ings. But the judge appealed to denied the plea for lack of jurisdiction. The Appellate Court, which the judge said had jurisdiction, was on a vacation; so the prisoner remained in jail until a benevolent citizen paid the $57, and secured his release.

Again do we see the mills of the gods groaning and creaking as they grind their miserly grist. To begin with, here was a grocer who, without consulting anybody, sold for profit some goods to a customer whom he chose. According to his story the customer refused to pay, and the grocer brought to bear the law of the State. The State put the offender in jail, but charged his board to the grocer. And had not an outsider interfered there would have been an interesting contest as to which would have surrendered first, the man who gave up his liberty or the grocer who paid three dollars a week for his board. According to the Bill of Rights, a debtor can be jailed only for fraud, that is, for dishonesty. But why should the victim of dishonesty pay the board of the man who wronged him? The victim of a porchclimber, or footpad, is not called upon by the State to pay his board while in prison. Why the distinction? It looks very much as though Illinois had retained the old English law of imprisonment for debt, but had tried to hide the cruel thing under the cloak of fraud. It is much to be regretted that this man was not allowed to lie in jail till a decent public sentiment was aroused to wipe out the barbarous relic. S. C.

Injustice and the Courts.

Increasing instead of diminishing seems the number of cases casting doubt on the fairness of courts and other branches of government. In California, Richard Ford and Herman Suhr are serving life sentences for a crime which no evidence shows that they committed. It was only through a ruling similar to the one, which in 1887 sent four innocent men to the gallows in Chicago, that they have been found guilty. In New Jersey, Fred S. Boyd and Patrick Quinlan are under sentence to the penitentiary, nominally for "incitement to riot," but in fact for exercising their constitutional right of free speech to express sentiments disagreeable to powerful interests. In New York, Bouck White is serving a sentence inflicted by a prejudiced magistrate, nominally for an unintentional violation of law which harmed no one. In Texas a strenuous effort to raise a sufficient defense fund seems all that can save from the gallows Rangel and Cline, who, in resisting an illegal and murderous attack, killed a sheriff. These are not all of the recent cases of the same kind. The victims, in every case, are advocates of unpopular ideas. Sometimes their actions have been such as to deserve censure or condemnation. But that does not justify judges or prosecuting attorneys in distorting into violation of law what was nothing of the kind. It certainly does not justify the railroading of men to prison or the gallows. When persons charged with crime can only hope to be saved from unjust punishment, through raising of defense funds, and strenuous public protests, then it is clear that many courts are not being conducted as they should. S. D.

A Double Action Amendment.

In initiating a constitutional amendment to limit local tax rates to one per cent, the Ohio State Board of Commerce proclaimed through its secretary, O. K. Shimansky, that it would make the single tax impossible since "with a one per cent tax limit a single tax will not produce revenue enough to support the government." Later, in answer to a statement by Daniel Kiefer that it would also prevent municipal ownership, Mr. Shimansky contradicted himself, declaring, "The people by vote can increase the tax levy or the indebtedness without limit." So according to Mr. Shimansky the proposed amendment limits the tax rate to one per cent, and at the same time allows it to be raised without limit. Believing single tax to be unpopular, Mr. Shimansky appeals to ignorant prejudice against it in behalf of an amendment designed to block municipal ownership. But knowing municipal ownership to be popular he tries to reassure the friends of that measure with a very different statement. Ohio voters had better beware of a measure alleged to be capable of accomplishing two such contradictory results. S. D.

When Is It to Be.

Government ownership was predicted by the railroad corporations in case of refusal of their request for a general five per cent increase in freight rates. The Interstate Commerce Commission has only granted about one-third of what was asked. Now won't the roads denied an increase kindly set the date for institution of government ownership? S. D.

The Land Question an Issue in Texas.

Eloquent testimony to the almost revolutionary significance of the result of the Texas primary has

been offered by Ex-Senator Joseph W. Bailey. Long before the date of the election, as far back as May 26, he wrote a letter to a citizen of San Antonio, J. F. Onion, in which he made his position clear. This letter was published in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram of June 8. Of course Bailey was bitterly opposed to the gubernatorial candidacy of James E. Ferguson. That is where most of the agents of the Texas plunderbund stood. In this letter Mr. Bailey said:

The proposal to regulate, by law, the amount which one man may charge another for the use of his land, is so directly at war with our theory of government that, other things being equal, I would feel compelled to oppose my best friend, if a candidate on that platform.

Probably Bailey realized that an objection so vague would have little weight so further on he added:

But there are other consequences, more serious if possible than those I have just indicated, involved in Mr. Ferguson's program. In order to sustain the validity of such a law as he urges, our courts must decide that land is not the subject of absolute private ownership and control. Will they do that? I think not; but if they do the inexorable logic of their decision will be that the right of the user is superior to the right of the owner, and land must henceforth be classified by us with those things which their owners have devoted to a public use. With that step once taken, we shall soon proceed to the point at which the "progressive" statesmen of Great Britain have already arrived, and it will soon be proposed in this country, as it is now proposed in that country, that landlords shall be denied the right to select or reject tenants according to their own judgment.

Thus Mr. Bailey did Mr. Ferguson the honor of classifying him with Lloyd George, and put himself in the position of a Tory opponent. Still further on he said:

In some states this attack assumes the form of a single tax on land values, which can easily be made a means of confiscation, and in other states, like ours, the attack assumes the form of regulating rents. So far as the amount of rent is concerned, the law would not make the slightest difference in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, but many advocate such a policy because they know it will divest land of its character as purely private property, and make the way easy for a still bolder challenge of its ownership.

In spite of the unscientific and certainly ineffective nature of the measure advocated by Ferguson, Mr. Bailey has made clear its essential significance. Texas has expressed her determination that the right to use of the land of the state shall be assured to its people. To that extent Bailey is right. There will be blundering at first, in devising means to apply the principle. But Texas will learn. There is in fact, already a strong organization of tenant farmers in the State, far enough advanced to advocate taxation of land values as the proper remedy. Texas may yet lead in the work of industrial emancipation.

S. D.

THOUGHTS ON THE WAR.

One good thing has come of this "war scare," a lesson which should be heeded by the labor unions and the friends of labor legislation. The big coal operators are already worrying about what will happen if the thousands of Austro-Hungarians and South-the-Danube peoples generally, forming the great mass of cheap labor in the coal regions, should be called home to serve under their respective flags. These coal operators know perfectly well what will happen. They will have to pay higher wages to American citizens and they don't see any possibility, at the present moment, of taking it out of the ultimate consumer. Now, if the many serious, earnest people, in unions and otherwise, who are fighting for minimum wage and other labor legislation, would pause a moment and read this perfectly obvious lesson, they might see a light. There would be no need of a minimum wage in the coal region after an exodus for Europe of the men of fighting age of the nations involved. The job would seek the man, not the man the job, as now, and the miner could ask what he wanted without discussion or bloodshed. Suppose now, some rearrangement of the economic basis of society could be made by which true freedom of natural resources, instead of war, should suddenly (or gradually—either way would do) remove thousands of men from mine, mill, and workshop? Those who remain could ask their own price for their labor, could they not? And they would get it without strikes or cumbersome legislation. This thing is within the power of the voters of this country to accomplish. And the immense labor vote, once it saw the light, could bring it about easily. Learn the lesson, comrades of the pick and shovel, slaves of the machine—learn the one good lesson of the present crisis, and work towards a permanent bettering of the conditions under which you work and live.

A free press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty. Yet there *are* times when even the most convinced radical feels tempted to approve of a measure to muzzle the press. The case has just occurred. The French Government will prose-