

twentieth of the country's area has but 1,694 owners. That such concentration is not confined to timber lands seems certain. The next census should gather complete information concerning that matter. In the meantime such investigations as Commissioner Davies has just made are to be commended and should be extended to take in all classes of land ownership. s. d.



### Methods of Propaganda.

Mr. C. B. Fillebrown presents in the *Christian Science Monitor* of July 11, under the caption "Thirty Years of Henry George," a review of the *Singletax* movement of the world, and endeavors to show why the idea has made so little progress in this country, and how the difficulty can be overcome. The alleged lack of progress, he charges, is due to the unwise course of the American *Singletaxers* in connecting the idea of Henry George with numerous kindred ideas, and particularly to their efforts to ally with various current political movements. "The political method, as a means of putting the single tax on the statute books," he says in conclusion, "has been abundantly tried and found wanting. . . . Voters cannot be persuaded to decree an important legislative innovation which they do not fully understand and concerning which it is easy for the opposition in the heat of the campaign to deceive or confuse." And he declares "that the sum total of experience in the 30 years under review enforces the conviction that persistent education of the masses and the classes—by word of mouth and still more effectively by the printing press—upon the pure issue of the single tax as the normal and just basis for obtaining public revenue, is the true means and method of advancing this or any other great reform."



Thus is raised again the old question as to the relative merits of an independent movement, or a joining hands with political movements most nearly in accord. Theoretically, the question might be debated indefinitely; practically, it insists upon settling itself. The way has been open for an independent, purely propaganda movement ever since the first appearance of "Progress and Poverty," and some strong and forceful individuals have persisted in that course; but the mass continually resorts to the other method. But is it not possible that Mr. Fillebrown has made a distinction without a difference? He would persistently educate "the masses and the classes . . . upon the pure issue of the single tax as the normal and just basis for obtaining public revenue." Is

not this the very purpose of the political-action advocates? Instead of trying to teach the masses and classes in the way they ought to be taught, they have undertaken to teach them in the way they are accustomed to being taught, which, presumably, is the way they wish to be taught. In short, it is a question of rubbing the fur the right way. Proclaim a naked truth bodily, and it will be instantly accepted by a few whose minds are ripe for it. But when all those advanced minds have been reached, there is an end of converts. No more will accept it until they have reached that higher plane. What is the most efficient method of procedure?



If the independent course be chosen it involves the presentation of an idea to a man who does not wish to consider it. And when prejudice and obstinacy and indifference have been overcome and the man has been converted there must be political action to put it on the statute book. On the other hand, if the advance be along the line of political action the idea enjoys the advantage of a ready-made organization and a sympathetic disposition on the part of the radical party. It may not be known for certain that this is the better method, but it is the one men persist in following. When Mr. Fillebrown speaks of Canada as being at the head of the single tax column, he doubtless means Western Canada. Eastern Canada shows no more progress than the United States. Western Canada enjoyed the advantage of opening government land for settlement after the single tax was widely known. And when he summed legislative progress in this country in the one half exemption of improvements in Pittsburgh and Scranton in 1925, he overlooked the emphatic vote of Pueblo, Colorado, on the straight issue. But the sum of progress is not to be measured in this way. Both the Democratic and the Progressive parties are permeated from top to bottom with the single tax; and there is a good deal of it in the Republican party. It has in fact become a part of the thought of the day. Men still hesitate to take such a radical step, but the logic of events compels them to it, and they cannot much longer delay. Finally, the field is so large that there is room for all to labor; and the need is so great that neither Mr. Fillebrown nor the political-actionists should waste one ounce of energy in discussing the relative merits of methods. s. c.



### Progressive Victory in Winnipeg.

There will be at least one thorough representative of democracy in the newly elected legislature

of Manitoba. The voters of Winnipeg have had the good sense to choose F. J. Dixon as their member by a large majority. Mr. Dixon has for years been an active propagandist of democratic principles. His campaign was energetically carried on in behalf of such measures as Initiative, Referendum, Recall, Home Rule, Woman Suffrage, Public Ownership and Singletax. His work in the legislature—in which there is an almost even division between the two parties—will be to push these measures forward, and may reasonably be expected to hasten their final adoption. Winnipeg has done the province of Manitoba a splendid service.

S. D.



### Economizing in the Wrong Place.

One might have more respect for the Senators who tried to cripple the work of the Federal Commission of Industrial Relations if they had not offered the plea of economy for their action. The sincerity of that plea may properly be questioned when one considers the vast sums wasted in pork barrel appropriations, and worse than wasted in large army and navy appropriations. The Commission has done good work in putting the stamp of an official investigation on facts of which too many Congressmen and Senators prefer to be ignorant. The conditions disclosed were pretty well known before, but an official investigation was necessary to make voluntary ignorance less excusable. Further investigations are sure to make more disagreeable truths officially known. To prevent this was probably the true reason for the attempt to cut down the Commission's appropriation. The economy plea, if sincere, would mark the Senate as being as foolish in practising economy as it is in authorizing waste. The sum of \$150,000 which Senator Martin and other Senators said they wanted to save could have been more properly taken off of the many millions appropriated for battleships.

S. D.



### Buncombe and Prosperity.

A rather obscure press dispatch of July 17 from Philadelphia says that "the Pennsylvania railroad has quietly ordered all the men laid off in its various departments several months ago to return for duty." Considering the noisy manner in which the laying off of these men was announced, one wonders why their return to duty was not considered equally deserving of prominent mention. Not that it is at all important that it should be loudly proclaimed or even publicly announced at

all. But the loudness of the laying off and the quietness of the reinstatement show a desire on the part of railroads and press to spread a false impression in regard to industrial conditions. This desire is due to the false notion that people can be made to believe themselves prosperous or otherwise by merely insisting, regardless of fact, that they are or are not so. It is this same false view which induces Republican Congressmen to waste breath, printers' ink and valuable time in calamity speeches, and causes Democratic Congressmen to make themselves ridiculous through still more preposterous and wasteful talk concerning alleged widespread prosperity. A little more reliance on natural law and less on buncombe would lead to wonderful improvements in economic conditions.

S. D.



### Hard Times and "Fool Law Making."

Frederick D. Underwood, president of the Erie railroad, stated a fact when in an interview published on July 17, he attributed hard times to "fool law making." He went astray, however, in naming the particular laws he had in mind. The anti-railroad laws to which he objects may be properly classified by him, since they are efforts to avoid the consequences of railroad monopoly without abolishing it. Yet they can not be justly blamed for bringing on hard times. Control of public highways is a proper public function. It is legislation of a far more foolish nature that deserves first blame. There are, for instance, the fool laws levying tariffs and other taxes on labor and its products; the fool laws that farm out to private corporations, functions which properly belong to the Government; the fool laws by which the Government, in endeavoring to escape the consequences of other fool laws, enacts set after set of arbitrary and unreasonable rules for business men and other producers; the fool laws that even now make appear to poor perplexed congressmen as a deep, abstruse problem, the very simple question of how to permit laboring men to combine to better their condition; the fool laws under which Government meddles in all sorts of affairs that do not properly concern it and keeps hands off of matters that should have its attention; and the fool laws that make a boon to be thankful for of what should be a right to be exercised by every man as a matter of course—the right to earn his own living regardless of the permission of others. Let President Underwood put some of his energy and talent at work attacking these fool laws and he will help to abolish the cause of hard times.

S. D.