

movement. To this all will testify who knew of the work he actually did.

It is too soon to sum up the results of that work and of the munificent financial support that went with it. There would be too much likelihood of underestimation. The time is fast approaching, however, when they may be reckoned; and when that time comes, the name of Joseph Fels will rank in general public esteem where it already ranks with those who knew him.



Personal sorrow is not to be disregarded when worthy men die. Whatever the faith in a further life, and however strong the conviction that within the range of wider horizons the best has happened, death makes a sad parting. We who knew Joseph Fels—all of us, from his least intimate friend to the wife who was as one with him—are in sorrow now. Yet we know that nature is gentle with sorrow as with pain; and that the sorrow of the present will mellow into a memory which we would not dim. Is it not so with those of our own households? Has it not proved to be so with Tom L. Johnson and with Henry George? Will it not be so with Joseph Fels?

Of whom could it be more truly averred than of this man that if it be that he has finished his course, yet that he has kept the faith and fought a good fight even to the end?

And who is there to say that he would have chosen better by living in the luxury of his income than by devoting both it and himself to the work of his later years? Better than luxurious living, better even than the luxury of charitably relieving individual distress, was that work which Joseph Fels was doing—uprooting the fundamental cause of those economic inequalities which breed poverty in the midst of luxury.

Of no one could these verses be more aptly quoted than of Joseph Fels:

In service poured he out his soul to death
And lifted up unselfishness in life.

LOUIS F. POST.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

DEPRESSION IN SASKATCHEWAN.

Ceylon, Sask., January 27.

Western Canada, more than any other country, has been built on borrowed capital. Besides, for a number of years a steady stream of money has flowed in, brought by settlers and capitalists for investment. An immense volume of business has been built up based on the continued influx of this foreign capital. Bountiful crops and fair prices have not brought comforts nor reduced debts, but have

caused further investment in land, horses, and machinery. In two decades the public domain has been devoured from Port Arthur to the Rockies. Only the less accessible portions and the distant Peace River country yet remain.

The influx of foreign capital has lately been greatly curtailed and the season just past was nominated for the liquidation of our enormous floating debt. So, in spite of a crop above the average in both quality and yield, we now have all the symptoms of a severe financial stringency, amounting in several overgrown towns to a collapse.

It is at such a time as this that one is impelled to look about him to see whither we are drifting. An intimate acquaintance with the social, intellectual, and economic mind of Western Canada would be, I fear, grievously disappointing to many Americans who have been inclined to idealize us. The fact is we can scarcely be said to have a mind in any of these spheres. No idealism of any sort is shaping our development. No integrating agency is producing apparent results. Luxuries there are for those who can afford them, but social and intellectual enjoyments there are none. Politics is left to the politicians, as religion is left to the preachers. True, some very progressive legislation has been enacted, but this has been done in a purely paternalistic way—has been done for us, not by us. Farmers and business men complain bitterly of the burdens of the tariff and the trusts and of railway extortions, but this merely supplies topics for squabbling party papers.

Nothing so well demonstrates the pervading apathy as the recent failure of direct legislation. Though the Scott government had earned the reputation of being progressive, here was a proposition that threatened encroachment on the domain of government by the politicians. It could not be safely opposed, for its few but active and idealistic defenders might come back and set the prairies on fire. So the Machavalian plan was adopted of passing a denaturalized bill, requiring to put it into effect a popular majority that should not be less than 30 per cent of the total registered vote. This put the Direct Legislation people in a hole, as was expected and intended.

The situation, though unfavorable, is, by no means hopeless. Opinion is not corrupted. Strictly speaking, it is not indifferent; it is unintegrated. Progressive thought is general, but scarcely the first step has been taken to express that thought in popular action. This, perhaps, is inevitable in view of the manner in which the country has been settled. This is a country of "stake" farmers and business men. We live in shacks and forego comforts and enjoyments in our pursuit—often vain pursuit—of easy money. If fortune favors it only makes possible a bigger plunge.

Probably the only cure for such a condition is a financial reverse, and that may be what we have coming on now. The symptoms so far are closely similar to those of the Western States in the '80s. One thing is certain: If forced liquidation is generally demanded the financial cyclone will be swift and thorough in its work.

The Singletax, as applied here, has scarcely prevented land speculation at all. It is only local reve-

nue that is raised by the land value tax. Most Saskatchewan towns either have not yet adopted it at all or are only now putting it into operation. Rural taxes heretofore have been a flat arce tax, amounting to some \$15 to \$30 per quarter section. This year the ad valorem tax will be applied to farm land.

Provincial revenues are derived from licenses and royalties and from a most vicious system of grants from the Dominion treasury. This latter will furnish a powerful pocket argument for the continuance of the protective tariff after it shall fail of defense on its own merits.

GEORGE W. ATKINSON.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

CONSERVED LANDS OPEN TO USE.

Washington, D. C., February 17.

The Public of January 9 and February 13, recites statements made in the House of Representatives by Congressman Johnson of Washington, from which it seems to draw the conclusion that large areas of land owned by the National Government are held out of use in the Rocky Mountain and Pacific States. Its only defence of the Nation is that it is no worse than private owners and that what is called opening the reserved lands would result in their monopolization by timber barons. This is no more convincing than the "you're another" of boyhood's vocabulary.

There is a better retort to Mr. Johnson in the bright lexicon of youth, which may be adapted to adult conventionalities by saying that his statement is not true. The "reserved" and "withdrawn" lands which make up his totals are not held out of use. They are classified for use. In degrees varying with each class and determined by the Federal statutes relating thereto, they may be used by anybody who is ready to use them. The National Forests, which Mr. Johnson especially loathes, are the most open of all. Their ripe timber is for sale on the stump to the highest bidder; their pasturage is for rent to the neighboring ranchmen; their metalliferous minerals are open to all takers at a nominal price. As for the sites "withdrawn" for water power conservation, every one is open to lease by the first applicant. The coal deposits are for sale in fee simple at the appraised price and their surface is open to agricultural use without price. But for timber, pasturage, water power, and coal the public must be paid some little approximation of their value, and, as to all but coal, the user can get only a leasehold, leaving in the public freehold, which includes the power of regulation by stipulations in the lease and also the power at some future day to take the land value as rental. Hence Johnson's tears! Doubtless he would weep as copiously if the taking were from private landlords by the instrumentality of the Singletax.

The laws should be amended to make possible a better leasehold than can now be had for water power. That they have not been so amended is

due chiefly to the opposition of Mr. Johnson and his kind during the past seven years.

PHILIP P. WELLS.



HOW HOLLAND MANAGES.

Forestburg, February 5.

Traveling in an unfrequented corner of the Netherlands, going through the commodious Poorhouse of Genemuïden I was assured that the institution not only made excellent provision for its inmates but was a considerable source of revenue to the town through its dairying, mat-weaving and knitting industries but especially through the farm land belonging to it which it rents out. Expressing surprise I was told that at Kampen, a neighboring hamlet through the renting of a hundred farms, wrested originally from the sea by its citizens, all the public works including an excellent public school system are maintained with no taxation whatever.

JOHN VISHER.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, February 24, 1914.

Death of Joseph Fels.

Joseph Fels died on the morning of February 22 in Philadelphia. He had been ill but a short time with pneumonia. His death occurred at the residence of Professor Earl Barnes where he had for some years made his home. The funeral has been set for Wednesday, February 25, and will be private. On February 7 he had attended court in Philadelphia to assist in a suit brought by Samuel Milliken against the Board of Revision of Taxes to compel publicity in a matter of rebates to favored taxpayers. He then left for the seashore. On returning he became indisposed and was confined to the house. On the 17th symptoms of pneumonia developed. A physician with two consultants was in constant attendance, but his weak condition showed the attack to be dangerous from the beginning. On Saturday, the 21st, there appeared to be a change for the better, which later proved deceptive. Death came at 4:30 a. m., Sunday.



Joseph Fels was born at Halifax Court House, Virginia, on December 16, 1854. He was educated in private schools at Yanceyville, North Carolina; Richmond, Virginia, and Baltimore. His business career began in 1870 as salesman for a Baltimore soap manufacturing firm. His own first venture was in establishment of a soap manufacturing business in Baltimore with his father in 1871.