

became converted into exceptions from land taxes; and that the Government were convinced that the surtax should stand. Owners would have a chance of dodging that by cultivating their lands; but nothing should be enacted that would enable a man to evade his just contribution to the national revenue in proportion to the value of the area he held. Deputy Monte insisted that the surtax was unjust, that it would involve endless litigation. Deputy Gonzalez put forward a number of considerations with the object of showing the wisdom of the Chamber's rejecting the surtax. To these Deputy Gaona replied advocating that the clause be retained as presented. The clause on being put to the vote was approved as follows: "Properties valued at over \$100,000 shall pay a surtax of 5% for the first year, 25% the second year, 35% the third year and 40% the fourth year, should it be proved that 20% of the value of the land has not been invested in development.

Article 5 was approved without discussion. Article 6 was altered to read that the values assigned shall stand for 5 years (five). It was specially approved that in making any valuation, the value of the land only shall be taken into account and that taxes levied on improvements shall be considered illegal.

The discussion of this law by the Congress is the Question of the Moment. Wherever one goes one hears nothing but the Land Tax being discussed, and of course opinions are greatly divided. Argentina is deeply interested in this matter, as many proprietors of land in Paraguay live in Buenos Aires, many being Argentines by birth.

C. N. MACINTOSH.

---

## 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, February 17, 1914.

### Mexico and the United States.

President Huerta's offer to pay the expenses of a number of press correspondents who might be sent to Mexico to write uncensored reports of the situation has been accepted by a number of important newspapers in different countries. The President promises free access to all parts of the country, and freedom to write what they wish. [See current volume, page 155.]

It is announced that the government will issue 500,000,000 pesos fiat money in the form of fractional currency. Its circulation is to be made compulsory. It is denied that the government will cease coining half pesos. The tax to be levied on all investments will be one-eighth of one per cent. Charge O'Shaughnessy made a second protest to General Huerta against the severe attacks of the Mexican press on President Wilson. General Huerta promised the offense would not be repeated.

General Villa has found time to talk politics

and to announce some of the things that will be done by the Constitutionals when they come into power. "After the revolution," he says, "this is our pledge to the Mexican people: That every Mexican shall have a piece of land, so that he may live; that all the world shall work; that there shall be a school for every child in the republic. The schools are nearest to my heart." There is to be no standing army, for that makes the opportunity of the dictator—and Mexico wants no more dictators. Schools, factories, and great agricultural enterprises will be established. "We must give the soldiers work," he says. "I do not believe in pensioning them. The mind of the idle soldier runs to war." But after setting forth policies that would enlighten more advanced countries than Mexico, General Villa declares he would not accept the presidency if offered to him, as he is a soldier and not a statesman.

Military operations amounted to little, beyond the investment of Tampico by the Constitutionals. But the Federals are still able to hold the city itself. General Villa announces an early attack on Torreón, which is now completely invested. He expects to capture the place without difficulty and thinks Monterey will offer little resistance.

### The Labor War.

Congressional investigation of the Michigan copper mine strike continues. Witnesses for the strikers have told stories of bad treatment. On February 10 Sidney Thomas told how he had once been compelled during the winter to go to work in wet clothes on the surface to cut up timber for use below. On February 11 Daniel Waati said he had worked twenty-six years for the Calumet & Hecla and that working conditions had become worse during the past five years. Another witness said he had made as much in one month as \$100 and as little in another as \$16 for sixteen days' work, but his monthly average for sixteen months was \$45 or \$50. Another witness had made as high as \$160 for one month, and again as low as \$12, and said further that the average was low. On February 12 two witnesses told of having worked for months under the contract system and had been informed at the end of that time that they owed the company money after balancing their account for supplies, benefits, rents and other things. On February 13 Mr. Allan F. Rees, counsel for the mining companies, asked a witness if he was a Socialist. Objection to the question was raised and sustained, although Mr. Rees explained that he wished to show the Western Federation of Miners to be a Socialist organization, and that this had an important bearing on the refusal of the companies to recognize it. Mr. Hilton, attorney for the strikers,