

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, November 21, 1911.

Joseph Fels Fund Commission.

As announced by the Chicago Record-Herald on the 19th, in a descriptive article illustrated with portraits of Joseph Fels and the Joseph Fels Fund Commissioners, this Commission is to meet at the La Salle Hotel, Chicago, on the 24th, 25th and 26th, concurrently with an unofficial Singletax Conference called by the Commission for advisory purposes and open to all Singletaxers. [See current volume, page 1171.]

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A local general reception committee was organized on the 18th at the La Salle Hotel, of which George V. Wells is chairman and Stanley Bowmar is secretary, and which has divided into sub-committees on Attendance, Banquet, Conference, Publicity, and Contributions. It is reported that the Conference will assemble at the La Salle Hotel at 10 a. m. on the 24th, and upon being called to order by Daniel Kiefer, as Chairman of the Joseph Fels Fund Commission, will organize and arrange its own program, in which, however, upon request of the local reception committee and the Commission, there will probably be three special orders as follows:

1. Friday, November 24, 3 P. M.—Reception of report of Joseph Fels Fund Commission, and advisory action thereon.
2. Saturday, November 25, 2 P. M.—Discussion: Subject, "Tax Reform," led by William S. U'Ren of Oregon and John Z. White of Illinois.
3. Sunday, November 26, 8 P. M.—Discussion: Subject, "Poverty." Speakers, Joseph Fels, Frederic C. Howe and Bolton Hall.

The general public are invited to all meetings of the Conference, and particularly to the 2nd and 3d Special Orders. A dinner with three to five minute speeches is announced for Saturday, November 25, at the La Salle Hotel at 6 P. M., at which dress will be informal. The toastmaster is to be William Marion Reedy of St. Louis.

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An American Singletax City.

Upon canvass of the vote of the 7th in Everett, Washington, on the 13th, it appeared that the Singletax amendment to the city charter had carried by a majority of 98, the affirmative vote being 1,989 and the negative 1,891. The only other amendment that carried was one for public ownership of the local water system, the vote for which

was 3,536 to 850. On candidates the Republicans got 2,415 votes for R. B. Hassell (a Singletaxer), the Democrats 2,070, and the Socialists 2,079. Until the Singletax question has been passed upon by the Supreme Court of the State, the system may not come into practical use in Everett. The legal point involved is to the effect that while the Singletax cannot be adopted in Washington for State purposes, yet, as a recent Constitutional amendment allows cities to make their own charters, this carries with it the right to levy taxes for local purposes in any way a local charter may prescribe. The adopted amendment provides that improvements in the city shall be exempt to the extent of 25 per cent of their value in 1912 and 1913, to 50 per cent in 1915, to 75 per cent in 1916, and altogether thereafter. [See current volume, page 1168.]

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Pensions for Mothers.

A beginning under the Illinois law for pensioning mothers was made at Chicago on the 17th when four mothers received checks for the support of their fatherless children. The payments, made by County Agent Joseph Meyer upon the order of Judge Pinckney of the Juvenile Court, amounted to \$70, apportioned according to the extent and condition of the respective households and being in the aggregate for a month's care of seventeen children. Each of the four families had been sharing in monthly rations distributed at various depots of the County Agent. The pensions eliminate these gifts of food and clothing. A reporter for The Chicago Tribune wrote of one of the four cases that he had

found a happy celebration in progress in Mrs. Toppel's spick and span home on the second floor of a tenement at 3000 Archer avenue. The bare floors had been scrubbed to a snowy whiteness. In the kitchen entrance hung the family's washing that appeared clean and sweet. Mrs. Toppel was pleased to receive a visitor and discuss her good fortune. "We'd much rather have the money than the rations," she said. "If they were the same in value, I'd prefer the money. My children range in age from 2 to 17. Their needs are all so different. With this income to depend on I can stay at home, make their clothes, and keep them well provided for. I used to have to go out to work and then there was no one to mind them. I was nearly worried sick fearing that they were getting in bad company or getting in accidents. The children are all so good, but it takes a mother to watch them all the time. Whether they are little or big. I really was at the point of sending one or two to some home. Wouldn't that have been too bad? It would have broken up the family forever. Now they can keep on going to school and come home to their mother every night. Two of my girls are old enough to go to the Holden School. Then I have a little boy at St. Bridget's." Mrs. Toppel's husband has been dead two years. He had been a stockyards laborer.

The mothers' pension law is designed to prevent