

state trade commission of five members. All corporations engaged in interstate commerce, other than common carriers, must fully inform this commission regarding their business methods, the extent of business operations, and the character of the business. The commission may or may not make this information public according to its own judgment. Members of the commission will hold office for seven years and receive a salary of \$10,000 a year. A fifth bill is being drawn by the committee on interstate commerce, and relates to control of railroad finance. [See current volume, page 80.]



#### Investigation of Railroad Abuses.

The investigation at Chicago on January 21 by the Inter-State Commerce Commission of private car lines—which are said to furnish the meat packing and other interests with a legal substitute for rebates—met an obstacle in the refusal of Frederick W. Ellis, vice-president of the Armour lines, to testify. Solicitor Patrick J. Farrell of the commission has prepared to institute contempt proceedings against him. On January 27 A. W. McLaron, manager of the railroad department of Morris & Co., testified that his company made but \$15,000 profit during 1913 from its private cars. A different kind of story was told by Charles M. Secrist, manager of the Pacific Fruit Express Company, whose profits for the year had been \$1,500,000. [See current volume, page 80.]



In the meantime the Federal grand jury at Chicago is busily engaged in investigating charges of rebating involving Swift & Co., and the Ann Arbor railroad, and the David Rutter Coal Co., and the Chicago and North-Western railroad. According to the Government claims Swift & Co. profited \$60,000 a year by rebating on shipments of beef to Michigan, and the Rutter Coal Co. to the extent of \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year on coal shipments.



That the United States Steel corporation, known as the Steel Trust, has, during the past six years, received \$75,000,000 in rebates is a charge made by Senator Lane of Oregon on January 25. Senator Lane has introduced a resolution providing for an investigation.



A report of the Inter-State Commerce Commission on the cause of insolvency of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad was sent to the Senate on January 26. The report shows that the road had been wrecked by financial syndicates which had made a profit of \$8,000,000. The road was bonded to such an extent that its indebtedness exceeded its capital stock by 375 per cent.

That the proposed 5 per cent increase in freight rates would benefit the Standard Oil Company at the expense of independents was an argument presented to the Inter-State Commerce Commission on January 26 by F. W. Boltz of Cleveland, traffic manager of the National Petroleum Association, which comprises about forty independent concerns. Other independents testified to the same effect. They said that the Standard controls the market through its ownership of pipe lines. The independents, more dependent upon the railroads, will find their narrow margin of profit entirely wiped out by the proposed increase. The price of crude oil to independents from the Pennsylvania fields has increased in the last twenty months from \$1.30 a barrel to \$2.77 with no advance in sales price. [See current volume, page 9.]



#### The Joseph Fels Fund Conference.

The Fourth National Singletax Conference, under the auspices of the Joseph Fels Fund Commission met at Washington on January 15, remaining in session until the 17th. Mrs. Alice Thacher Post was elected chairman. An address of welcome was made by Charles G. Nesbitt, representing District Commissioner Newman, and the response thereto was made by Congressman Edward Keating of Colorado. The Conference then proceeded to hear reports from participants in work that has been done and to discuss plans for the future. The report for California was made by J. Stitt Wilson of Berkeley and Miss Helen Todd of San Francisco; for Colorado by J. G. McGauran of Denver and George J. Knapp of Pueblo; for Missouri by Vernon Rose of Kansas City and J. P. Hermann of St. Louis; for Pennsylvania by W. D. George of Pittsburgh; for New Jersey by Charles O'Connor Hennessy and Edmund B. Osborne, for New York by F. G. Leubuscher; and for Rhode Island by former Governor Lucius F. C. Garvin and A. B. Johnson. [See current volume, page 78.]



Resolutions on many subjects were introduced. These were first referred to the committee on resolutions and those reported out were discussed and voted on. Those adopted were the following:

Offered by Mr. F. G. Leubuscher of New York:

Resolved, that this conference expresses its approval of the manner in which the Single Tax Review has been conducted, and its appreciation of the unselfish and self-sacrificing work of Joseph Dana Miller, its publisher.

Resolved, that this conference recommends to the Joseph Fels Fund Commission its continued and increased support of the Single Tax Review.

Offered by F. W. Garrison:

Resolved, that the Joseph Fels Fund conference send to the Land Values Group in Parliament

(through the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values) a fraternal message of encouragement in the great fight now in progress in Great Britain for the restoration of the land to the people through the rating and taxing of land values.

Offered by Miss Doris Stevens of Omaha:

Whereas, the largest liberty, the broadest democracy, is a fundamental principle of the Singletax philosophy;

Whereas, one-fifth of the Senate, one-seventh of the House and one-sixth of the Electoral College hold their power through the votes of women as well as men;

Whereas, the Democratic party now in power claims to stand for the fundamentals of democracy;

Whereas, there is at present no committee in the House of Representatives with sufficient time to consider properly so important a question as Woman Suffrage;

Be it resolved, that the men and women of the Joseph Fels Fund Singletax Conference call upon the Rules Committee of the House to return a favorable report at once on the resolution to create a permanent committee on Woman Suffrage in the House.

Be it further resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to every member of the House Rules Committee.

Offered by Governor Garvin:

Resolved, that in order to make Washington a model city, its revenue should be derived solely from land values.

Offered by S. A. Stockwell:

Whereas, there is a nation-wide movement promoted by the public utility corporations to take from the cities the right to control their local public utilities; and,

Whereas, State control of local public utilities is wholly undemocratic, therefore

Be it resolved, that this conference urges all supporters of the democratic movement to actively oppose the creation of state-wide commissions that in any wise infringe upon the fundamental democratic right of home rule and local self-government.

Offered by Governor Garvin:

Resolved, that we favor the following amendment to the Federal constitution: Congress shall have power to levy and collect a direct tax on land values without apportionment to the several States and without regard to any census or enumeration.

Offered by W. C. Lee:

Whereas, the present system of support of the government of the District of Columbia by revenues drawn equally from federal and local sources is before the country; and

Whereas, the present condition of taxation in the District favors land speculation, as shown effectively by Congressman Tom L. Johnson and again by Congressman Henry George, Jr.:

Be it resolved, that now is the time to advance the principle of land value taxation and demonstrate its merit by supporting the local government of the national capital through taxation of no other property than land values, whether governmentally or

privately owned, in which franchise values are to be included.

Offered by A. B. Johnson:

Resolved, that Congress be and hereby is requested to instruct the Industrial Commission to investigate and report upon the merits of the taxation of land values and its relation to labor troubles and labor necessities.



At the propaganda meetings held on the evening of the 15th and 16th the speakers were Henry George, Jr., J. H. Ralston, Charles O'Connor Hennessy, Samuel Gompers, Frederic C. Howe, George Lansbury, Bolton Hall, Frank Warren, Grace Colbron and others. Before final adjournment a vote of confidence in the work of the Commission was given and a vote of thanks extended to the chairman and the local committee. A banquet at the Raleigh was the closing feature of what all who attended declare the most successful national Singletax gathering yet held in the United States.



An affair supplementary to the Washington Singletax gathering was the dinner given to members of the Joseph Fels Fund Conference at New York on January 22 by the Manhattan Singletax Club. The toastmaster was William Marion Reedy of St. Louis and the speakers were Charles T. Root, Bolton Hall, J. Stitt Wilson, J. B. McGauran, George J. Knapp and Joseph Fels. Daniel Kiefer was prevented by illness from attending.



#### **New York Graft Investigation.**

Since the election of last November, a graft investigation has been conducted by District Attorney Whitman of New York. Little of interest had developed until January 21 when the deposed Governor, William Sulzer, was called upon to testify and told the story of his personal relations with Boss Murphy. Before testifying, the ex-Governor signed a waiver of immunity, as all other witnesses had done. At the beginning of his administration he had fallen out with Murphy over the appointment of the highway commissioner. Murphy wanted the place given to James Gaffney. The Governor had refused because he had been informed by Senator O'Gorman that Gaffney was Murphy's "chief bagman," and tried to hold up a contractor named Stewart for \$100,000 after he had put in a lower bid than any competitor for a canal contract. Before taking office in December, 1912, while the bids of Stewart and others were before the canal board, he had been informed by George H. McGuire of Syracuse that there was a probability of Stewart's bid being rejected, although it was the lowest, and that this would be an injustice. On the strength of this he had sent a telegram to the board, asking that action be deferred. At a subsequent meeting with Murphy