

source? Is there a natural law of distribution? Why not seek for it then? Is there profiteering? If there is, how can it continue to command a rate of earnings higher than the average return? Does not the return to capital tend to a level if allowed to flow freely? Is there a profit in making cotton cloth greater than is to be secured, for example, in making silk or cretonne? Capital will scent the advantage and flow there. Is there a greater return to capital in the building of houses than in the construction of automobiles? All the Henry Fords, little and big, will discover the fact, and the return to the industry of house building will drop to normal again. And so on through the entire gamut of industry.

What causes profiteering, as distinct from profit-earning, is the powers to command scarcity by those who control the sources of supply, taxes, and the restrictions imposed by taxes. With their removal no profiteering, wholesale or retail, can continue beyond the time needed to establish the normal equilibrium.

DOES it not seem strange to our readers, at a time when the world has become more adventurous, essaying new paths into what was once the *terra incognita* of economic and social experiment, that Single Taxers should become more and more timid? We cannot arrest the hurrying, mad world that is hesitating at so little now, with faint and cautious whispers of tax reform, tax exemptions, and the clipping of percentages from income and tariff-tax provisions. Are we fearful of our doctrine? Surely the world seems fearful of little. Without "batting an eye," to speak in the vernacular, America destroys millions and millions of property invested in the brewing and distilling industry. Without so much as "by your leave," at one stroke it renders all this investment valueless. And we, who would destroy nothing, take nothing, even for the state, that can rightly be called property, ask nothing that is yet in the possession of the landlords, but merely that the income from land rent that accrues next year shall be paid to the State in lieu of all taxes—we, of all people, to indulge in low, cautious and hesitating whispers! How the gods must laugh!

OUR government is ready to apply drastic methods to the striking coal miners. The mines will not close down. President Wilson has declared it. The government, with its armies and its courts, will compel the opening of the mines, because, as one metropolitan newspaper expresses it, "110,000,000 Americans must have coal. No small percentage of the people must be permitted to control the output."

But this is what a small percentage of the people have been doing. Mines have been shut down and kept shut by a handful of coal mine owners in order to produce a scarcity of coal. Forcible measures of compulsion to force these mines to open were never thought of in their case. It is only when the workingmen attempt to close down the mines by withdrawing from work that the President issues a forceful presentation, press and public fume, and the power of courts and army is invoked.

Big Business and the Crisis.

NOT so many years ago, Big Business was accustomed to manipulate Congress, Government and even Judicature, to its own advantage. Such was then the accepted order of things. It was a blunder of big business.

Today, thanks to the growth of popular education and a democratic interest in government, Big Business finds the tables turned: Congress, Government and Judicature are daring to manipulate Big Business (railroads, telegraphs, mines, packing industry, etc). This may be a blunder of Democracy. We incline to think it is so.

In facing this new situation there does not seem to be any unanimity of opinion amongst the leaders of big business. In a previous issue we gave John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s broad policy of admitting to a share in profits the four contributing factors in industry: Capital, management, labor and the community. More recently we have the Warfield plan, proposed by the Association of holders of railroad securities, advocating a substantially similar adjustment. But against this we have to place the powerful and reasonable plea advanced by Swift & Co., who refuse to see in government direction of business anything but retrogression and decay. We reproduce entire one of the bulletins which Swift & Co. are spreading broadcast through the press of the country. Under the caption "Is it possible to Legislate Life and Brains?," it reads:

"Swift & Company is primarily an organization of men, not a collection of brick, mortar, and machinery.

Packing Plants, their equipment and usefulness are only outward symbols of the intelligence, life-long experience, and right purpose of the men who compose the organization and of those who direct it.

Will not Government direction of the packing industry, now contemplated by Congress, take over the empty husk of physical property and equipment and sacrifice the initiative, experience and devotion of these men, which is the life itself of the industry?

What legislation, what political adroitness could replace such life and brains, once driven out?"

With the above position we are in sympathy. It is a great pity, however, that the intelligence which organized and directs the vast and intricate manufacturing and distributing service known as Swift & Co., seems alive only to the palpable, obvious peril of collective ownership and remains blind to the less obvious but sufficient causes of the present crisis. It is natural and right to be alarmed over a case of typhoid in your household. But is it intelligent to ignore the infected drain that made the disease inevitable? Is it to the credit of the intelligence of big business that it has ignored the fact that our whole fiscal environment is and has been hostile to all productive enterprise, whether large or small? Is it nothing to the directive heads of business that, in every instance, the enormous fiscal pressure of organized government passes clear of the non-producer and falls heavily on the producer?

If such discrimination could be safely passed over, in spite of its unfairness, when taxes were light, can it be safely tolerated now when the weight of taxation has reached undreamed-of figures?

The rapidly rising land values all over the country, already far in excess of the hundred billion mark, express in purely monetary terms the capitalized privilege of fiscal discrimination above referred to and the ever accumulating mortgage on the industry and enterprise of the nation in favor of non-productive parasitic interests. Are the leaders of American industry going to tolerate this monstrous abuse of our fiscal machinery much longer?

Where they are not the product of ignorance in panic, the freak measures of price-fixing, wage-and-work regulation and the nationalization of industries are but varying devices for deferring or avoiding the one great issue.

The higher the grade of intelligence engaged in business, the greater is the responsibility for the policy observed toward the fiscal problem. The small merchant, in the limited field of local service, may be excused if he fails to perceive the interactions and reactions of the nation's fiscal system upon his little business. But the same excuse cannot be made for the directors of businesses which cover a national and international field and where fractional margins are measured up large in the final profit and loss account. Messrs. Swift & Co. would do but elementary justice to themselves and might render a real service to the business community and the nation, if they turned their great business experience and organizing genius to an investigation of the basic principles of our fiscal system, and to its practical effects upon industry, commercial exchange, the purchasing capacity of the people, the development of the country, the standards of living and the distribution of the population, with all of which are intimately connected their own business interests and the welfare of the nation.

The Young Girl

WE have received a number of so-called "Reconstruction Pamphlets," issued by the Catholic War Council, at Washington, D. C. One concerning the Young Girl is of special interest.

In this pamphlet the writers say: "Tens of thousands of young women left their homes and normal occupations to take the place of men who were called to the colors. . . . They have been accustomed to high wages throughout the war period, and now, after having become accustomed to a higher income and a higher standard of living, they must go back to a lower, and the process is not without danger."

These conditions, fraught with grave perils, the National Catholic War Council is endeavoring to meet by establishing Community Houses throughout the country. A girl coming to a strange city can find the location of the Catholic center at once, where all accommodations are provided.

It is impossible to say too much in praise of the spirit

that animates this work. Allowing for conditions incident to the war through which we have passed, however, the necessity for such splendid service on the part of the Catholic organization should teach a lesson to the observant and serious minded. And this is indicated on page 8 where we are told:

"Capital for some years has been inclined to seek other outlets for investment than housing. Particularly has this been the case since 1914 owing to increased cost of residential construction and to the more profitable returns offered to capital in other fields. For nearly five years the building forces of the country have been largely absorbed by the erection of factories. Residential building in the Eastern, Central, and Northern sections of the United States fell from \$432,337,000 in 1916 to \$252,000,000 in 1918. Meantime the population has increased. Moreover, there has been a great shifting of woman labor from rural to city industrial centers. Great numbers, too, have changed from domestic employment to the industrial and clerical fields. It will be many a month and probably many a year before such housing conditions will return to normal."

The pamphlet concludes: "What labor of love can be more womanly, more maternal, more Christian than giving hospitality and home interest to the strange and lonely girl? I was a stranger and ye took me in. What ye do to her ye do to Him."

And these words we may indeed apply to this unselfish service of the Catholic Church, instinct as it is with the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and others who have glorified the mission of that great organization which speaks in the name of Jesus.

But more is asked of her. It is not enough that in the name of Pity she shall continue her Christian work for the unfortunate and those who require her temporary help. She must also speak in the name of Justice. Her ministrations to the poor are to her everlasting glory, but her teachings to the faithful include also the doctrine that we are all children of a common Father. The natural bounties are for all; it is inconceivable that conditions against which she struggles are the result of laws ordained by a great beneficence. These conditions must spring from social maladjustments for which man alone is responsible.

Will not the Church learn that to grapple with this problem seriously is to remove the obstacles to that loving faith which leads her adherents to depart from her teachings and closes the door to others who would gladly embrace her faith? Canon Knox Little used to tell of an inscription he once saw over the lych gate of a beautiful church edifice just restored: "This is the Gate of Heaven," while underneath was the direction in smaller characters, "Go around to the other door." Must the earnest minded pilgrim be told indeed that he must go to the "other door?" Today thousands and thousands of men and women are sorely troubled because the Church, while not indifferent to conditions, seems nevertheless to have failed in the search for a solution to the great economic problem.

Sympathy and aid to the needy are not enough; mass and altar and loving ministration must lack something essential if there go not with it the recognition of the divine