

out does the rift between the two wings of the party widen. It matters not whether the avowed cause of the split be the repeal of the Panama tolls, or some other measure, the split is bound to come. The Bourbons will never consent to serve under a real democrat longer than is necessary to secure the offices at his disposal. Nor is the fact that one of the Bourbon leaders is afflicted with an incurable grouch conducive to political harmony.



The outspoken opposition of Speaker Clark and Floor Leader Underwood, and the enlistment of the Bourbons under their banner at this early day, will give real democrats the more time in which to prepare for the coming struggle. The two House leaders are united only in the sense that they are opposed to the President's democracy. Both aspire to the Presidency, and each thinks old line conservatism a winning issue. But they are reading the signs of the times while standing on their heads. We are not going that way. The issue before the country is not personal, popular as the President is; it is not political, much as the men who displaced the "rascals" would like to have it appear; it is economic. And the moment the Democratic party forgets how to spell its article of faith with a small "d" it will be time for the turning out of another set of rascals. Democracy is the word, live, progressive democracy with the little "d." And if Speaker Clark, or Floor Leader Underwood, or any other Bourbon does not like to march to that music, he should lose no time in joining some other procession. The Democratic party out of power included every known variety of politician, and professed all the vagaries known to man; but the Democratic party in power must choose between democracy and not-democracy.

s. c.



### A Message Worthy of Attention.

Herbert Quick's "Message to the Women of America" disposes in a few brief paragraphs of all the jingo speeches, and exposes the true inwardness of the demand for intervention in Mexico. Says Mr. Quick:

All I can say to the women of America is this: Your sons are in danger! Your lovers are in peril! There is a damnable conspiracy to tear them from you and kill them, or return them to you crippled, diseased in body, diseased in soul! Owners of great newspapers are also the owners of great estates in Mexico, which will be tripled in value the day the Stars and Stripes wave over the land! Senators stand up in the halls of Congress and demand inter-

vention in Mexico because their own interests will be made more valuable. They talk of honor, but they think of dollars.

That is all that need be said in answer to the ravings of the Hearst papers and the speeches of Penrose, Fall and other congressional betrayers of the interests of the people they pretend to represent. Mr. Quick's suggestion as to the way to meet the agitation for intervention applies with equal force to all jingo agitation.

Lay down the law that the women of America are willing to "endure" disorder in Mexico, not for one year, but forever, rather than send a single American boy in khaki to die in Mexico.

s. d.



### Washington's Land Question.

Congressman Albert Johnson of Washington on March 14 in the House of Representatives came dangerously near to proclaiming a great truth. He read with approval the letter of a farmer constituent in Jefferson County who had taken up 149 acres on the Queets river. The farmer complains that after putting \$3,000 worth of improvements on his land, his taxes were raised so high that he says, "I saw no hope, gave up in despair, and moved out." Further on he says, "They tell me the tax is on the timber and improvements, and as there is a strict law against burning timber or improvements, I naturally expect the increase to continue." He has offered his place for sale but "can not find anyone fool enough to buy" and so offers as an additional inducement "to remove all improvements so as to make the tax . . . as light as possible." He finally expresses willingness to take only "enough to pay me and my family's way across the line into Canada where a farmer that tries to improve his place is protected." The letter is published in full on page 5511 of the Congressional Record. Mr. Johnson declared that he has "a hundred or more letters in a similar vein." There is nothing surprising about that. What the State of Washington clearly needs is revision of its tax system so that those who put improvements on land will not be taxed for so doing, and those who withhold lands will be penalized.



Mr. Johnson got very close to this truth—and then sidestepped it. He tried to place the blame on the government's conservation policy; there being, as he states, 730,000 acres of untaxed forest lands in Jefferson County, while the area of assessed lands is but 280,000 acres. But such an explanation does not explain. If the untaxed for-

est land were government land, then, as was explained by Philip P. Wells on page 201 of the current volume of *The Public*, "their ripe timber is for sale to the highest bidder; their pasturage is for rent to the neighboring ranchmen." But a large part of it is owned by lumber companies. So it does not seem that the federal government is any more to blame for such a situation in the State of Washington than it is in any other State. The State of Washington can, if it will, adopt the methods of western Canada, "where a farmer that tries to improve his place is protected." Congressman Johnson can, if he will, be helpful in making such a change. But the place to do it is at the State, not the National Capitol.

S. D.



### Prosperous Exploiters of Iowa Labor.

Addressing the House on March 19 Congressman Vollmer of Iowa said: "A pretty good index to the prosperity of the farmer is the price of his land. . . . In my county I have seen it go up from \$50 to \$250 per acre, and still going up. . . . It is a resistless tendency, due to increase of population in the world at large at geometric ratio, while the increase of cultivated area is only at arithmetical ratio." Further on he spoke of the number of retired farmers "who have grown wealthy by reason of the increase in the value of lands." What is there to boast about in all this? Mr. Vollmer plainly shows that what he calls "the prosperity of the farmer" is in fact the prosperity of the land speculator. It is no wonder that the last census shows a decline in Iowa's agricultural population. Mr. Vollmer's speech makes it appear that these farmers would have prospered just as much had they never seen a plow or never worked at all. Their prosperity is not due to labor but to "increase of population in the world at large at geometric ratio while the increase in cultivated area is at arithmetical ratio." In other words, it is due to land monopoly. As long as there is good land unused there is no excuse for increase in cultivated area failing to keep pace with increase of population. That it does not, shows economic injustice somewhere. The retired farmers of whom Mr. Vollmer speaks are prosperous because able to appropriate the labor of cultivators of the farms they have left. That Iowa tenants are not prosperous Mr. Vollmer admits and correctly attributes to "the unearned increment and its tendency in higher rents to absorb the profits of farming as active business." This he further says: "Is not a matter of astonishment to students of the Singletax." Perhaps

Mr. Vollmer could give a more accurate and logical presentation of conditions in Iowa were he not under the mistaken impression that his duty as a Democratic partisan requires him to make a showing of general prosperity where it does not exist.

S. D.



### A Progressive Business Body.

The Chamber of Commerce of Oakdale, California, numbers among local attractions the singletax system prevailing in the irrigation district for irrigation revenue. It proudly announces that "Oakdale has abandoned the primitive plan of taxing both land and improvements and has assessed the land alone for the cost of irrigation." It further shows how the adoption of this plan has encouraged improvement while the old plan had the opposite effect. "Many of the settlers in the older districts," it says, "lived in barns because the taxes on improvements prohibited them from living in comfortable houses with modern conveniences."



Does Oakdale realize that it has not only a splendid climate, fertile soil and just taxation as attractions, but something more which the circular could not well mention? It has a rare asset in a Chamber of Commerce that is so progressive as to push a reform which privileged interests oppose. In most cities the opposition of the Chamber of Commerce to progressive measures is looked upon as a matter of course. In Oakdale the business men are apparently as progressively inclined as the rest of their fellow citizens. It is a fortunate community.

S. D.



### More Work for Pastoriza.

Texas is not only a state of vast area, but of varied examples of wisdom and folly. Houston, under the guidance of the inimitable Pastoriza, serves as an example of one; Austin, lacking the council of the unique tax commissioner, serves as the other. Houston, as is now pretty well known, has undertaken to encourage enterprise by removing taxes from industry, and placing them on privilege. Austin not only does not do this, but it has recently engaged in an undertaking that displays in all its crudeness the folly of modern government.



Austin is building, at an expense of a million and a half of dollars, a dam for the empounding