

been offered by Ex-Senator Joseph W. Bailey. Long before the date of the election, as far back as May 26, he wrote a letter to a citizen of San Antonio, J. F. Onion, in which he made his position clear. This letter was published in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram of June 8. Of course Bailey was bitterly opposed to the gubernatorial candidacy of James E. Ferguson. That is where most of the agents of the Texas plunderbund stood. In this letter Mr. Bailey said:-

The proposal to regulate, by law, the amount which one man may charge another for the use of his land, is so directly at war with our theory of government that, other things being equal, I would feel compelled to oppose my best friend, if a candidate on that platform.

Probably Bailey realized that an objection so vague would have little weight so further on he added:

But there are other consequences, more serious if possible than those I have just indicated, involved in Mr. Ferguson's program. In order to sustain the validity of such a law as he urges, our courts must decide that land is not the subject of absolute private ownership and control. Will they do that? I think not; but if they do the inexorable logic of their decision will be that the right of the user is superior to the right of the owner, and land must henceforth be classified by us with those things which their owners have devoted to a public use. With that step once taken, we shall soon proceed to the point at which the "progressive" statesmen of Great Britain have already arrived, and it will soon be proposed in this country, as it is now proposed in that country, that landlords shall be denied the right to select or reject tenants according to their own judgment.

Thus Mr. Bailey did Mr. Ferguson the honor of classifying him with Lloyd George, and put himself in the position of a Tory opponent. Still further on he said:

In some states this attack assumes the form of a single tax on land values, which can easily be made a means of confiscation, and in other states, like ours, the attack assumes the form of regulating rents. So far as the amount of rent is concerned, the law would not make the slightest difference in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, but many advocate such a policy because they know it will divest land of its character as purely private property, and make the way easy for a still bolder challenge of its ownership.



In spite of the unscientific and certainly ineffective nature of the measure advocated by Ferguson, Mr. Bailey has made clear its essential significance. Texas has expressed her determination that the right to use of the land of the state shall be assured to its people. To that extent Bailey is right. There will be blundering at

first, in devising means to apply the principle. But Texas will learn. There is in fact, already a strong organization of tenant farmers in the State, far enough advanced to advocate taxation of land values as the proper remedy. Texas may yet lead in the work of industrial emancipation.

S. D.



## THOUGHTS ON THE WAR.

One good thing has come of this "war scare," a lesson which should be heeded by the labor unions and the friends of labor legislation. The big coal operators are already worrying about what will happen if the thousands of Austro-Hungarians and South-the-Danube peoples generally, forming the great mass of cheap labor in the coal regions, should be called home to serve under their respective flags. These coal operators know perfectly well what will happen. They will have to pay higher wages to American citizens and they don't see any possibility, at the present moment, of taking it out of the ultimate consumer. Now, if the many serious, earnest people, in unions and otherwise, who are fighting for minimum wage and other labor legislation, would pause a moment and read this perfectly obvious lesson, they might see a light. There would be no need of a minimum wage in the coal region after an exodus for Europe of the men of fighting age of the nations involved. The job would seek the man, not the man the job, as now, and the miner could ask what he wanted without discussion or bloodshed. Suppose now, some rearrangement of the economic basis of society could be made by which true freedom of natural resources, instead of war, should suddenly (or gradually—either way would do) remove thousands of men from mine, mill, and workshop? Those who remain could ask their own price for their labor, could they not? And they would get it without strikes or cumbersome legislation. This thing is within the power of the voters of this country to accomplish. And the immense labor vote, once it saw the light, could bring it about easily. Learn the lesson, comrades of the pick and shovel, slaves of the machine—learn the one good lesson of the present crisis, and work towards a permanent bettering of the conditions under which you work and live.



A free press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty. Yet there *are* times when even the most convinced radical feels tempted to approve of a measure to muzzle the press. The case has just occurred. The French Government will prose-

cute the editor of the Paris Midi for printing alarmist war news. The technical count is that the article is a false report of a meeting of the Cabinet Council. The French Government is doing everything in its power to keep people cool at such a troublous time and there is no doubt that "scare heads" of war news which have no foundation in fact—and usually few have—are as dangerous as a lighted match in a powder barrel. This is not freedom of the press, but using the press deliberately to incite the people to bloodshed. We're putting men and women in jail for that sort of thing here just now, at least what we call "inciting to bloodshed." Why isn't it the same thing when a big newspaper does it? Such a paper appeals to thousands of readers, where the speaker of a street-corner gathering appeals to tens only. And the street-corner speaker is usually actuated by ideals that are high, however wrong the expression of them may be. But the "scare heads" in the papers have motives that are not high in any way. The cheapest and lowest motive is to sell as many sheets as possible, pandering to the vulgar taste for horrors and to the jingo spirit, the worst form of mob excitement. This must be kept alive because it is good in many ways—for the few, not the many. Hurrah-shouting and lust of gore obscure economic issues which are inconvenient—also makers of arms and armaments need the war spirit in their business. But the influence of these scare heads on the surging crowds in the street is bad in the extreme. Few read the account below, which in some of our dailies, were calmer and more hopeful. The great majority absorb the glaring head lines and go about reveling in the thought of a general massacre, or shaking their heads sadly over a "horrible inevitable," like a great many kind-hearted people who love to pore over the misfortunes of others. Thus, at such crises, does the one moment arise when a sincere lover of freedom would like to muzzle a portion of the press at least.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### THE PASSING REGIME IN MEXICO.

Los Angeles, Calif., July 15.

A friend of mine since my boyhood, Manuel Bonilla, who was Minister of Fomento in Madero's cabinet (this ministry has to do with mine patents, public lands, and other concessions except railroad concessions), is a Singletaxer, and the late Mr. Madero was one also, which is the real reason the landowners overthrew him. However, a couple of months ago, when Bonilla came here on business, he told me that the singletax was well enough to

keep the land in the hands of the peasants, after they once get it, but that no effort would be made to follow Madero's plan of using a land value tax to get the lands out of monopolistic control. Outright confiscation, I think he meant to convey, would be used to get the first possession of the lands.

There are many things not well understood in this Mexican revolution. First of all, our people do not understand the Mexican people. To begin with, there is no Mexican people. The Indians and mixed people form one people, and the people of Spanish descent form another people, exactly like our South, before the war. But these Indians are not, and never were anything like our Indians—they are brown people, but live in houses, and none of them pass below a certain degree of civilization. Cruelty is abhorrent to them. The Aztecs were never the real Mexicans; they were a small band of invaders from the Indians in this country, just as foreign in the beginning as the Spaniards were. Then there are the Spanish people, who own the land. They have been born in Mexico, have lived 400 years there and know no other country. They live and dress in European style. They can no more go to Spain than we can go back to England, or our Negroes go back to Africa. Thousands of these hacendados are good people, like our own Southern people. The system is feudal. The masters are good when they choose to be, and bad when they prefer to be. I lived for years on a hacienda of 65,000 acres, where the master family, when they wanted to pay an afternoon call, had to have the carriage hitched, and drive fifteen miles to the big house of the next hacienda. Yet so primitive was the life, for all their acres, that when the young ladies wanted a bath, a peon was ordered to the roof, with a barrel of water, which he emptied in the form of a shower into the bathroom, which was roofed with sacks, to keep out the view, but not the water. This family had an old peon foreman, who had become superannuated. "Felipe used to be a very good foreman," the master told me, "but now he is too old. But I can't bear to retire him, even on full pay, because it would hurt his feelings so. I have to let him be the ostensible foreman, but the peons have all been told to really obey Juan, while pretending to obey Felipe. He never notices; he's so old; and of course they wouldn't any of them hurt his feelings by letting him know. It only costs me two foremen's wages, and I'd have to keep him alive anyway, even if he did not work." All this, I found, was strictly true. Twice when the rurales came and tried to kidnap the peons to take to Yucatan on behalf of a powerful Cientifico, we had to stand them off with guns, the master arming the peons for the purpose. The first time, the soldiers came by surprise in the night and took away all the men they could catch. That time, the master paid the soldiers a bribe and got his hands back, and I remember yet how the wailing of the women was changed to rejoicing when he brought them. There arises a close personal relation between master and man. For all its good points, the system is evil.

They have in that country two kinds of railway and street cars, and in everything imaginable there is a jim-crow line. Even in the public parks in