

ballot for those who are against the proposed interstate tariff.

Mr. Ingersoll is filing a petition for the Independent Nomination for Governor of New Jersey for the fall election and is formulating a platform of economic democracy which will be taxation of franchises, natural resources and land values.

Mr. Ingersoll is to address the Economic Forum of the Bloane House led by Mr. Richards, March 21, and also the Dinner Meeting of Mr. Ewing again at an early date, his first talk being on his watches and this one to be on his "hobby," the Single Tax.

Mr. Ingersoll has planned a course of thirteen popular lectures, especially for Y. M. C. A's. Mens Clubs and Forums in which he will connect our philosophy with the current political and economic muddle; this course he is now offering after each 30-minute talk, in answering questions; we ask help in introducing the course. Following are the titles.

1. Shall Our Christian Civilization Survive? 2. Does it Depend on Democracy? 3. Claims of Socialism:—and of Monopolism. 4. Defects of Democracy; Perfection of Democracy. 5. Capitalism, Individualism, the Profit System and the Machine Age. 6. Monopoly the Corrupter and Absorber of Wealth. 8. Socialization not Socialism. 9. "Render Unto Caesar, the things that are Caesars." 10. "Equal Rights to All, Special Privileges to None." 11. "The People Best Governed Who are Least Governed." 12. The New Deal Set Right: Social Income for Social Needs. 13. An Unlimited Future for All of Humanity through Scientific Economics.

IF President Roosevelt and the present Congress had to deal with a yellow fever epidemic what would they do? According to the way they are dealing with the depression they would ignore the presence of mosquitoes but would pass laws making it a crime for a yellow fever patient to convey the disease to another. They would order rouge applied to all sufferers to cure them of their yellowish appearance. And they would empower a commission to fix appropriate penalties for physicians who treated patients in ways other than those prescribed by the commission or them to follow. When in spite of these measures the epidemic would spread Congress would make the penalties more severe.

HERBERT SPENCER says: "Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter." Why not make short work of the matter anyhow? For this robbery is not like the robbery of a horse or a sum of money, that ceases with the act. It is a fresh and continuous robbery, that goes on every day and every hour.

PROGRESS AND POVERTY.

Work in California

EVEN though something may remain to be added at a later date, it seems proper at this moment to give your readers a resume of progress toward putting upon the California ballot at the coming election the constitutional amendment of which we have heretofore written and which proposes as its principal features the abolition of the recent California sales tax and progressive removal through a period of five years of all taxation upon improvements and tangible personal property, beginning with the abolition of taxation upon \$1,000 of the assessed value of all homestead improvements, taxation being transferred to land values.

As I have before written, this proposition received the endorsement last Fall of the California State Federation of Labor, and initiative petitions have been prepared for the placing of the amendment before the people at the coming election. These have to receive 110,000 signatures.

The campaign for signatures as well as for the general support of the proposition has progressed so far in the northern part of the State rather more rapidly than in the southern. The Central Labor Councils of San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Stockton, Fresno, Bakersfield, San Jose, and other places, as well as the building trades councils, have specifically backed up the demands for the State Federation and have pledged their support to the initiative proposition. Unions in a large number of the smaller towns of Northern California have taken like action. The campaign for individual signatures is progressing as rapidly as may be in all of these towns and many others of the State.

In Southern California a particularly active campaign has been inaugurated already in San Diego and is now getting under way very rapidly in Los Angeles. A very competent Speaker's Bureau has been created, in charge of Saul S. Klein, 311 Spring Street.

In every case where the labor organizations have been asked to sustain the action of the State Federation they have voted unanimously in favor of the proposition, and have done so in a majority of instances at any rate, after the proposition had been fully elucidated to them.

As there are in California at the present time not far from 200,000 men and women in active membership in the Unions, we have to begin with a formidable support. The recent State Convention of the Socialist Party voted unanimously to support this amendment, and its candidates for Governor and Lieutenant-Governor are active proponents. Two of the Democratic candidates are committed in its favor, and the same is true of a third possible candidate. Half a dozen farmers' clubs have unanimously favored the amendment.

My personal experience leads me to believe that Cali-

fornia is ripe for the move. In such individual canvass as I have made, I have found a certain number of apologists, probably not exceeding five per cent, for the sales tax, with a much less percentage of people who favor taxation of improvements and tangible personal property. Of course, the number who will fight for present conditions is very much larger than these figures would indicate, because my appeal has not been to those whom I knew in advance would be opposed, and in addition, great pressure may be brought to bear thereafter upon many now willing to declare themselves against taxation of the objects spoken of. Nevertheless, there is ample reason for believing that at the election a majority of the citizens of California will vote for this immense forward step.

We have to confront the fact, of course, that our opponents will be terribly bitter and use every social and political power within their reach to defeat the proposition. Even at this stage, while we have still a long way to go to secure a place upon the ballot, indications of this feeling are manifest. The reactionaries of Los Angeles, for instance, have declared the measure to be a "frightful menace," as no doubt it is—to privilege. One of the Los Angeles papers quotes Mr. Riley, the State Comptroller, and who is largely responsible for the sales tax, speaking at a recent meeting in Los Angeles, as follows:

"Possibility that state taxes in California will fall short of fiscal needs by about \$75,000,000, a biennium was suggested by Riley in case the initiative petition being circulated for repeal of the sales tax and in favor of a single tax should be successful.

"We are now faced with the prospect of having to combat this most vicious proposition which is inimical to every person living in California, whether he owns property or not," said Riley.

A confidential circular addressed to the building and loan associations declares that "The radical element in the State Federation of Labor, and the radicals in all other groups, have joined with the wealthy Fels-Naptha Soap Estate Trust, working under its perpetual endowment fund, to fasten Henry George's Single Tax theory on the people of California by an amendment of the state constitution," and it later refers to this "vicious Single Tax proposal." It will probably be news to your readers to find that after having been dead for twenty years, there exists a Fels fund of any kind. But its ghost still seems to walk.

We know we will have the bitter opposition of the owners of the very influential *Los Angeles Times* and of W. R. Hearst, as these gentlemen between them own probably not less than 2,000,000 acres of land in California. They will fight a measure which will transfer at once a very appreciable proportion of public charges back to them, these charges now being paid by the necessities of the State.

We shall not underestimate the strength of the influences which will be brought to bear against us, neither shall we make the mistake of underestimating the natural and logical strength of our own position, which we believe will

prevail, for after all, it is true that "Thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just."

It is undoubtedly true that today, early in the campaign, there are thousands of people who recognize that taxation should be levied upon the only form of property that society has a natural right to tax, that is to say, its own production in the shape of land values. Heretofore they have never given thought to the matter, but they now see clearly what righteousness demands.

All this is not to say that we find it necessary to invoke a large share of that philosophy which goes under the general name of "Single Tax." We do not discuss the land question, save in the sense of which we have spoken. We trouble ourselves with no academic discussions as to the rightfulness or wrongfulness of interest. Our addresses are strictly and solely to the justice of the proposition we are laying before the people of California. Only to this extent does theory interest us. The beneficial results to flow from the adoption of this specific measure are easily made manifest to any man who is not too dumb or too interested to be reached by ordinary reason.

I am beginning to wonder whether the people who have considered themselves in general sympathy with the fundamentals involved in this contest and who live outside of California have the slightest conception of the importance of the pending struggle. If we succeed, freedom of improvements and freedom of production to the farmer, the mechanic and the merchant of California, will be assured within a very brief period. Never before has such an important campaign in local taxation existed in the United States, or in any other country. It directly affects the well-being of 6,000,000 people in a State which in area is second in the United States. More persons, therefore stand to be benefited than have profited by all the smaller experiments of Australia, Canada, and elsewhere, to which any reference may be made. The importance of the struggle is further to be measured by the fact that our rate of taxation here is undoubtedly higher than in the other jurisdictions of which I have spoken, and therefore the contest becomes correspondingly increased in importance.

The interest in the contest taken outside of California as indicated by the results of such attention as *LAND AND FREEDOM* has heretofore given the matter is ridiculously unimportant. Up to date, I have received three sympathetic letters from readers of *LAND AND FREEDOM*, and total of \$7.00 cash, and Mr. George W. Patterson, the president for Southern California, has received nothing. It is, however, to be borne in mind that my suggestion of the necessity of aid has not yet been a pronounced one but as the contest grows I shall call upon all friends for help.

I have indicated heretofore that we would need assistance in the way of speakers, but any assistance of this kind can only be of real value if those rendering it confine themselves to the lines of which I have spoken. We have

no time to discuss what we may call academic principles, or to paint undue roseate pictures, which have no place in this practical campaign. We must always keep "our eye on the ball," as the golf players say, and that ball is our constitutional amendment as supported by the California State Federation of Labor.

JACKSON H. RALSTON.

News From Alaska

THE conditions in Alaska may be briefly summarized as follows: The Alaska interior is a one industry gold mining. It is estimated that there are 25,000 gold mining claims in the territory free of taxes. Only a small percentage of these claims are being worked. A large majority are held speculatively. Most of them have been acquired fraudulently and are held so. They comprise all the known auriferous area.

The government has spent over one hundred million dollars in the construction of roads, railroads, trails, etc., since 1913. This expenditure has not and is not assisting in the development expected. The value contributed by these projects has been absorbed in speculative values.

One obstacle to use is being substituted by another. Because of low tonnage, and because the adjacent areas are held out of use, high freight and passenger rates result. This of course penalizes the genuine developer. It is stated that the railroads have not paid in the sense that the operating costs exceed the revenues. They have not "paid" because the real values they create have escaped into private pockets.

Because of the high freight rates caused by the above conditions an uneconomic competition by automobile and airplane has resulted, tending to further diminish tonnage. As a result a system of tolls on the highways is being installed. Thus a vicious circle against development is being instituted, so that a few speculative holders can charge through their holdings for governmental facilities. This condition is being aggravated by the recent increase in the value of gold. Claims are jumping rapidly. The whole country is being "staked" illegally and without "discovery." A certain fool in Congress with the help of Burton K. Wheeler, has removed the "assessment work" provision, the last vestige of the pioneer requirement, that a man could not hold land without using it. This because, as one Senator has put it, "the owners are poor men," and "this is all they have," etc. A fool form of charity that creates the very unemployment the N.R.A. is designed to relieve! It is a crime to hoard gold in banks but apparently it is a virtue to hoard it in the ground. Of course, the latter is more vicious as it creates unemployment.

As a partial solution of this mess I am proposing that an area 120 miles wide having 60 miles of such wealth on

either side of the center line of the Alaskan R.R. and the road system, be called a transportation zone and within that area all unused gold claims be taxed \$2.00 an acre annually, all base metal claims \$1.00 an acre, and all agricultural claims ten cents an acre. Also that all payments made by purchase of existing development agencies be taxed ten per cent and also all royalties received. All funds thus realized to be applied to reduction of freight rates, the construction of roads, etc. I am confident that the solution, imperfect as I know it to be, is practical, and will result in the opening up of the country.

Most of the right thinking people of the territory are cognizant of existing conditions but are afraid to tackle them. As an illustration, last winter I succeeded in convincing the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, and the president of the Alaskan College, of the soundness of my position. A memorial was drawn up and submitted to the Alaskan legislature, but they were scared to death.

It is difficult to do anything from here. It must be presented to Congress through the President's advisers. I am not financially equipped to do it myself. But I am confident that Frederick C. Howe might be able to do something.

Alaska presents a great field for our philosophy and there is a crying need for immediate action. If any of your readers can place me in contact with any one that can be of service it would be a great help.

DONALD MACDONALD.

Statement of Mr. Harry Weinberger

AT PUBLIC HEARING ON THE N. R. A., WASHINGTON, D.C.

I SAT here this morning and heard labor representatives talk about \$13.50 a week, and when I heard the Upholsterers' Union say that they were getting \$13.50, a minimum wage, which was now the maximum, and that they had twenty-five weeks of work a year, and then when I went out for lunch and read in the newspapers about the million dollar salaries that certain industries give to certain officers because they happen to be in the position where they can mulct the public, I wondered whether I was really living in a democracy where the people of the United States in reality are supposed to control the government. I wondered why it was that, having the richest country in the world, we still seemed unable to give human beings sufficient money to have what we used to call the American standard of living.

I came down here today, not as a representative of labor, but just as part of the public, because I felt that the N. R. A. seemed to be barking up the wrong tree. The N. R. A. has gone on the basis that we in America here are suffering from overproduction, that the things that we have got to do is to cut down the number of hours, cut down the use of machinery, take land out of use, pay farmers for doing nothing, and think that that was going to solve our problems.

America is not suffering from overproduction. American people are suffering from underconsumption. America can not buy the things that they can produce. With all of the natural wealth from coast to coast, with all of the improvements of machinery, with all of the inventions of science, we can still have men come here and,