

the Recall in all its applications and not to judges alone. And what a delectable argument it is! A band of outlaws, in a wild mountain region, shoot to death the sheriff, the prosecutor and the judge for doing their duty; therefore it is dangerous to reserve to the law-abiding people of any community the right to recall from office, in a formal and peaceable manner, by their votes, any sheriff, prosecutor or judge for not doing his duty! The Recall is lucky in the kind of opposition it provokes.



### Coal Strikers and Coal Trustees.

England, Germany and the United States are threatened with a coal famine in the very centers of inexhaustible natural deposits of coal, and an impotent public opinion is appalled. Such expression as it gets may be resolved into curses at striking coal miners. But coal miners have a right to strike. Their labor is their own. Slavery aside, and coal miners are under no obligations, legal or moral, to keep at work. It is for them to say whether or not they will dig coal for the pay they are offered; and they have as much right to say it collectively as individually. Curse them if it relieves your mind, but rest under no delusion. If you are cold because they won't dig coal, it is no more their affair than it is yours if they are hungry because you won't furnish them with food.



You are cursing in the wrong direction when you curse the strikers. You bark up the wrong tree. Instead of cursing them, curse the owners. The owners of natural coal deposits are responsible if coal is short-mined. They are responsible if there is a coal famine where natural coal deposits are abundant, for they hold title to those natural deposits as trustees for the common good. On no other sound principle can monopoly of these free gifts of nature be justified or excused. When mining stops in consequence of labor strikes, the crucial question is not whether strikers are over-exacting; it is whether owners of natural coal deposits are true to their trust.



Of course it is conceivable that the demands upon the owners of natural coal deposits by coal miners might be so irrational and extravagant as to make stoppage unavoidable. Mine owners are under no more obligation to keep on operating at a loss than are miners to keep on working at all. But mine owners *are* under obligations to keep on operating or surrender their trust. They must not

be allowed both to monopolize the coal deposits and to refuse to operate them. Unless they surrender the deposits they owe a duty to come to terms with the coal miners, to the end that coal mining shall go on without interruption. If they won't do this, then the government owes the duty of rescinding their trusteeship, of taking over the mines, and of producing coal by direct governmental operation.



So revolutionary an alternative may not in form be necessary, but the principle must be recognized. If the trust obligations of coal deposit owners are not redeemed, their trust must be rescinded; and the trustees must understand that it will be rescinded if necessary. Short of government operation there are many available methods, one of which, neither revolutionary nor beyond immediate reach, might fully serve the purpose. A reasonable minimum wage for coal-mining, based upon the principle that the ownership of natural coal deposits is a public trust and coupled with a warning that if this wage is refused as a minimum the trust method will be superseded by government operation, would probably be enough to prevent coal famines where natural coal deposits are plentiful. Natural coal deposits are essentially common property; how they shall be utilized for the common good raises a question of method; this question has been answered so far by creating ownerships in trust; but if the trust method fails, another method must be adopted. Trustees must be ejected if they cannot keep up the coal supply; and some method, ranging from government regulation or special taxation to governmental operation, must take its place.



### Waterpower Trusteeships.

Not content with permitting incompetent and unfaithful trusteeships of all our natural coal deposits, public opinion has kept silent while similar trusteeships are in process of creation for all our water power. One vigilant official sounds a warning. This is the commissioner of corporations, Herbert Knox Smith.



There would of course be no great danger in this trusteeing of waterpower were it not for the fact that the trusteeships are allowed to take on the color of property rights. The same absurd anomaly once attached to public office. It was regarded as the private property of the incumbent; and even to this day that absurdity survives in a