

for such peasant holdings as were gained in France by the Revolution, in Germany by the reforms of Stein and Hardenberg, in Ireland by recent land bills and in the Philippine Islands in consequence of laws passed since the American occupation. Merely including the contending elements of Mexico in a conference which aims to settle the present war, affords the best ground of hope for settling this paramount economic question. If the United States makes war on Mexico, the burden of it will fall most heavily on the disinherited peasants. We shall slaughter many, starve many and crush all by unendurable taxation. If no obstacle to a conference is interposed it may be possible to avoid foreign war, to end civil war and to effect a reform of land tenure which will make the Mexican peasantry for the first time really free and place them on a plane of comfort such as they have never enjoyed since the Spanish conquest. This will lay the foundation for a stable and constitutional government. Such a result would be an achievement wholly worthy of an administration which has desired only the welfare of our sister republic and has constantly striven for the maintenance of peace on any honorable and just terms.



A reform of land tenure will not bring peace if it does no more than substitute peasant proprietorship as it exists in France, for the present hacienda system. Such a change would increase the number of landholders, but it would still leave the greater number of Mexican peons landless, and all experience shows that the lot of the landless, when exploited by small landlords, is far worse than when exploited by a big landlord. The reform to be effective in establishing permanent peace must recognize the inalienable right of all to the use of the land.

S. D.



A New Kind of Real Estate Advertisement.

It is not very many years since well-meaning citizens were predicting that the first attempt to apply the Singletax would be met by the farmers with guns in their hands. But so far is this from being true that many rural communities have applied a modified form of the Singletax; and it has proven itself so popular among farmers that it is now being advertised as a means of attracting settlers. The Oakdale and the Modesto Irrigation districts of California are sending out printed matter boasting of the fact that the irrigation tax falls upon the land only, and urging people who are seeking homes to settle there because they do not "tax houses, barns, cattle, personal property or improvements or crops on the land for irrigation purposes." Nor is this statement issued by some rascally malcontent who, too lazy to acquire property of his own, seeks by this means to enrich himself by taking from those who are more industrious

and frugal; but on the contrary it is signed by the president and the trustees of the city of Oakdale, by the president and the directors of the Oakdale Irrigation District, and by the officers of the various public bodies, including bankers and editors. No hint is given of danger from irate land owners. Rather do they boast of the contentment of those already there, and urge their system of taxation as a reason why others should come.



This illustrates anew the peculiar merit that lies in the practicability of the Singletax. Not only is it absolutely just, but it is ideally workable. If the government were to pass a law confiscating all the land now in private hands there doubtless would be armed resistance. But if personal property be exempted from taxes, who is going to take up arms to resist? If homes be exempted, or factories, or any other improvements, at what point will the land owner meet the tax collector with a gun? Clearly at no point. Each step will commend itself and give assurance of the wisdom of the next step, up to the disappearance of the last vestige of Privilege. It should not be inferred from this that all citizens will be equally pleased with the introduction of the Singletax. Speculators who now thrive on the industry of others will be disappointed; but few of them will be willing to confess their cupidity by protracted opposition. Rather will they be disposed to rejoice in the prosperity of all.

S. C.



A Better Way.

To end the southern Colorado trouble Congressman Bryan of Washington has introduced a bill for condemnation and purchase by the Federal Government of a controlling interest in the mines. That is a clumsy and unscientific way of mending the matter, although it may be the only one within the power of Congress to apply. But the people of Colorado can settle the question more cheaply and effectively by applying the Singletax. Had Colorado adopted the entering wedge to that measure in 1902, when the question was before the voters, there would by this time have been no monopoly of natural resources within the State. But it is never too late to mend. Now is a good time for the voters to correct the error they made when they allowed the Bucklin proposal of 1902 to be counted out.

S. D.



Senator Penrose and the Singletax.

No outright declaration was needed to let it be