ing to do more, or have done nothing but want to do something—there is your opportunity, whether you live in those places or elsewhere, and whether you reckon your income in thousands of dollars or in dimes. Every dime will help. If you can't give a thousand dollars, give a nickel, or something not so extreme as either; but give.

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Give through the Joseph Fels Fund, unless you object to that channel. What you give will be distributed better and count for more if given that way. It will be distributed better, for the Joseph Fels Fund Commissioners know the relative need of different places, and have financed the work to its present stage; it will count for more, because to that fund Joseph Fels will add a dime to your dime, a dollar to your dollar, a hundred or a thousand or ten thousand dollars to yours. If you object to this channel—for any reason, good, bad or indifferent—don't allow your objection to serve as your excuse for not helping. For Missouri you can send direct to Dr. William P. Hill of St. Louis; for Oregon you can send to William S. U'Ren of Oregon City; for Seattle you can send to Thorwald Siegfried. And don't wait. They vote on the question in Seattle the 5th of March, and in Missouri and Oregon next November, and the campaign in all those places has already begun. Whether you send direct to those men or to the Joseph Fels Fund, send! Send now. Send enough to convince *yourself* that you really want your cause to win and are no dawdler. Don't wait until the fight is over. If you do, and the fight is lost, it will not be for you to criticize, nor if it is won for you to cheer. The fight you have prayed for is on. Whereabouts are *you?*

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THREADED OBSERVATIONS.

In a New York speech, and again in Washington, Governor Wilson of New Jersey made an observation that shows that he knows how to string his observations on the right thread.

In his New York speech he said: "As a politician I'll agree not to trouble this country's business if this country's business men will agree not to trouble politics. The trouble is that the business men of the country won't agree to this. The purpose of one political party now is to take the tariff out of politics and settle it for the good of the whole country. But as long as the schedules of the tariff are settled by special interests there is going to be trouble. . . . *Suppose we ask the business men of this country to stop meddling with the tariff.*"

This is the talk of plain common sense, something heard too rarely in speeches by our public men.

The majority of them, and the great mass of conservatives generally, in private conversation or in public utterances from the platform, in newspapers and magazines, have a great deal to say about the way in which the country is surely going to the dogs unless politics will stop interfering with business. But now we have a public man who reminds us that the interference of business with politics came prior to, and is the direct cause of and reason for, the present concern of politics with business.

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An editorial in one of the big New York dailies r cently showed the same popular misunderstanding of cause and effect, the same lack of proportion.

In giving some kindly paternal advice to organized Labor apropos of the Los Angeles troubles, that paper asserted that "ninety millions of people cannot endure that two millions should subvert the common welfare from any motives whatever, good or bad."

This sort of argument is always used to organized Labor in connection with any manifestation, violent or otherwise, on its part. But, apropos of Governor Wilson's suggestion, how about the less than two millions of representatives of Big Business who for some decades now have been subverting the common welfare of ninety millions of people for their own advancement?

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A constant perusal of the daily press is a great delight to a person with a sense of humor.

Another editorial writer, in dealing with the epidemic of poisoning cases in the Berlin Municipal Lodging House, remarked that the case was astonishing in that it revealed an incredible depth of poverty in that prosperous city. It seemed to this writer that but few people here or in Germany realize that even in a well-governed city like Berlin there is such a tremendous sum of actual want and misery.

Possibly if he would think the matter over, he might understand that in the so suddenly revealed depth of misery lay the explanation for the remarkable gains in the Socialist vote at the German elections. But when the papers report Socialist gains, public opinion here is surprised,

and the conservative portion of it shakes its head dubiously and says, "Why should such things be?" and "What are we coming to?"

They don't seem to realize that the Socialist vote is not the result, as they like to suppose, of the work of "agitators and demagogues," but a result of conditions that fill the municipal lodging houses with thousands of homeless and penniless men.

Truly saith that arch-humorist, George Bernard Shaw: "How meaningless are our observations if we haven't the right thread to string them on."

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

MUNICIPAL HOUSEKEEPING IN WINNIPEG.

Winnipeg, January 10, 1912.

We, the citizens of Winnipeg, are now in possession of our own hydro-electric power. The current from the city's power plant (see The Public, vol. ix, p. 749; vol. x, p. 898) was first "turned on" on the 16th of October, 1911, being immediately put to use in lighting the streets, and shortly after, in lighting private buildings, as well as those belonging to the city. The plant is now in full operation, and installations for private lighting and power are now taking place. Some delay in this was caused by attempts of the city Executive to repudiate the rates fixed by the city's "power prospectus," previously issued, by raising them; but agitation carried on by the honest newspapers and citizens, as well as the approach of the civic elections, compelled the abandonment of those attempts. So, it has come about that we are now enjoying electric lighting at one-third its usual price to us.

For, no sooner had the city announced its rates than the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company—which hitherto has had a monopoly on our lights, both gas and electric, and our power—mailed a "special announcement re electric lighting rates" to its "customers," saying: "The Winnipeg Electric Railway Company wish to announce that on meter readings taken on and after the 5th of December, 1911, the rate for electric lighting will be precisely the same as that decided upon by the City Council, namely 3½c per kw.-hour, with 10 per cent discount for prompt payment within ten days from date of bill, thus making the rate 3c net per kw.-hour, with a monthly minimum charge of 50c."

When it is remembered that up to the present the company has been charging its customers at the rate of 10 cents per kilowatt-hour (kw.-hour) this reduction is enormous.

Think of having your monthly bill of $5.38 suddenly reduced to $1.63! That is one case. And the same proportion in larger and smaller amounts maintains throughout this happy community of light consumers.

Although—partly owing to the delay caused by the attempts to raise the rates—the installation of the city's lights comes upon a time when lights are much needed and all are not willing to swap masters in the lighting business, and although the electric company is stooping to conquer by lowering its rates below what has been maintained as profitable, yet all public-spirited citizens feel that, by installing the city current in their houses they are assisting in an undertaking in which they themselves are the stockholders; an undertaking, it may be added, which—as shown above, and indirectly confessed by the company's announcement—has relieved them of a certain amount of monopolistic oppression.

PAUL M. CLEMENS.

WASHINGTON'S CONSTITUTION AND THE SINGLE TAX.

Snohomish, Wash.

Anyone acquainted with the people of the State of Washington, and with the people of the Eastern States during the last decade of the nineteenth century, must have been struck with the marked difference in political thought existing in Washington and the older communities at that time. The democracy and social equality which seems always to exist in a new community, doubtless was the cause of the very progressive thought which pervaded the State of Washington at the time of its admission to the Union. Every community in the State had its little crowd of thinkers, all of whom who were not Socialists were Singletaxers.

Accordingly, when the Constitutional convention met in the Territorial capitol the following was adopted:

Art. 7, Sec. 2. Taxation-Uniformity and Equality-Exemption.—The legislature shall provide by law a uniform and equal rate of assessment and taxation on all property in the State, according to its value in money, and shall prescribe such regulations by general law as shall secure a just valuation for taxation of all property, so that every person and corporation shall pay a tax in proportion to the value of his, her or its property. Provided, that a deduction of debts from credits may be authorized: Provided, further, that the property of the United States, and of the State, counties, school districts, and other municipal corporations,, and SUCH OTHER property as the legislature may by general laws provide, shall be exempt from taxation.

This provision became a part of the Constitution of the State of Washington.

It seemed plain from this that any class of property which a legislature might by general law exempt, would be exempt from taxation. And one of the first laws enacted by the State legislature was a law exempting household goods and other personal property to the amount of $300. No one questioned this law, and property was exempt from taxation under it until the year 1897. In that year the Fusion legislature, in which was a large element of Singletaxers, passed an Act relating to revenue and taxation from which the following is taken:

Section 5. All property described in this section, to the extent herein limited, shall be exempt from taxation, that is to say: . . . (5) All fruit trees, except nursery stock, for four years after being transplanted from the nursery into the orchard. (6) The personal