

wealth is produced by labor applied to land, this woman should be very rich. But she is not. The little property, in the shape of tools and furniture that had been accumulated during the past three years, after seventeen years of debt-fighting, has recently melted away in living expenses. Even her sewing machine had been taken for debt; and the hogs, the only remaining food supply, had gone on a foreclosure sale.



It will be said by some that these people did not know how to manage. Granted. Let it be conceded that they worked well, but not wisely; they represent a type too numerous and too widespread to be dismissed as incompetent. The Chicago man who recently received a letter from an Arkansas relative, sober and industrious, asking for a barrel of old clothing in order that his seven children might be able to go to school, is another of the many evidences that attempts to get back to the land by this road are worse than futile. Not even the endurance of the hardships of pioneer life, the isolation, the humdrum drudgery, with all the means of modern production at hand, suffices to win a decent living from the soil by any save the exceptionally gifted. Why? Why is this Texas family brought to this condition, in spite of all the power that science and invention have placed in its hands? And if those reared on the soil fail thus miserably, what hope is there, unless conditions are radically changed, in sending the city unemployed to the land? Southern planters declare cotton has for several seasons been raised at a loss. Corn and wheat can be produced at a profit on rented land only by exceptional management and industry. Farmers owning farms where land is valuable prosper as land owners, not as farmers. Farm tenants are indeed in a sad way. Back to the land should still be the cry; but back to the land in the midst of civilization, not upon the remote frontiers. The story revealed by the Commission on Industrial Relations, in its investigation into farming conditions, promises to be worth reading.

S. C.



A Significant Vote.

Texas land monopolists must be blind indeed if they do not see the writing on the wall. A proposed constitutional amendment for a graduated tax on land values received in the lower house of the Legislature, on March 16, sixty-three votes in favor and only fifty-five against. It failed of passage because a two-thirds vote was required. But the fact that it obtained an actual majority is an event of great moral significance. This is clearly

recognized by the Dallas News, which says in comment in its issue of March 18:

The narrowness of its defeat signifies unmistakably that the people of Texas are coming into a mood to grapple with the problem of land ownership in a vigorous and decisive way. This is not the last we shall hear of this proposal. There is little prophecy in saying that it will make its appearance in the next legislature, and if it is not adopted by the next legislature it is apt to be because, meantime, some better way of checking the progress of land monopolization shall be proposed.

A better way would be to abolish all taxes on Labor and its products and to raise all public revenue by taxing the value of land alone, irrespective of improvements upon it. A measure of that kind is what Texas needs.

S. D.



Missouri's Misleaders Safe.

A bill to punish publication of "untrue, deceptive or misleading" advertisements is said to be sure of passage in Missouri. It is not retroactive, however, and therefore the anti-singletax leaders of 1912 and 1914 have nothing to fear.

S. D.



A Sufficiently Long Working Day.

In an address at Worcester, Massachusetts, Mrs. Mary Fels expressed the opinion that an eight-hour working day is too long and that four hours would be ample. Commenting on this, the Worcester Gazette says, in its issue of March 11, that the vital problem to the worker is not the hours he spends at work, but "whether he gets a just share of the wealth that he produces." If the editor thought, that he was expressing a sentiment from which Mrs. Fels would dissent, it must have been because he neglected to inform himself on the views held by Mrs. Fels, which are surely well enough known. To ensure the laborer his just share of what he produces is the immediate object which Mrs. Fels has in view, and it may easily be that she understands better than the Worcester Gazette that the just share due the laborer consists of all that he produces. Once assured of justice in distribution, the length of the working day may safely be left to each individual worker. Four hours a day would be ample, said Mrs. Fels, and if she erred in this at all it probably was on the side of moderation. If eight hours would have been ample in the days of long ago when the agitation began for an eight-hour day, four hours would easily be ample today. This does not mean that arbitrary regulations for a four-hour day should be established. The man who jumps to such

a conclusion would see a demand for arbitrary regulation by law in a claim that some people eat more than is needful. What it does mean is that workers ought to get what justly belongs to them, and then those who care to work no longer hours than enough to ensure them a good living will find four hours sufficient. Today an unjust economic system compels many of them to work much longer for a poor living. To point out that four hours a day would be ample is to declare that the worker is deprived of his just share. Mrs. Fels has a definite program of action which will ensure justice to the laborer and thus make it possible for those who want to work no more than four hours a day to so limit their time and still be able to live well. Has the Worcester Gazette as much?

S. D.



Repeal the Anti-Labor Laws.

The industrial depression is attributed by protected interests to legislation which curbs their unfair privileges; by railroads to legislation which interferes with their predatory practices; by telephone interests to measures taken to curb their power, and by the plunderbund generally to legislation ostensibly aimed at oppressive methods. It seems about time for Labor and unprivileged Business to see and explain that the cause is due to legislation which puts them at the mercy of Monopoly. There were panics and depressions before there was interference with protective tariff laws, or with predatory habits of railroads and trusts. But every panic or depression, of which we have any record, occurred while laws were in force interfering with useful labor. There will continue to be depressions as long as production of wealth may only take place by permission of the class that controls natural resources, and while industry and its products are subject to taxation. The laws upholding those conditions are in fact anti-Labor laws. They constitute the most inexcusable and pernicious antilegislation on the statute books. Their repeal is the step that should be urged to put an end to industrial depressions.

S. D.



Working for Each Other.

Mr. Hutchins Hapgood, the novelist, made a shrewd observation when he said, speaking of labor conditions:

The workman will never again work well until he works for himself. He used to believe that God, the king, the autocrats, legitimately commanded him to work. He believed in authority and worked well.

He no longer believes in authority; and handicrafts, trades, and mechanical arts will never again be good until the worker works for himself and can express himself in his work.

This is a feature that few of those who delve into the causes of industrial unrest appreciate. They say, speaking abstractedly, that capitalists work for labor, as much as labor works for capital. But the concrete situation gives to their words about the same meaning as attaches to the mouthings of a United States Senator, when he speaks of himself as a servant of the people.



Capital and Labor are partners. They do work for each other. Too often, however, the Capitalist has allied himself with Monopoly; and as an individual he assumes the power of Monopoly under the guise of Capital. And the Laborer, discriminating no more between the two than the Capitalist himself, bitterly resents this assumption of superiority. The direction of industry, and the management of affairs, is assumed entirely by the Capitalist; and while he realizes that he himself is helpless without the co-operation of Labor, he knows that Labor must bow to immediate necessity, and so yield to his dictation. The remedy for this state of affairs does not lie necessarily in Labor's control of industry; but it does demand that Labor be so independent that the worker can freely withhold his services from any enterprise of course that does not meet with his approval. Capital today dictates terms to Labor, not as Capital, but as Monopoly. Destroy the Monopoly, and Labor and Capital will stand upon an equal footing. For, if the natural opportunities for industry be thrown open alike to Labor and Capital, Labor will be freed from the necessity of accepting the preferred terms of Capital; and will be able to negotiate as an equal. The Capitalist being deprived of his present privilege, and compelled to deal with laborers who are not under the immediate necessity of working for him, will be obliged to share, not only the product of the joint efforts of Capital and Labor, but the honor and responsibility as well.



The essence of the working man's idea of working for himself, as set forth by Mr. Hapgood, does not lie in the elimination of the Capitalist as a manager, but as a beneficiary of special privilege. If Labor itself controlled the industry, it would have to employ a manager, and gather together tools and materials; and it may well be doubted if the wisest labor organization could do this as effi-