

MRS. FELS AND PARTY IN
CALIFORNIA.

Since the adjournment of the Joseph Fels Fund and Single Tax Conference at San Francisco, a few weeks ago, Mrs. Joseph Fels and her party, Mr. Daniel Kiefer, Chairman of the Fels Fund Commission, Dr. John W. Slaughter, of the University of London, Professor Earl Barnes, of Philadelphia and Miss Gertrude Heubsch, sister of the well-known publisher of New York, have been visiting and speaking at public meetings in San Francisco and the neighborhood, on Single Tax, suffrage and like questions.

Desiring to see the results of the partial application of the Single Tax in the irrigation districts of California, Mrs. Fels invited me to become her guest and guide in a tour of the great San Joaquin Valley in Central California. We left San Francisco on last Wednesday, September 1st, for the city of Stockton, ninety miles from the former place. There the Single Taxers, G. McM. Ross, Captain William Simpson and others, had gotten the Chamber of Commerce interested in the visitors, and the entire party were taken in automobiles about the city and through a part of the delta district, seeing some of the fifteen hundred miles of sloughs and canals that provide transportation for the farmers in that reclaimed section of California.

A meeting was held at night in the public square, Mr. Ross introducing the party to the audience. About two hundred and fifty persons were present, The deep interest the people of that city have in the Single Tax was shown by this large audience remaining standing, listening to the speakers and asking questions for more than two hours. Mrs. Fels was the first speaker, after the introductions, Her soft, gentle voice immediately won the sympathy and interest of her hearers; while her profound knowledge of economics brought home the truth of the Single Tax most convincingly. She said in part:

"This war will bring Single Tax and other great reforms. Suffrage for women, in England, France and Germany is sure, for the women of those nations are living suffrage today. It will not have to be

given them. They will demand and receive it. The Single will come, and it must come, for the reason that with no other system will the nations be able to pay their enormous war debt. Best of all, the big estates of Europe will be broken up, and the men who are fighting now for home and country will as a result find that they really have a home to fight for when the land is free. These men are soldiers now; they won't return to take up again the yoke of slavery. They are emancipated once and for all time."

Professor Earl Barnes dealt with the Single Tax as not only a fiscal measure, but as a movement based on fundamental conceptions of justice, which must inevitably lead to wider thinking, and a more generous brotherhood of man. He illustrated his talk with incidents from the life of Joseph Fels, showing how he was driven from individual aid of those who needed help, through cultivation of vacant lots and small holdings, to a realization that the work was too vast for the individual, and must be worked out by the community through the Single Tax.

Dr. Slaughter reviewed the present movement in England for land value taxation, the adoption of the 1909 budget by the Parliament, and the curtailment of the veto power of the House of Lords which resulted from it. He told of the effect of the monopoly of the natural resources in England when the war broke out, raising the cost of living of the working people, without any increase in wages, and causing the great strikes among the munition and coal workers. He said that the common people of England had no desire for this war. The privileged classes were in a position of facing wars outside or difficulties within.

I closed by calling the attention of the audience to a proposed constitutional amendment in California which would give the legislature power to "create subjects of taxation," thus permitting the restoration of antiquated forms of taxation like taxes on windows, doors and chimneys. It gives the legislature power to make anything the "subject" of taxation, even the right to stand on the sidewalk, or to wear a straw hat. It is backed by the representa-

tive of the greatest land monopolists in California—the Kern County Land Company, owning 428,000 acres, and the Southern Pacific Company, which owns about 10,000,000 acres, including 1,000,000 acres of timber land.

Questions were then asked, and answered by Mrs. Fels and others.

From Stockton, the party journeyed to Sacramento, where the Church Federation, Rev. E. Guy Talbot, secretary, and a staunch Single Taxer, provided a noon luncheon, after which Mrs. Fels and the others made short talks. The balance of the day was spent in an auto ride about the city, and visiting a large fruit cannery and Sutter's Fort, where the American settlers in the 40's sheltered themselves from the Indians. In the evening a public meeting was held at the High School Auditorium, under the auspices of the Church Federation. From Sacramento the party journeyed down the Valley, through Stockton to Modesto, where a meeting was held that had been arranged for by the local Socialists. The story of this part of the trip I shall defer to a later date. Mrs. Fels and the rest of the party are very much impressed with the deep interest manifested by the audiences which they addressed throughout California.—EDWARD P. E. TROY.

THE CAPITALIZED VALUE OF SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

In my native city of Glasgow, Scotland, one of the main thoroughfares runs due North and South and has a street railway along its whole course with high class stores and business premises on both sides. For no immediately obvious reason, it has been remarkable during the past twenty years that the whole West side of the street has been the popular or fashionable one and that the business premises on that side have commanded much higher rents than those on the East side. This circumstance was for long a source of perplexity to me, and I had almost come to the conclusion that it was due to one of those freaks of fortune which seem to have no cause behind them; one of the things in short, which, to quote

the words of the celebrated Lord Dunsyre, "no feller can understand." Having occasion, however, to go southward along this street frequently in the forenoon and northward again in the afternoon, I found myself unconsciously taking the West side in the morning because it enjoyed the full brightness of the cool morning sunshine, and returning in the afternoon on the same side of the street for the opposite reason, because it lay in shadow and was completely protected from the blazing post-meridian rays.

Of a sudden it flashed upon me, "here is the reason that the owners of property on this side can obtain about twice the rental per lineal front foot than the less fortunate proprietors on the other side can demand. The morning sun is desirable while the afternoon sun is not. The western side gets the one and escapes the other, and so the pedestrians at both times of the day prefer the West and the storekeepers compete for the locations where the window-gazers and possible purchasers parade.

With this clue to the mystery which had always seemed to surround the apparently capricious manner in which the situation-value distributes itself, I began to make observations on another of the main thoroughfares, which runs due East and West. There the North side is always in sunshine and the South side always in shadow. How, I asked myself, will the capitalized value of sunshine and shadow express itself here? The northern side gets the advantage of the cool morning sun, but has to endure the disadvantage of the scorching afternoon heat. The southern side misses the benefit of the sunshine in the early part of the day but enjoys the immense advantage of protection in the heat of the afternoon. Which (I asked myself) of those two advantages, both of which belong to the West side of the street first referred to, is the greater? I replied to my own question by saying that if I were a storekeeper I should certainly want to have the benefit of the cheerful morning sun, and would dread the destructiveness of the afternoon sunshine on my window goods, and that seeing I cannot have both advantages in this street I should prefer to remain always in shadow. Yes,