

is not denounced by one of the rightful heirs, the land is continued to be held in common by all heirs. Not all heirs happened to have equal number of children; so, after the second generation, all their heirs had not the same right, many of them began to sell to strangers a part or all of their inheritance, and this unequal distribution of the rights amongst them is made more difficult to determine at the present time, when we consider that there are no precise genealogical trees, no records of the families and their offspring and no documents whatever to throw light on that, but only the word of the eldest among the living ones as to who has a right and how much of it or if none at all.

According to Mexican law, anyone having a right, however small, in a community, is entitled to fence in and use as much land as he desires from the unallotted, and that he holds in the name of the community but for his own exclusive benefit. This has brought into the communities a certain class of land grafters who, buying a small right, fence in a large tract and make exclusive use of it in various ways. The rest of the members cannot protest.

The communities cannot be divided under existing laws, for if a number of the members in one, for instance, decides to divide, only one of them might appeal to Federal courts alleging hurt to his private interests and thus all proceedings are indefinitely stopped. Nevertheless most of the members of the communities are earnestly hoping they will be divided some time, so they can get their rightful share of the inheritance. Accordingly every one of them makes only the absolutely necessary improvements on the land he has fenced in for fear some time or another land and improvements may fall to the lot of another.

Very few of these communities are defined as to their membership. Fewer still have a regulation of their own and an organization. Perhaps out of five hundred communities in Nuevo Leon, not half a dozen are duly organized. They were not instituted by law, but have grown out of the peculiar conditions of the region. Still every one of the right-holders defends his right by all means at his command when it is attacked in some way by others. This fills the courts of the land with the disputes of the communities and their shareholders. Lawyers have grown fat from them. Not only are these fights between one shareholder and his neighbor in the same community, but there are difficulties between one community and another, in many cases limits being undefined and land unsurveyed.

To survey the land and justly divide it among the shareholders would require the herculean labor of a just and wise government and a long retinue of the appropriate employes. It would not take less than ten or fifteen years, and to enforce its decisions it must have the strength of the whole nation back of it.

The actual local Government and its Agrarian Committee are grappling now with this situation and trying to solve the problem. They believe it better to apply revolutionary methods to it and do away with this vexing question once for ever in a quick and forcible way.

Can any Single Taxer suggest an effective and practical remedy for it?

E. S. WESTRUP.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

A HINT TO THE FARMERS

San Francisco, September 24.

Farmers in the Modesto and Oakdale irrigation districts were able, under the Home Rule provision of the irrigation law, to exempt their improvements and personal property from irrigation taxes. That exemption lowers the taxes of the farmers, and raises the taxes of the speculators. That's the reason the farmers in those irrigation districts are in favor of Home Rule in taxation.

A few weeks ago an irrigation district was formed in the southern part of Shasta County, and one of the main arguments used in favor of forming the district was that the farmers could exempt their improvements and personal property from taxation for irrigation purposes.

The Amendment for Home Rule in Taxation will give all farmers in California the same power that the irrigation law gives to farmers in irrigation district. It will give the farmers of any county the right to vote taxes off their improvements and personal property—if they want to do that. How does it help a farmer to pay more taxes on fifty acres of an improved farm than a speculator pays on fifty acres of unimproved land?

CALIFORNIA LEAGUE FOR HOME RULE IN TAXATION.



MONEY IN RECENT ELECTIONS

Washington, D. C., Sept. 24.

The Lorimer scandal shocked the nation. A Senate investigation showed that Senator Stephenson spent \$108,000 to secure his nomination at a primary election and we were again shocked. The nation is due for some more shocks. Penrose has been nominated in Pennsylvania and Roger Sullivan in Illinois.

Senator Norris has introduced a resolution demanding an immediate investigation by the Senate of the amounts spent in each of these primary elections. It is being strenuously opposed.

Vast sums but in lesser amounts are being spent all over the nation to defeat the people's candidates and to elect reactionaries. The Special Interests are determined to control the next Congress. They care nothing about a candidate's party politics so long as he is secretly or openly for them.

"But," you remind me, "we have a Federal law which prohibits corporations from contributing to campaign funds; another law which requires publicity of campaign contributions and expenditures and which prohibits a candidate for the House of Representatives from spending more than \$5,000 or a candidate for the United States Senate from spending more than \$10,000 to secure his election."

Of course we have. BUT—these laws are jokes. A "corporation" cannot contribute, but a "person" who may be connected with the corporation may spend any amount he chooses. Publicity is required of national party campaign committees operating in "two or more states," but none from state or local committees. A candidate must report the

amount he spends, which must be within the limit named, but certain "exceptions" are provided which permit him to spend in effective campaigning a hundred times that amount or more, with no publicity.

Moreover, and note this point, no publicity is required of outside organizations working in behalf of a candidate. I might file a report truthfully that I had spent \$2,500 to secure my election to the U. S. Senate, but the people would not know that a Manufacturers' Association had spent \$150,000 of their own money for me. The present laws are cotton twine designed to bind giants.

The lower House recently passed the Rucker bill, which professed to amend and codify the present laws, but it retained all the big jokers of the old laws. The National Popular Government League made a strenuous protest, and succeeded in knocking out the "two states" joker. Senator Owen went before the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections, and in the form of a substitution bill offered amendments to the Rucker bill, which were proposed by our league. All these changes were adopted by the committee and then some, so that the Rucker-Owen bill now pending in the Senate is a tremendous step in advance. This bill should be immediately enacted by the Senate and concurred in by the House. If it is not, there will be no adequate publicity upon the real sources of campaign contributions and expenditures in this coming election at which one-third of the Senators and all of the House members are to be elected.

The reactionaries of all parties are determined that this bill shall not pass at this time, and it is likely that they will succeed in killing it unless they hear from the people. The enactment of this law will check the flow of money in favor of candidates of the special interests, and this is the reason why the readers of this paper who desire the next Congress to be a people's Congress should immediately write both to their Senators and Representatives in Congress to work for and vote for this bill in effective form. They should also demand the passage of the Norris resolution for an investigation of Pennsylvania and Illinois.

JUDSON KING,

Executive Secretary The National Popular Government League.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, September 29, 1914.

The European War.

The campaign in the West has been confined to the activities in the north of France, and in Belgium, in neither of which have material changes been officially announced. In the East Russia, Servia and Montenegro continue to make head against Austria. And in the Far East Japan announces gains in its Kioa-Chau campaign. Offi-

cial censorship is rigidly enforced in all countries, which keeps from the public all details as to the number of men engaged, the exact position of the armies, and the extent of the casualties. The week appears, on the whole, to have been favorable to the Allies. [See current volume, page 922.]



The Franco-German Campaign.

The position of the two armies in the north of France shows little change after another seven days of almost continuous fighting. The line still extends from Metz to the junction of the Aisne and Oise rivers, near Compeigne, thence north to Perronne. The eastern end of the line has moved a little north of Nancy; and although German troops are still to the southeast of Verdun, that fortified place still remains in the hands of the Allies. Rheims has withstood the attacks of the German center. And the German right has been forced back a short distance. The advance of the Allies along the German right in an effort to turn it back upon the center has resulted in extending the line of both armies farther toward the Belgian border. Both armies are well entrenched, and the action now partakes more of the nature of a field siege than of a battle. Fighting is almost continuous at some point along the line. Hand to hand conflicts are reported, when bayonet charges are made with deadly effect. Night attacks have been conducted by picked men on an extensive scale. Both sides claim gains, but military experts hold that the fortunes of war have slightly favored the Allies. Reinforcements are being added to both armies, and while the numbers are not given by the official reports, the gain in strength is supposed to be in favor of the Allies. The casualties are said to be very heavy, but are not given officially.



The Campaign in Eastern Europe.

No decisive action has taken place between the German and Russian armies, since the latter was driven back from Koenigsburg in Eastern Prussia. The German advance into Russian Poland has ceased, and troops are moving to strengthen the Austrian lines from Cracow southward. The Russian forces in Galicia have continued to push back the Austrian line until the tip of the right wing is now south of the Carpathian Mountains, the left is at Cracow, and the center has been forced to yield two of the forts protecting Przemysl. The control of the Galician oil fields is likely to handicap the Austrians and Germans by depriving them of their chief supply of gasoline. Russian reinforcements continue to pour in, and a decisive battle is expected at an early date. Austrian arms on the south have been equally unfortunate in their struggle with the Servians and the Montenegrins. The Servians