

Mexico or any other country. That is tax based on land value.

A tax to be equitable must be based on a common asset. As land values are the only common asset, they are the only true basis of taxation. Furthermore the expenditure of tax moneys is reflected in the value of the land and nowhere else. For example, no amount of grading, policing or other public service can enhance the value of a building or any other thing made by man. They depreciate in value from the time they are created. But, on the contrary, the land will appreciate in value from the performance of public service. Therefore, land value is the only just basis of taxation. Land increases in value with the population. Thus every member of a population, be he rich or poor, is paying his quota with a tax collected on the basis of land value. With these three points of support the principle of a land-value tax is securely based.

An arbitrary distribution of land would not be practical or desirable. All to be desired is that "occupancy and use" shall become the solid basis of land tenure, and a tax based on land value would naturally gravitate to that end, without fuss or feathers. Tolstoi said the land question is the bottom of all questions. And Emerson seems to have put his finger on the exact spot of unrest, when he said "I cannot traverse the plane, the mountain peak or the valley below, but someone will touch me on the shoulder and say: 'Sir, this is mine.'"

Every title to a piece of land is nothing more or less than a franchise from the community to the individual to enjoy that piece of land. A tax levied on this franchise would prevent land being held out of use. Land held out of use tends to dam up labor and force down wages. Therefore, a land-value tax would liberate the land to the full capacity of the people. It would foster an occupancy-and-use land tenure, and afford a judicious revenue at a minimum cost of collection; without custom houses, detectives or other inquisitorial expensive friction-making paraphernalia.

Such is Mexico's great opportunity. The time is most propitious, on the verge of a new birth, to inaugurate a flexible, judicious social adjustment, not only for herself, but to hold on high an example to a class-cursed world seething in a stifling atmosphere of social unrest.

W. E. JACKSON.



THE COLLAPSE OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION IN EUROPE.

Cornish, Oklahoma, Sept. 25, 1914.

I have read with interest what many preachers and others have to say about the collapse of Christian civilization in Europe. Therefore, I desire to express my views relative to the same.

There is nothing wrong with humanity; it is the same today as it was in the beginning. It only needs to be trained and directed in the proper channels to induce individuals and nations to do right.

We are all just as we are educated, and it is impossible for us to be otherwise.

The nations of the earth have been taught from time immemorial that war and human slavery were right, and justifiable in the eyes of both God and

man. That a man could be a soldier and a Christian. That he could be shot in pieces on the battlefield and go right off to glory. . . . That God sanctions both war and human slavery. This is a travesty upon justice, a crime upon nature and an imposition and lie upon God.

It is the greed and criminality on the part of the ruling class that precipitates all wars.

War and human slavery are the most potent factors that operate in the interest of the ruling class.

If the people of our country were taught that it is nothing short of murder and assassination to kill our fellow-beings in war; and that human slavery in any form means nothing but degradation for the race, we would soon be on the high way of Christian civilization.

The nations of the earth will never be civilized as long as they sanction and engage in war. Because war and human slavery, and Christianity and civilization will not harmonize.

R. F. RICHARDSON.

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, November 3, 1914.

Election Reports.

Defeat of reactionary Democratic candidates throughout the country is indicated by early but incomplete returns. The party's majority in Congress is thus reduced almost to zero. Defeated reactionaries apparently include Hogan of Ohio, Karel of Wisconsin, and Sullivan of Illinois, the Republican nominees winning. Progressive candidates, including Robins, generally third in race. Whitman pledged favorably to lower rent referendum defeats Glynn in New York, who evaded issue. Kent and Nolan are elected in California, Keating in Colorado, Crosser and Gordon in Ohio, and probably Buchanan in Chicago. Woman suffrage apparently defeated in Ohio and Missouri and in doubt in Nevada, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Prohibition defeated in Ohio and California and Arizona. In doubt in Colorado. No returns on pending taxation, initiative and referendum or other amendments.



Mexico and United States.

Confusing and conflicting reports come from the convention at Aguas Calientes. General Carranza's resignation as first chief was qualified by the condition that General Villa also should retire. The convention is reported to have adopted on the 30th a decree deposing both Carranza and Villa from official positions and providing for the choice of a provisional president. The convention is to serve as a sort of congress, which, with the provi-

sional president, will institute certain social and political reforms before holding elections. [See current volume, page 1044.]



Eulalio Guterrez was chosen provisional president by the Aguas Calientes convention on the 2d, for a term of twenty days. The briefness of the term is due to the fact that the Zapata delegates were not empowered to vote for a provisional president, and the twenty days are provided in order that the delegates may obtain credentials and power from General Zapata. General Guterrez is known in the Constitutionalist army as the "tiger of Conception del oro." He was made provisional governor of San Luis Potosi by General Carranza, with whom he is said to be most intimately associated.



One of the surprises of the convention is the respectability assumed by the Zapata faction. General Zapata, who began as a rebel against President Diaz, and continued his opposition to Madero, Huerta, and Carranza as each failed to keep faith with the people, has been referred to as a bandit. His army is said to be composed mainly of Indians, and the reports of his operations that reached the outside world have come through his enemies. He is now represented in the Aguas Calientes convention, and his delegates and those of Villa are said to control the convention. General Carranza's estrangement from Zapata and Villa has led to the substitution of what is known as the Ayala plan for the Guadalupe plan. The Ayala plan, which is urged by Zapata and accepted by Villa, calls for the confiscation of one-third of the land held by large holders, to be distributed to the poor farmers, who do not own the soil they till. Legal recourse is provided for the land owner, as well as the penalty for a refusal to abide by the decision of the court, which penalty is confiscation of the remaining two-thirds.



The European War.

The thirteenth week of the war leaves the struggle barren of decisive results. In Eastern Europe the Germans have been compelled to retreat in Poland, and the Austrians have made no further headway in Galicia. In the West the Allies have made small gains in Belgium and Northern France. Along the rest of the line the gains and losses have balanced each other. Dispatches announced the bombardment of Odessa and two other Russian Black Sea ports by Turkish warships on the 29th. Russia recognized a state of war with Turkey by a manifesto issued on the 3d. [See current volume, page 1043.]



The Campaign in Western Europe.

Little change has taken place in the long battle

line extending from the Franco-German border at Switzerland to the North Sea at Ostend. What is spoken of as the severest fighting of the war is reported from the northern end of the line. From La Bassee, south of the Belgian border, to Nieuport, near the sea, much activity has been shown; but it is between Dixmude and Roulers where the Germans have made desperate attempts to break through the line of the Allies, that the severest fighting and the heaviest losses have occurred. The great sacrifices made by the Germans in crossing the Yser seem to have been in vain, for they have been compelled to withdraw to the north bank again. The week's fighting favors the Allies in that the Germans have made no headway in their efforts to push their right wing down the coast to Calais, and so shorten and strengthen their line. It is reported that they are bringing up their heavy siege guns, which by over-reaching the artillery of the Allies have heretofore broken down opposition. The use of these guns, however, will be rendered doubly difficult because the Belgians have flooded all the low lands, which has made the movement of troops difficult. The Germans made a local gain ten miles east of Soissons, where it is announced they drove the Allies to the south of the River Aisne, but were unable to follow up the success. Farther to the east, in Lorraine and the Vosges mountains, the French claim gains. Experts think they see the effect of the advantage held by the Allies in having more men to draw from in sending re-inforcements to the front. Opposed to this is the German advantage of heavier artillery. No decisive battle is looked for in the west in the immediate future.



The Campaign in Eastern Europe.

Reports of the campaign in Poland still favor the Russians. The advance of the Germans on Warsaw completely failed. The army in East Prussia, which was to have supported the army advancing from the west, did not effect a junction. It is thought another advance in Poland will be attempted, with support from the army in western Galicia. Little change is announced in the struggle between the Russians and Austrians. Since all this eastern territory is absolutely excluded from the eye of the outside world, and the reports from Petrograd, Berlin, and Vienna are so conflicting, it is difficult to determine the real situation. Reports of the operations between Serbia and Austria are vague and confusing. Vienna announces a new invasion of Serbia by an army that crossed the rivers Save and Drina on the first. Reports of cholera in Austria persist, but the extent of the disease is not known. Some friction has occurred between Greece and Italy over the control of the Bay of Avlona on the coast of Albania; but it is supposed to have been adjusted.