

PRESS OPINIONS

Wilson Will Stand the Test.

Senator La Follette in La Follette's Magazine, January 10.—Installed in office ten months ago, President Wilson turned at once to the performance of his great task. Congress was summoned. The tariff was reduced. It was a long, hard struggle. The interests resisted. They threatened to strike back, to cut wages, to discharge employes. And wages were cut. Labor in many industries was put on half time. Thousands of workmen were discharged. The "squeeze" has been on for months. It is whispered that the private records of the National Manufacturers' Association show that within ninety days two hundred thousand wage earners have been thrown out of employment. The association did not publish this information. Doubtless it has been apprehensive that too intimate a knowledge might imply concerted action in bringing such conditions about. And the Association is "lying low" for the present. But two hundred thousand wage earners idle means a loss of more than half a million dollars a day to the men alone—fifteen or twenty million in wages every month. A great big fact like that, judiciously handled, could be converted into a tremendous amount of political pressure. So it was permitted to leak through the proper channels to reach those close to the President. It is an open secret that the Administration and the Democratic leaders of the Senate and House have been very nervous for many weeks. They have heard the growl of idle labor. They fear the effect of a season of business depression upon the approaching congressional elections. Hence the haste for the passage of a currency bill; hence the kind of a currency bill that would be acceptable to the Big Bankers; hence all this talk about compromising with the great combinations—"fixing things up" without going to court. Hence no more is heard about "the vigorous enforcement of the criminal law against trust officials;" hence no more threats to "break up criminal commercial conspiracies, to reduce the high cost of living." The final test of the Administration is near at hand. President Wilson should be reassured. He should be made to feel that if he keeps faith with the public, the public will sustain him. Let "all honest men, all patriotic, all forward-looking men" urge President Wilson to stand like a rock against the combined power of the System that seeks to turn him back from the fulfillment of his pledges to the American people.



A Tale of Two Nations.

Collier's Weekly, January 17.—Two recent newspaper items deserve a second reading. One of them concerns a \$15,000,000 land sale in London:

By selling nineteen acres of land in the heart of London, centering around Covent Garden, the Duke of Bedford violates all the traditions of his family. His ancestors have held the property since the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, at which time it belonged to the monks of Westminster. . . If in breaking up his estate this great London landlord were inspired by fear

of Lloyd-George's land policy, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be entitled to the blessings of the people of London. But Lloyd-George's reforms relate more directly to the rural districts, where the effects of the established system of landlordism have been more burdensome than in London. In farming districts thousands of acres, including whole villages, are often held under single ownership.

In 1552, when this block of land came into the hands of the Duke's ancestor, its annual rental value was about \$32. In recent years, Covent Garden Market alone has brought the "owner" something like \$1,250,000 a year in tolls. But from this paragraph let us turn to the news from Mexico:

All the property of Luis Terrazas, Sr., Enrique Creel and Juan Creel, including banks, mines, vast areas of land, thousands of head of cattle, homes and personal effects, was ordered confiscated to the rebels in an official decree issued by General Francisco Villa. The holdings of General Terrazas, now a refugee in the United States, about two-thirds of the state of Chihuahua, place him among the most extensive landholders in the world. The combined estate of the Terrazas and the Creel brothers, his nephews, is valued at many millions.

One does not often associate Mexico, land of unrest, and England, "civilized" England, unless in considering British investments in the republic south of us. But here is news which emphasizes a truth of more than local import. The social ills of both these countries spring from the ownership of land by an absurdly small minority that exploits values created by its fellow men—whether those men be called "agricultural laborers," cockneys, or peons. Henry George, if he were alive today, would make some interesting comments on this state of affairs. But he has really made them already—in "Progress and Poverty."



A Case of Greeks Bearing Gifts.

Cleveland (O.) Press, January 19.—An eastern organ of privilege scolds radicals who "continue to hack and hew the corporations after they have accepted terms of surrender." It wants "peace." The corporations surrendering? What have they surrendered? None of their profits on watered capitalization. Very few of the millions they have wrung by extortion from manacled labor and helpless consumers. Mary Jones, washerwoman, is still paying trust tribute on food, clothing and shelter, and wondering how under heaven she can make ends meet. Labor in Colorado, labor in Michigan, labor in West Virginia, is still on the rack. "Peace"? You don't see much peace in Calumet, do you? Privilege can't save itself by putting the shingle of feigned penitence down its back. It's a case now of spare the rod and spoil the job.



Little Alice was to speak in public for the first time at a Sunday school concert. When it came her turn she arose and walked across the platform very bravely, but being seized with a sudden attack of stage fright she could not find her voice. Something came up in her throat, making her gulp and swallow, but no little poem was forthcoming. Finally, turning a frightened face to her teacher, she gasped, "I've swallowed my piece."—Woman's Home Companion,