

of the teachers of economics, and it found a ready welcome as a text book and as a reference book. We found a few orders coming in to us from professors of economics, for fifty, seventy-five or more books at a time. That gave us an idea. With the start of the 1928 Semester, a letter was addressed to professors of economics throughout the country calling attention to our special prices for the book in quantities and offering a sample copy. The many letters on file show that the response was instantaneous and cordial. The letter was repeated (in varying form) each Semester and the sale of books has increased. Some 1,000 books have been sold this way. Nor was "Significant Paragraphs" the only marketable book. The unabridged "Progress and Poverty" has proven popular also and is ordered in large quantities by certain universities, and there is a steady demand for Louis F. Post's books. "Significant Paragraphs" has come through three editions of 5,000, 2,500 and 5,000 respectively, and it will not be long before a fourth edition is announced.

Lest there appear a taint of commercialism in this brief resume of sales of books, we would like to state that in all cases postage (which is a considerable item) is prepaid by the Foundation, and quantities of books are always sold at a cost below, or equivalent to the actual printing costs. This does not take into account the cost of the making of plates, which is not considered when the prices are fixed. Moreover thousands of copies of books and pamphlets have been freely given to college libraries, to professors, and wherever it is felt the need is great and the interest alive and real.—ANTOINETTE KAUFMANN.

## Taxation

LET me quote a statement from the immortal Thomas Paine: "When it shall be said in any country in the world, my poor are happy, neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them, my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars, the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive, the rational world is my friend because I am the friend of its happiness, when these things can be said, then may that country boast of its constitution and its government."

I never read these lines without feeling something stir within me, for these lines are so practical and also so impressive, for it is the truth in statements that stirs and inspires the normal mind.

It is over one hundred and fifty years since Paine wrote those words. Would it not be well to inquire, are we today much nearer the objective set forth in those lines; what progress have we made?

We have plenty of poor, for the life of the ordinary working man is the life of a poor man, a week out of work and he is in debt. The life of the ordinary small store keeper is the life of the poor man; for financial worries are always with him. And is it not true that ignorance abounds, do

not a vast majority of our people believe monstrous things so inconsistent with facts? If they were not dreadfully ignorant, how could they believe them, and how ignorant the most of our people are on vital questions of great importance.

Take the tax question, for instance. How many people know anything about it? We all growl and we all complain, but how many seriously and intelligently think on this problem?

The jails are not yet empty; the fact is they are worse crowded than they ever were in any period of the history of the United States. We have a larger percentage today of our people in jail than we have had since Washington crossed the Delaware.

The aged have not been saved from want and the fear of want. One dark thought that comes into the minds of all our people, at least to an overwhelming majority of them, is what will I do in order to live when I am old, and in many thousands of cases it is either the charity of relatives or the poor house.

What about the burden of taxes? Are taxes oppressive or are they not? I would say, most emphatically, they are oppressive. The total bill of this country, federal, state and local, is said to be for 1927, over Twelve Billion Dollars, and with a population of one hundred and twenty million, that means One Hundred Dollars per capita for every man, woman and child. For a family of five, it means Five Hundred Dollars a year that people on the average have to pay in taxes. But someone says, ah, the rich pay nearly all of that. Do they? Where do they get it and how do they get it? Is it not by taking it through monopolistic power from those who produce wealth, thereby making anything they pay into the tax fund a collection of the earnings of laborers and capitalists who enjoy no privilege and have no monopoly? So finally all the costs of government, as well as the support of the idle rich, comes out of industry and results in lowering wages and diminishing the return to capital.

If Paine could come back and look around, take a journey up Fifth Avenue and see the magnificence of our splendor, or take a walk down south Fifth Avenue and see the depths of our poverty and degradation of human life, I wonder what he would say?

JAMES R. BROWN, in *Yonkers Workman*.

## Taxation and Prosperity

THE usual comment of those in comfortable conditions, when speaking of the less fortunate class, is that if the masses were more industrious, frugal and intelligent, their lot in life would be vastly improved; would in fact, be quite equal to their own; that they are the makers of their own condition.

This attitude on the part of the more fortunate dulls the sense of responsibility they might otherwise feel did