

WOMAN WHO WOULD UPLIFT A WORLD

One reveals no secret, nor risks the banality of flattery, to say that May Fels is very beautiful as well as exceptionally intelligent. To say less, or leave it unsaid, in however brief a sketch of her, would be an affectation—the picture tells its own tale; her life work beside Joseph Fels and her continuance of it succeeding his passing, tell their part unmistakably.

Not ever woman who feels the impulse to larger activities than are compassed in the personal satisfactions has depth of mind to reach fundamental issues. Women are not inherently radical thinkers, the feminine graces of mind being other than those which lead to the preception of causes. But Mary Fels is a human individual first and a woman second. In this side is not unique, but rare—there are not many. As active and responsible head of the Joseph Fels Fund for the restoration of the land to the people she is easily the leader of the most revolutionary movement known to history.

The world does not understand this yet because it is not superficially obvious that land appropriation is the base of all slaveries and exploitations. All can see—and scorn and hate—the tinsel of the aristocracies, the swords and sceptres of dynasties, and the money bags of plutocracy, but only here and there is one who perceives that all kings and money lords, buccaneers of business and finance, food slavery, and war itself—all rest on the allodial system of land tenure. Not so many indeed, men or women, know even the meaning of "allodial" and much less the deep and terrible significance of allotting titles to the earth's unused acres.

But Mary Fels knows—and she is very able, very wealthy, and wholly true to the best she knows. She may have learned it from Joseph Fels her husband, or with him. There was complete sympathy and understanding between them—a rare and beautiful friendship not quickly to be severed by death, as one learns from those who tell that in her speech and thought today there is the seeming consciousness of his presence. He is there in London with her, or wherever, helping, guiding, consulting—only when circumstances force his absence upon her is she sensible of the separation. It is his work—theirs. Well she knows what it is. For years they worked together in the utmost harmony—in America, Europe, Australia, almost everywhere—true cosmopolitans, teaching a truth as wide as earth, as deep as human causes lie, as fraught with hope of freedom and justice as the human heart can reach.

Mary Fels knows—and the great basic truth drew her away from the petty charities and reforms that do but change the person of slave and freedom and can never lessen the ratio between them while land monopoly exists. Dynasties and plutocracies will hear from her. To war and hate and greed Mary Fels is probably the most dangerous woman in the world.

Which is ventured in no sense of hero worship, of which I hope to remain unattainable. One person is as another intrinsically to me, for I am quite certain that none could be greater than another had not the unmeritorious accident of birth more fortunately endowed one and not the other. This terrible inequality of endowment is abnormal, greed-born, and unnecessary. There should be a million Mary Fels in the world—that is to say, a million women beautiful, intelligent, profound, with sympathies as wide as human suffering and wealth and energy with which to combat the inhuman greeds that erstwhile would devastate the race and drive mankind back to its Neros and chattel slaveries. And to make that million possible, and other millions of men and women free to pursue whatever may be their mental bent, even—to paraphrase Joseph Fels' frank and manly humorism—even to make her own ill-gotten wealth impossible—Mary Fels gives all that she has. It is much, as much even as the widow's mite, and the treasurers of Ind are no more than that.

If genius homo ever awakens to the fact that land ownership means man ownership and that every man needs to own himself and must be permitted to own no one else; if he ever understands that the forcible withholding of idle acres is the cause of poverty, that slavery ensues from land monopoly and can only be cured by reducing land tenure to use and occupancy—then it will be "all off" with war and kings and money bags; then he will build a monument to—not to Henry George who built his own monument when he wrote Progress and Poverty—but to Joseph and Mary Fels to whom the aforesaid genius homo will in a very large degree owe his long delayed enlightenment.

Being also a woman as well as an individuality, Mrs. Fels is strongly sympathetic to the suffrage movement in the United States as elsewhere. Unintentionally it has her influence and her financial support, but never to the exclusion or diminishment of her lion's share of work for free land and free men. Does she over-estimate the importance of the suffrage question? Perhaps the vote in California this fall on the single tax enabling amendment, "Local Tax Exemption No. 7," will justify her faith in the voting wisdom of her sex.

Henry George used to say that it will take fewer ballots than bullets to free the land to the people. Certainly it is, true that the ballot box has immense value as an educative factor, when, as is rarely enough the case, a vital issue is presented there. And it is true that until at least a very powerful minority has been educated to unanimity on the basic question of land tenure, so that the allodial, or allotment, system can be abolished and the tenure of use and occupancy firmly established in its place, all effort toward freeing the land is but educative. In its last analysis human slavery is human ignorance. And no one can divorce himself from the human mass and live—whether he can indeed by dying is an open question. The ignorance of the mob binds all. No one is free where there are slaves, and least of all those who whip the slaves.

Popular thought or sentiment is usually a crude and banal thing, yet as the centuries flow by it becomes less crude and banal, and that it can finally be educated to the point where it can perceive and understand the basic cause of human slavery seems not so far a cry now. But far or near it is the hope that stirs to courage and strength an ever increasing army of insurrection to all forms of entrenched greed. And at the head of this army is a very small woman very comely, with "a very unusual, magnetic style of speech—rather timid in manner, but her voice clear and musical" (quoting Daniel has been written of "The Little Woman Who Would Uplift a World," as the North American of Philadelphia recently characterized her, and yet much has been left unsaid of one destined for so conspicuous a part in the great world struggle between Love and

PORTO RICO'S LABOR PROBLEM

In Porto Rico, as elsewhere, there is, as there has been for many years, unemployment and distress. But Porto Rico apparently has in its Free Federation of Workingmen, headed by Santiago Iglesias, a labor organization with some intelligent ideas of the cause of the trouble.

The federation addressed on September 21, a complaint to Governor Arthur Yager at San Juan, calling his attention to conditions as they exist and suggesting a remedy. It mentions that the Bureau of Labor of the islands has been imploring the landowners to give peasants the use of land. This policy the Federation shows to be futile. "Knowing as we do," says the Federation, "the conditions of indigence under which the peasants live, and what has been for long years and centuries the attitude of their lords toward them, we regard the advice of the Bureau as quite futile, and the blandishments addressed to the exploiters and enslavers of the rural population of Porto Rico as somewhat ironclad and improper."

But the Federation points out that the insular government owns considerable land, enough to furnish support to 10,000 workingmen and their families if devoted to farming, and it offers the reasonable suggestion that this land be devoted to that purpose. It does not stop with the public lands. It says "Besides the lands owned by the government there are in the country large tracts of uncultivated land. The government should take over such tracts by proper means at law and continue to establish farms." Further on appears the following statement of facts

"The workers on farms and the small landholders work and devote all their efforts to create the wealth of the country. They are the ones that give to land the value it has and yet the land and its value belong to or are monopolized by a few business men, bankers, usurers and individuals who live on their rents." In answer Governor Yager promised to give the matter careful study. It is to be hoped that he will, but will also bear in mind that while he is pondering over it distress is continuing, and he should not impose too much on the patience of the sufferers, while thinking over a problem the solution of which should have been known to him before he accepted such a position as he holds.

The request of the Federation it would seem should be granted. The government land might easily be leased to workers, and the privately owned lands, withheld from use, should be forced into use by taking for public purposes through taxation the value given to them by the wealth producers of the island.

ALTRUISM.

(Galveston News.)

Some men are so exacting that if they do one kind of deed They want to see it published, that the whole wide world may read. They must have proper credit for each little thing they do, So selfish, egotistic and so narrow is their view.

"Let not thy left hand know"—we're told, and many men today Do what come up that should be done, and cheerfully obey. Their hands go forth in helpfulness to others passing by—Why should one ask for credit? Let's ignore it, you and I, And just help folks along the road when help is worth the while, And never ask for thanks except to see some fellow smile.

Greedy. Here are two of her characteristic "notes" that contribute much to lessen this deficiency.

If a woman stood up in all the pride and the abasement of herself, as she is, what would she not be to a man and to all men and women. What could she not achieve in herself and for others. For oneself truly is always for others as others truly are always for one self. Every step in growth and progress is made along the line of self-knowledge. So one must investigate oneself and live by what one is and may be.

It is ill to deceive others but we may be constrained to that; mercy may call for it. It is worse to deceive oneself; one never need do that. The integrity of the mind is necessary to salvation. Illusions about oneself fill the mind with cobwebs and then it ceases to be a good working machine and we become, despite our best intentions, hurtful instead of helpful in life.

Mary Fels did not change her name when in the fall of 1881 she became the life-partner (as it happily chanced) of Joseph Fels. They were distant cousins. She was graduated at the high school of her native town, Keokuk, Iowa, and the year before her marriage she spent in study at the convent of Notre Dame, Indiana. In 1886 when the Russian Jews reached America destitute and helpless she began her public activities. They have continued uninterruptedly save by illness, and they have been always of a personal nature. Where she gave her money she gave herself, her presence, her thought, her care—her head, heart, hand, and purse went together. She always meant it. The life of an idle rich woman with its endless social swirl of "good times," "pleasant evenings," joy rides and headaches never appealed to her. The Felses were always in earnest in every endeavor. Luckily those endeavors were never trite or trivial, and early became fundamental—for over zeal in the narrow pursuits of small natures is a curse on the world of men. Joseph and Mary Fels always stood for human freedom in its widest, fullest sense, not only for the word but for the thing itself; it was the bent of their natures, always lightened by a fully developed sense of humor; they could stop to laugh at themselves—but not often at the errors of others.

Innumerable petty "fly-catching" reforms constantly nagged at the their heels for "funds." It was one of these doubtless that gave birth to this illuminating "note" of Mrs. Fels which was evidently born of many perplexities:

... How one needs to steer one's course in this life, to beware of either abandon on the hand or of rule of thumb on the other! The possibilities of life and one's own self-realization and consequent effectiveness are at stake between the two. Does not the second threaten these almost more than the first?

And later on she writes: "In all cases is effort made to show that only the reform that makes all other reforms possible and that ultimately will do away with all reform is worth while."

The "Little Woman Who Would Uplift a World" is rarely wise.

—LUKE NORTH.

COLORADO MINE OWNERS EXPLAIN

Explanations are still coming in to the press from Colorado's mine owners concerning their attitude toward the striking miners. These explanations have been coming at the rate of about two or three a week ever since the Ludlow affair, and the end is not yet in sight. Is there that much to explain? There would not be if the mine owners would only be frank. They claim to be acting in the interest of law and order, in the interest of their faithful employees, in the interest of the right to work, in the interest of everything worth defending, it seems, except their own pocket books. They never think of mentioning that.

Why not openly admit that they are ordinary human beings making the best for themselves out of existing conditions, with no more than the average interest for the welfare of others? That can be done in a few words. Everyone will believe it and no further explanation will be necessary. Their "faithful employees" have no particular interest in their welfare, and will probably admit it frankly, if sure that it will not endanger their jobs.

The mine owners need offer no apology. Conditions in the mining districts are undoubtedly horrible. But they would not be if the laws of Colorado did not make it advantageous to the mine owners to maintain such conditions. Colorado laws make it easy for coal land monopolists to keep their mines closed during strike. The laws make use of coal lands impossible without permission of the individuals now issuing explanations. Consequently, if miners won't work on the owners' terms, it is quite possible to shut down the mines and either wait for outside men to come in and agree to the owners' terms. It is the people of Colorado who allow these conditions to exist, who should do the explaining and apologizing.

Instead of quizzing the mine owners and suggesting truce plans, it would be more in order for the United States Government to urge the State of Colorado to abolish private monopoly of its natural resources, by compelling such monopolists as these mine owners to pay the rental value into the public treasury of the lands they hold. That will make holding of lands out of use pending a strike or pending issuing of a long string of explanations, an unprofitable procedure. It is the fault of the State of Colorado, not of the mine owners, that such a measure has not been adopted.

RESULTS OF UNTAXING INDUSTRY.

Western Canadian Cities have been wise enough to exempt improvements and personal property from local taxation. But they have not yet learned to make the tax on land values, by which all local revenue is raised, sufficiently heavy to check land speculation. Since land speculation is the principal cause of industrial depressions, failure to check it had the same inevitable result in Canada that it has had in the United States and elsewhere.

But slight and insufficient as is the application of the Single Tax principle in Canada, it is enough to show a marked difference in conditions in cities where it has been applied, from conditions in cities on this side of the border of a similar size which still tax labor products.

Such a comparison was presented by Dr. W. G. Eggleston of San Francisco, in a recent article in The Star of that city.

Comparing the cities of Victoria in British Columbia with Berkeley, California, a place of about the same size, Dr. Eggleston finds that building activities in the two cities in 1913 were as follows:

Victoria	\$4,037,992
Berkeley	2,236,700
Victoria's lead	\$1,801,292

Comparing New Westminister, British Columbia, with a little larger city, Bakersfield, California, Dr. Eggleston notes the record as follows:

New Westminister	\$958,975
Bakersfield	760,744
New Westminister's lead	\$198,231

Stockton, California, is twice the size of New Westminister, but the comparison shows:

New Westminister	\$958,975
Stockton	946,273
New Westminister's lead	\$12,702

Oakland, California, is two and a half times the size of Edmonton, Alberta, but building activities for 1913 compare as follows:

Oakland	9,106,191
Edmonton's lead	\$136,259

Fresno, California, is twice the size of Medicine Hat, but the records show:

Fresno	1,776,666
Medicine Hat's lead	\$2,080,906

Sacramento, California, is twice the size of Medicine Hat and New Westminister combined, but the building records tell the following tale:

Two Canadian cities	\$4,816,547
Sacramento	3,416,057
Canadian cities' lead	\$1,400,490

Berkeley, Fresno and Sacramento combined are bigger than Vancouver, but the building records would not give one that impression. They show:

Vancouver	\$10,423,197
California cities	7,429,423

Vancouver's lead
 \$ 2,993,774 |

Oakland, California, is bigger than Vancouver and Victoria combined. Here are the building figures:

Vancouver and Victoria	\$14,461,189
Oakland	9,106,191

Canadian cities' lead
 \$ 5,354,998 |

Finally, Vancouver's record since 1910, when the tax on improvement was finally abolished, compares as follows with the five California cities combined of Oakland, Fresno, Pasadena, Sacramento and Stockton:

Vancouver	\$60,376,000
Five California cities	55,286,878

Vancouver's lead
 \$ 5,089,122 |

The figures speak for themselves.