

The amount appropriated for one year for the army and navy would build the proposed national railway in Alaska. After being spent, moreover, we would be prepared to carry out what it would be spent for, while spending it for military purposes only leaves us as "unprepared" as ever.

S. D.



### In Time of Peace, Prepare for Peace.

Japan is sorely afflicted. This is our opportunity to strike. Burdened already to the very limit of endurance by the cost of the Russo-Japanese war, crop failures have left millions of her people at the point of starvation. And now is added the horrors of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tidal waves. Seldom does such an opportunity come to a nation to overcome its opponent. This is our chance to render Japan forever harmless. One bold stroke now, and our Pacific coast will be as safe from Japanese invasion as the state of Colorado. This is the psychological moment. We may never again have such an opportunity.



But it is not with dreadnoughts or super-dreadnoughts that the blow must be struck. It is not by any form of force that the Japanese are to be overwhelmed. Physical blow will provoke physical blow in return. Were we to over-awe Japan today with a great armada, she would assume yet greater burdens, she would starve yet other millions of her people to retaliate. But by sending her shiploads of food instead of shiploads of guns and armed men, we shall by one blow disarm her. The cost of a single battleship spent for food to save these starving men, women and children will do more to render our coast safe from attack than all the dreadnoughts we could launch. The price of one battleship expended in succoring these unfortunate people will save the building of twenty battleships in the future. Will our Congress rise to the occasion? Never has a nation had a better opportunity to show its real worth.

S. C.



### Heroic But Not Discreet.

And now it is South African labor that has appealed to the arbitrament of war. The long drawn-out struggle between miners and mine owners has resulted in a general strike. Business has stopped, the citizen soldiers have been called to the colors, and we are to see a short, sharp struggle between the man with the tools of industry and the man with the tools of war. How will it end? How does it always end? There may or

may not be destruction of life and property. There is certain to follow increased bitterness to hold men of common interests apart with misunderstood-grievances. If any material gain at all comes to labor it will be so small that it will ill compensate the men for the dangers dared. It is heroic, heroic beyond measure, this stand taken by labor. For while the soldier's pay begins when he goes on duty, the striker's pay stops. The one's livelihood begins, the other's ends. Yet, in spite of the hardship—not to say danger—labor stakes its all upon the success of a strike. It is heroic but it is not discreet.



Consider the factors involved. Labor with a grievance pits itself against the rest of the community. Part of the opposing force is passive and indifferent, part active and aggressive. The moment violence begins, the indifferent become positive, and respond to the appeal to maintain law and order. Then it becomes a contest between two bodies of citizens, the one doubly armed with the majesty of law and the weapons of war, while the other meets it with bare hands. Can an inferior force overcome a superior force? If the strikers be in a minority what chance is there for them, unarmed, to overcome a majority, armed? If the strikers be in a majority why appeal to arms at all? Why not resort to the ballot? The majority rules, and if labor can carry its point by force, how much better can it carry its point by ballot?



If it be said that labor cannot be got to vote as a unit, what reason is there for supposing it will strike as a unit? Many may respond to the first call for a walkout, the militant-spirited with enthusiasm, the worst oppressed, stolidly, and the great mass, passively. If the strike be the result of a passionate appeal, such as that at Lawrence, Massachusetts, it may win united support. If the grievance be one to arouse the sympathy of the public, it may succeed. But the public is fickle. The appeal that found willing ears at Lawrence was treated with indifference at Paterson.



There are two reasons why violence and sabotage cannot solve the labor problem. Most men instinctively shrink from anything savoring of unfairness—even if done in the name of fairness. And if by any chain of fortuitous circumstances success were to crown their efforts for a time, it would lead only to jealousies, betrayals and disaster. Men will act together peaceably as long as

the end in view appeals to their reason, and to their sense of justice; but the moment they become conscious that they can attain their end by force, without regard to reason and justice, they are soon led to destruction by the ambition of unscrupulous leaders. The labor problem is not a class problem. It is the problem of society itself. And any plan that does not consider the welfare of all, and appeal to the conscience of the great mass of society is doomed to failure.

S. C.

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

### THE FELS FUND CONFERENCE.\*

Washington, January 18.

There is no question of the success of the Fourth Annual National Conference of Singletaxers under the auspices of the Joseph Fels Fund Commission at Washington on January 15 to 17. No less than twenty-five States were represented, besides those who came from outside the boundaries of the United States. The attendance from outside the city in which the meeting was held certainly far exceeded that of its predecessors. It also excelled in the businesslike manner in which its proceedings were carried on.

The Conference came to order at 10 o'clock on the morning of the 15th. In opening, the Chairman of the Joseph Fels Fund Commission, Daniel Kiefer of Cincinnati, called attention to the fact that this was the first Conference to be held with Singletax legislation actually on the statute books within the United States. Alice Thacher Post was unanimously elected permanent chairman, and Stanley Bowmar, secretary. Rules limiting all speeches to five minutes were adopted. To this fact, as well as to the efficient and fair manner in which this rule was enforced, much of the success of the meeting was due. The reports from the "storm centers" probably told little that was not before known to those attending. The situation was reviewed in California, Oregon, Colorado, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania. As in all conferences of this nature resolutions were introduced bearing on all matters in which the participants were interested. The one receiving the most attention was introduced by Mr. Louis S. Murphy of the city of Washington, and was as follows:

WHEREAS, the conservation of our forests is vital to the prosperity of every citizen and every industry and to the continued welfare of the Nation, and

WHEREAS, the taxing annually, as a land value, of the value of standing timber is unjust, encourages the premature cutting of the forests and discourages the practice of forestry by which a new forest crop may most surely be secured, and

WHEREAS, the Singletax movement stands for conservation in its most fundamental and comprehensive form,

BE IT RESOLVED, that it is the sense of this Conference that the Singletax as applied to forest lands should provide for:

(1) An annual tax on the value of the bare land for

\*See vol. xv, p. 1160; vol. xvi, p. 1211; current volume, page 29.

that purpose to which it is best adapted by its location and physical character, and

(2) A "cutting" or "yield" tax on all timber matured in the virgin forests, such tax to be based on the stumpage value of the timber when cut, and

(3) The exemption from taxation of all planted or other forms of "second growth" forests grown and matured under man's supervision.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Thomas G. Shearman. But the object of the Conference was business, and though there was no apparent dissent from the object of the resolution, it was evident that time required to discuss details could not be spared, and a motion prevailed to appoint a committee of three to discuss the matter by correspondence and report to the next Conference.



A resolution received considerable attention endorsing woman suffrage and urging the House of Representatives to create a special suffrage committee. Objection to this was raised on the ground that it was not germane; in spite of this it was endorsed.

Another resolution recommended the application of the Singletax in the District of Columbia. It was adopted as a matter of course.

Greetings were sent to the Land Values Group in the British Parliament, to Senator James W. Bucklin lying on a sick bed at his home in Grand Junction, Colorado, and to Congressman William Bremner of New Jersey.

Some feeling was aroused by a resolution to endorse the LaFollette "Seamen's Bill." The Conference was placed in the embarrassing position of endorsing a measure not germane to its object, or of defeating a resolution with the object of which, practically all present were in sympathy. The matter was finally laid on the table.

A letter from C. B. Fillebrown of Boston was read urging that political action be abandoned and that a policy of pure propaganda be substituted. The discussion on this was altogether one-sided. All speeches were in opposition, and a resolution to endorse the recommendations made was unanimously defeated.

The time and place of holding the next conference was discussed but not acted upon. The claims of San Francisco during the Panama Exposition of 1915 were most energetically pushed, and seemed to be favored by a large majority.



● An address to the public was decided upon and a committee appointed to draw it up. The address follows:

Address to the Public,  
from the  
Single Tax Conference  
held in

Washington, D. C., January 17, 1914.

It is a self-evident truth that laws should be so framed as to leave people free to do their best and not their worst for their fellowmen.

Unfortunately two mistakes have been made. First, the earth, and all its resources, has been treated, not as a gift to all mankind, but as an article of bargain and sale. Consequently, the majority of mankind has been disinherited. Thus we abnegate the glorious doctrine of the brotherhood of man.