda.

Yet Henry George's biographer, Charles Albro Barker, states that it was precisely "at the point of the Fels Fund" that the Georgist impulse in the United States entered the broad spectrum of Progressivism, while Fred Howe believed that Fels "demonstrated the power of a single individual possessed of a great idea to send his voice to the ends of the earth and to successfully apply the agencies of business to the advancement of a great cause." And John Paul wrote:

He knew that a beginning must be made in the direction of the practical policy advocated by the land values movement, but it was the ideal of complete industrial emancipation that inspired him. He looked on kindred democratic movements with much sympathy, but with a profound conviction that the best way he could help them was to promote the agitation to free the land from the bondage of monopoly. This was his religion, and he lived up to it.

Whichever perspective was most accurate quickly became inconsequential after his death, as events overwhelmed reform movements and halted their momenta. The British movement for the taxation of land values became a casualty of the guns of 1914 and the demise of the Liberal Party, and the attempt to evaluate all land in the United Kingdom ceased until, in 1920, the duties on land values were revoked to become no longer lawfully chargeable. Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom and its Progressive offspring dominated domestic developments in the United States until 1916, and thereafter the war overwhelmed everything else, just as it had already done in the countries

of Europe where Fels had labored to establish the principles of Henry George in actual practice. Indeed, the Great War of 1914-18 destroyed the very prospect of the world Fels strove to bring about.

A friend who watched at Fels' bedside four days before he died described him near the end:

He was so desperately ill that he caught his breath with difficulty as he spoke, yet when he had asked after my health and that of our mutual friends he went back to the question of land taxation. On his bed were strewn letters relating to land taxation. From a bundle under his hand he gave me the reprint of an article which he had written on the taxation question. He went over his latest plans and spoke of the future, always with faith and hope.

In 1914 the future offered Fels a choice only between defeat and disillusionment. Death could come as a blessing for such a man.<sup>3</sup>

The will of Joseph Fels was admitted to probate on March 19 following his death. Dated December 1, 1903, in London, on the eve of his sailing for America, it provided that his wife, Mollie, should have the "entire disposal of any and all wealth, real and personal," which he might leave, that his brother Maurice and his friend Walter Coates should act as executors, and that Coates should be paid the sum of \$50,000 out of his estate. Ironically, in a codicil dated December 13, 1907, Joseph included his brother Samuel S. Fels among the executors and begged that Sam would consider it "as written over two years ago when we came to know each other as we are—friends as well as brothers."

After her husband's death, Mary Fels took over the leadership of the single-tax movement for a time. She carried on her husband's pattern of commitments, writ-

ing, speaking, spending, exhorting, and many articles appeared to the effect that the momentum given to the Georgist movement by her husband would be maintained undiminished. She discharged the obligations that Joe had assumed before his death, and his former associates took heart from her example. "The work he inspired for economic justice will go on, and it will be carried on in the joyous, living spirit of Joseph Fels," a circular from the Fund's Commission announced.

He shall be no more dead than Henry George is, or Tom L. Johnson, or any of the other leaders and workers for the vision that gave them life and immortality. This we know, we, the members of the Commission, from the ring of the letters which have come to us and to Mrs. Mary Fels, in this crisis. There is sorrow in them, but there is courage in them also. And there is the spirit of Joseph Fels.

"Why I am attempting nothing unfamiliar," Mary Fels told one interviewer. "I have always helped Mr. Fels—from the very beginning." A spokesman added: "It is certain that no movement will be dropped, no cause forgotten, that had the support of Mr. Fels."

Mary's directions soon began to shift, however. "It is my desire to comprehend personally the policy, plans, and personnel, not only of the United States Commission, but of similar groups and commissions working toward the same end in England, Denmark, Germany, France, Spain, and other countries, where Mr. Fels was giving his support to our cause, his and yours and mine," she informed the Joseph Fels Fund's commissioners, in April 1914, as she prepared to sail for England. The policy of matching contributions was abandoned by Mrs. Fels in 1915. (Total contributions from the Fels to the Fund stood at \$173,000.) The Joseph Fels Fund Commission ceased to exist in 1916, and for it was substituted the American section of a new organi-

zation, the Joseph Fels International Commission to Promote the Single Tax (with headquarters in New York City and Post's magazine, *The Public*, gathered into its fold), and the National Single Tax League, organized in 1917, again with a national committee (with Daniel Kiefer as its chairman), and again with its national organ, *The Bulletin*, issued monthly from its headquarters in Cincinnati.

In Great Britain, the death of Joseph Fels created a severe problem (aggravated further by the outbreak of war) for the single-tax organization. A. W. Madsen, then of the staff of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, recalled bitterly years afterward that Mrs. Joseph Fels virtually sounded a death knell for land-reform agitation upon her arrival in England by withholding any future financial support, and that the war blocked even the proposed work of the Joseph Fels International Commission. Worse, in Madsen's opinion, was Mary's drastic departure from her husband's principles, her abandonment of the single-tax movement for a spiritualistic brand of Zionism. "She said she had held long talks with Joe *after* he died," Madsen remembered, "and he told her that support for Zionism was the right thing to do. Her eyes burned as she told of talking to Joe. I protested, but Mary said all was changed now."

Her transformation took place progressively from 1916 to 1920. She was "one of the strongest members" of the Zionist movement by 1916, yet she affirmed then, in words reminiscent of those of her departed husband, that "If a Jewish nation is at any time ready to carry out the principles of [the] single tax, I should do everything I could to help." She reiterated the next year that "the single-tax principles must underlie the Zionist state." The British government issued its famous Balfour Declaration late in 1917, promising its support for

a Jewish homeland to be established in Palestine after the defeat of the Ottoman Turks, and by 1919 Mary Fels was shifting wholeheartedly toward Zionism and the colonization of Jews in Palestine, although she continued to profess her support for the single-tax principle. Her agents were buying land in Palestine for her own projected residence, as well as for Jewish colonists.

Mary Fels chronicled her own further metamorphosis:

It was during my first visit to Palestine that I awoke to the realization that the most beautiful spirit in Palestine was to be found among the older colonists who came there fifty years ago inspired with a devotion to the Holy Land. Through their unfaltering loyalty to the land which they loved beyond anything in the world, they endured their trials and tribulations without a thought of retreat. Their descendants are in *Eretz Yisroel* now, and five years ago Captain Alexander Aaronsohn organized them into a group called the B'nai Benjamin. It is on the people of this organization that I base my hope. From these, who are the finest type of beings, we may expect new light and learning.

True to her new convictions, Mary Fels established the Joseph Fels Foundation in place of the single-tax commission, in order to enlighten both Jews and Gentiles on the history and mission of Israel and to work for the non-political settlement of Palestine. Its objectives expressed her faith in the Jewish people and their historic purpose. "We have a mission to fulfill in Palestine," she announced. "We must achieve a real brotherhood of man, not only concretely, but also spiritually if we want to avert war permanently. It is from Palestine, where real brotherhood is achieved, that I look for the first proof of the oneness of God."

The Russian revolutionary Angelica Balabanov re-



ports in her memoirs that two days after the October 1917 revolution in Russia she received a letter in Stockholm "demanding full and immediate repayment of the note!"—the "note" of course being for the sum Joseph Fels had lent the party for its 1907 convention in London. Such a request, if actually made at that time, must have come at the behest of Mary, to whom repayment was eventually made in London in 1922 by the Russian Trade Delegation. As Leon Trotsky grandiloquently proclaimed after it was all over, "Revolution carries out its obligations, although usually not without delay." His statement, however, does not explain the motivation behind the repayment. The debt to Joseph Fels was repaid at a time when the new Soviet government was anxious to resume trade relations between Russia and Great Britain. The Bolshevik government paid the obligation because it regarded the money owed Fels as a legitimate debt of the revolution, unlike claims against the government of the Czar. Nevertheless, Lenin's debt to Joseph Fels was discharged, and the accounts were closed on a strange episode, equally strange for revolutionary socialism and capitalistic reformism. Whatever else might have happened inside Russia instead of the Bolshevik triumph of 1917 can only be surmised, if Joseph Fels had not helped the revolution to stay alive through its darkest hours.

Mary remained interested in prison reform and education, and kept up the more personal philanthropies in music and the fine arts that she and her husband had always supported. She continued her friendships, by correspondence with Walter Coates and Marion his sister, George Lansbury, and Signe Bjørner, and saw some of her old friends from time to time; but in the end it was the Zionist cause that attracted most of the residual fortune of Joseph Fels. Mary herself was

embarked spiritualistically on her life's unfolding journey "toward the light," a book-length account of which she published in 1927 dedicated to Joseph Fels and Alex Aaronsohn, "who are an inherent part of it."<sup>4</sup>

Early in the 1950's Mary Fels, the woman with whom Joseph Fels had shared so much, and Samuel Simeon Fels, the brother with whom he shared so little, both died. From 1914 until his death, Samuel Fels had served as president of Fels and Company. At the time of his death, he owned 22,000 of the 40,000 shares of the corporation's common stock outstanding, there being neither bonds nor preferred stock, which suggests the measure of working control he had somehow by mutual agreement acquired from his brother immediately prior to Joseph's death. In the mid-sixties, Fels and Company was acquired by the Purex Corporation and ceased to exist as an independent company.

Little else remains of Joseph Fels. The world outside and he himself had moved away from the Fairhope Single Tax Colony's attempt to practice the message of Henry George. As for Fels' labor-colony projects in England, the superior example—Hollesey Bay Colony, through which almost 11,000 unemployed men and their families had passed by the time of Fels' death in 1914—was discontinued in 1938 for Poor Law purposes and the farm sold to the Prison Commission for £85,000.

After Fels' death, ardent Georgist disciples failed to appear and the movement languished overtaken by events and revolutionary persuasions. As Shaw was to say 14 years after Fels' death:

Now the Single Taxers are not wrong in principle; but they are behind the times. . . . Land is not the only

property that returns a rent to the owner. Spare money will do the same if it is properly used. Spare money is called capital; its owner is called a capitalist; and our system of leaving all the spare money in the country in private hands like the land is called capitalism.

Joseph Fels could be dismissed as a man whose ideals for land and people outdistanced his capacity to achieve them—except for the example of his life, and the fact that the cause to which he devoted his life, the search for an end to poverty, still exists.

Once late in his life Fels summed up both his marriage and his work:

Mollie has been sadly neglected even though she is so sweet and brave about it. She reminds me more and more of the Trojan mothers and sisters and wives who sent their dear ones to the fight and spurred the courage of the brutes with such smiles and encouragements as would make men fight all Hell itself. And it is all Hell I'm fighting. . . . It is all the powers of darkness and want and despair among those who hunger for food and shelter. I feel as the warrior of old must have felt, and the feeling spurs me on to do things *now* and *here*.

The consolation, too, is mine that *here* and *now* things are being done which must influence the world for good—must make this old world less a charnel house for lost hope, and more a world to live and love in.<sup>5</sup>

So lived—and loved—Joseph Fels of Philadelphia and London, as he liked to introduce himself to others. The worldwide single-tax movement founded on the doctrines of Henry George and nourished by Fels-Naptha's profits ended with his death as well. But neither human poverty nor squalor perished, nor man's greed for land nor pollution of the earth. "The Land! The Land!—God gave the Land to the People!"