

he may confidently be expected to make of Ellis Island a model of humane and enlightened management.

S. D.



EVERY LITTLE EFFORT.

In Buckle's immortal Introduction to the History of Civilization he discusses with his marvelous clearness of style the importance of public sentiment in the progress of truth. He shows, what indeed any of us may see in any lifetime, that the projection of a law does not avail unless there be a certain preparation. In fact it may be that well-meant legislation may actually cause reaction, and so retard the progress of civilization or the abolition of some superstition.

We hug our superstitions, and will not have them too suddenly swept from us. If you bring your statutes and your police power, the grip on the idol is often tightened in opposition. If the hand of the law manages to loosen it for a moment, there is a new clutch. No, there must be preparations and warnings and arguments. The intellect must be reached and convinced. There must be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

This is the thought that makes the appeal to the humblest of us. If one has got rid of some superstition in which others may be still involved, or has seen some truth which others, for one reason or another, may not yet have seen, he can help to change the common view. No matter how insignificant one may think himself to be in purse, or power, or intellect, he has his influence. No matter how little he may think he can do for the truth which he sees, he has the tremendous obligation to make the effort to do what he can. He does not know what he can do. Every little effort has a meaning all its own, and no man can judge the effect of his effort in the subtle spread of human influences and opinions.

Let us take the case of the Singletax. If by some astounding turn of legislative wheels the complete system could be put into effect at the beginning of next week, I am not so sure but the ultimate triumph of the doctrine would be retarded. We have too many economic and financial superstitions and prejudices for such a law to prevail. In order to support such a law there must be more of us who have the profound intellectual conviction that justice and right reason bespeak equal rights for all in nature's gifts and opportunities. Before the law could permanently prevail, it is necessary that the knowledge of the truth must be far more widely spread. It is necessary

that many more of us should be convinced not only of the justice and advantage of equal rights, but of the far-reaching harm that has come from going against these rights, and of the effectiveness of Henry George's simple method for the execution of these rights.

It is in the spread of these convictions that each one, be he rich or poor, learned or unlearned, has the call and the chance to do his part, to use his influence, to profess his thought, to give what he can of time and means, to make sacrifice, to be patient and yet persistent. And what is more worth living for than to be true to one's conviction? Being true to a conviction means doing something for it, that is, doing something for its progress in the thoughts of men. And herein, as I have said, lies the fine appeal to all of us, the humblest as well as the most powerful. In the spread of a thought each has his influence, each can give his tithe, each can make his effort, and every dime, every effort has its effect.

J. H. DILLARD.



THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE.

Peace societies place entirely too much confidence in treaties as instruments of peace. Their defective character is seen in the fact that Russia destroyed the autonomy of Finland, Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, and now Germany has invaded Belgium in defiance of their solemn treaty obligations.

"To be always ready for war is the best way to avoid war," says Roosevelt. Stubborn facts now prove not only that this theory is false but that the direct contrary is the truth. Of all the great powers, Germany was best prepared, yet her very preparedness has arrayed against her such a number of enemies that her tremendous military strength may cause the destruction of the great German empire.

The greatest influence either for war or peace is self-interest. The self-interest of the builders of battleships and the manufacturers of all other military and naval equipment is always on the side of war. They exert a constant unseen influence stimulating public opinion in favor of costlier war equipment, and when international differences arise they try to use the press to play up and keep alive national prejudices and jealousies and thus attempt to force the nations into war.

The remedy is the government ownership and operation of all shipyards and factories necessary to the supply of all war equipment.

Of still greater importance as a deterrent to war is the abolition of the tariff. Free trade would

promote international trade, which binds the nations together with a far stronger bond than peace treaties.

Foreign trade arrays self-interest decisively on the side of peace. It creates a force for peace incomparably more effective than The Hague Court. Had Germany been a free trade nation the European war would have been morally impossible. Its foreign trade would have been so enormous that no German statesman would have exposed it to destruction by Great Britain's fleet.

All the preaching of the servants of the Prince of Peace coupled with arbitration treaties construed and enforced by courts of international arbitration will do less for the world's peace than the abolition of that great barrier between the nations called a protective tariff.

E. J. BATTEN.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

EVILS ABOLISHED BY THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

Los Angeles, Cal., July 27, 1914.

I was brought up from babyhood in Mexico and know it pretty well, especially the northwestern portion.

The great haciendas or plantations date from the time of Cortez. The Church absorbed many, and in 1857, the Constitution was adopted prohibiting non-commercial corporations from owning land. This silly provision was aimed at the church. But it also destroyed the right of cities to own land. It could as well have been restricted to the church. The law resulted in the subdivision of the common lands (the "Egidos") which every city had, into vacant lots, which soon became the property of speculators. This took place in Diaz' time, but the law was a piece of shortsightedness on the part of Juarez.

A good part of the lands of Mexico are held in the old Indian fashion. Our newspapers never tell of that system, but it is very widespread. In Sinaloa two-thirds of all the lands are so held, and that explains the prosperity and independence of that State. Here is the system: the country is divided into certain great tracts as large as haciendas—5,000 to 100,000 acres; these tracts are inherent and indivisible, just as if they were political units. Usually each occupies a separate valley, or in some other was is clearly defined by nature, the ridge-tops serving as boundaries. Every boy or girl born on the tract (which always has a name, such as "The Palms," "The Hill," "Two Rivers," "Hot Springs," etc.) has an equal and inherent right in it. This right entitles the party (women have equal rights with the men) to fence and cultivate a field, and to pasture cattle on the unfenced ground. All build their houses in a central village, and walk out to their fields. A large tract would have more than one village. When a young Indian marries, all his neighbors turn in and build his house; later he repays the service when others marry. None has more

than one wife. The women seem to have more influence than the men. Houses are made of wattle, thatched with palm, for the young Indian; but as they grow wealthier with age, the old people generally have erected commodious adobe houses with tile roofs, all whitewashed within and without. Some old man is elected by vote to the position of "Empowered Person," which he holds until recalled—usually for life. He is distinctly a mere representative, and his authority is in no way recognized by the legal government. His business is mainly to protect the locality against the encroachments of hacendadoes, who continually try to get possession of the land, so as to have the Indians for peons. These Indians, be it remarked, wear clothes, and live in fixed habitations. Among them the old men are always the richest. Labor is divided among the men and women in this way: the men must clear, fence, and cultivate the fields, build the houses, and present the crop ready to cook, to the wives. The wives make the dishes of clay, make and mend the clothes, cook, wash clothes, and keep the house in order. They bring water from streams on their heads, a short distance, and as all go together in the morning, the streamside is the local woman's club, the water-getting being a social function. These people, if asked for anything, cannot say "No," and grant the request, even if unreasonable. Their work is very hard, for there is not a particle of truth in the stories about the Tropics giving a man a living without labor. They cannot bear to drown a puppy or kitten, and hence always have more dogs than they can feed. They are, however, very kind to the dogs. As for the cats, the huge rats eat them, so there is always a scarcity. I found a village once so hidden in the mountains that the government did not know of it, and the usual government officials had not been appointed. The census had omitted it. In that place every house was two stories high, and worth \$3,000 to \$4,000 U. S. money, if built in this country. The principal support of the place was a silver mine which had been found by a six-year-old girl. The thing was being worked co-operatively, with no organization or discipline whatever, as they never heard of such a thing. The little girl, who was an orphan, was given a royalty out of the proceeds. She was a blonde child, too, clearly not an Indian, but left there by her father, who died as he traveled through. In that town they used Mexican money and other products just as everywhere else in Mexico. The Indians like to conceal their roads and their towns, but seldom succeed as in this case.

The Indians are mostly Catholics. But sometimes they fall back on some religion of their own. They have not many superstitions compared with other peoples; but the Halley comet of 1910 they hailed as predicting war, pestilence, and famine, all of which have come. They beat tin pans and rattled cow-bells all night when the comet was largest, trying to scare it away.

They eat their own crops—each man his own, and raise nothing to sell, except near a city. Every man does his own labor; several times a year he needs aid, and then a kind of "bee" is made of it, and he repays the borrowed labor in kind. They have little iron, and no knowledge of reading. In fact, they answer every definition of barbarians, for they have no stores or merchants, and only two occupations—