

and published on June 10, by Amos Pinchot. A copy of the letter was also given to Colonel Roosevelt before sailing for Spain. Therein Mr. Pinchot declares that Mr. Perkins "favors the protection of private monopoly in American industry and since the party's formation has been taking active steps to commit the party to that policy." Another charge brought is that he "is actively opposed to the recognition of Labor's right to organize and deal with Capital through labor unions, and has frequently gone on record to that effect." Mr. Pinchot says further that—

Mr. Perkins has conducted an extensive pro-trust propaganda calculated to convince the party and the public that the trusts are useful and sacred institutions; that those who attack them are bent upon the destruction of all healthy industry on a large scale, and, finally, that the Progressive party fully agrees with him in these views. The result is that we have been placed in a false and fatal position. Our sincerity has been attacked. Our energy is largely expended in defending ourselves.



Some inside history of the Progressive National convention of 1912 is given in the letter. Mr. Perkins had opposed endorsement or approval of the Sherman law. In spite of this the Committee on Resolutions adopted a plank endorsing the law and recommending that it be strengthened. Although the convention adopted this plank yet, Mr. Pinchot declares, it was omitted from copies of the platform furnished the press and copies printed and issued during the campaign from Progressive headquarters. This expurgation, he does not charge Mr. Perkins with having had made. But he says that Perkins' fight against an anti-trust plank created a misunderstanding leading to the unintentional omission of the plank. After citing some public expressions of Mr. Perkins in favor of perpetuating monopoly, Mr. Pinchot suggests action as follows:

I think I am warranted in saying to you, gentlemen of the national committee, that, in view of these facts and in view of the approaching elections, the rank and file and a large majority of the leaders of the party feel that Mr. Perkins' resignation as chairman of the executive committee is necessary. I am sure that upon reflection you will agree, as will Mr. Perkins himself, that the success of the party demands such action immediately.



Progressive Connecticut Democrats to Organize.

A state conference of fundamental democrats of Connecticut has been called to meet at Lake Compounce on June 27. The call for the meeting is addressed to "you who believe in capacity of Connecticut people to govern themselves." and is as follows:

Connecticut Democracy is facing a crisis. With party lines everywhere giving way, we have unmis-

takable assurance that thousands of our fellow citizens, hitherto Democrats, will no longer submit to reactionary leadership. Determination to support only forward-looking men for State, Congressional and local office is deep and widespread. As fundamental democrats, we believe that our party can be made the most effective agency for social and political progress. To this end it needs only to stand square and honest upon the principles professed for a century. Democratic success in other States and in the nation absolutely proves this. The undersigned have, therefore, accepted the duty of summoning the progressive Democrats of central Connecticut to meet in conference at the time and place above mentioned. In the interest of genuine Democracy, with its assurance of victory in the Fall, your presence is desired.

The secretary of the committee issuing the call is Raoul W. D'Arche, 95 Barker St., Hartford. Other members are James F. Connery, Middletown; Willard C. Fisher, Middletown; Christopher M. Gallup, West Hartford; George W. Hull, Bristol; George M. Wallace, New Haven.



Mexico and the United States.

Another week's negotiations at Niagara Falls have brought a better understanding of the Mexican situation, but no definite settlement. President Wilson's insistence on a hearing for General Carranza has been the main difficulty. The tentative agreement with General Huerta's delegates involves the setting up of a provisional government composed of five commissioners. Of these the United States has held that three must be of Constitutionalist sympathies. An acceptable man for President has not yet been found. The Mexican delegates claim General Huerta's right of approval of the man chosen, and President Wilson insists that nothing shall involve a recognition by this country of General Huerta's administration. [See current volume, page 561.]



The Mediators, in deference to the Washington government, again invited General Carranza to participate in the conference, but insisted upon their original stipulation that an armistice should first be declared. General Carranza on the 12th named as the three commissioners to represent the Constitutionlists, Fernando Iglesias Calderon, leader of the liberal party, now at Saltillo, Luis Cabrera, and Jose Vasconcelos, confidential agents of the Constitutionlists in Washington. General Carranza's message was answered by the Mediators with a statement that there is no word in regard to the cessation of hostilities during the conference, and that they will give no official recognition to the Constitutionalist delegates until an armistice has been declared.



The steamship Antilla with a consignment of

arms and ammunition from New York for the Constitutionalists, discharged its cargo at Tampico on the 11th. General Natera attacked the Federals at Zacatecas, but was repulsed with heavy losses. General Villa will go to Zacatecas as soon as possible with his army. As he will have 32,000 men in his command, he will endeavor to take the city and cut off the retreat of the Federal army. Mazatlan, on the west coast, though hard pressed from a long siege and repeated assaults and bombardments, continues to hold out against the Constitutionalists. The military governor of the city, in response to a large delegation of starving women, has issued an order permitting non-combatants to leave the city.



Ring Challenges Opponents.

The following challenge to debate the merits of the Houston plan of taxation has been issued by H. F. Ring of Houston under date of June 11:

Under the Houston, Texas, plan of taxation which has been in force here for three years land is assessed at 70 per cent of its value and building improvements and merchants' stocks at 25 per cent. Nothing else except the franchise value of public service corporations appears on the assessment rolls. Personal property of every other description, including so-called "credits," is ignored. Nine-tenths or more of the taxpayers favor the plan. A few large owners of vacant lots have organized the so-called Harris County Taxpayers' Association and are threatening to apply to the courts.

I hereby challenge the Harris County Taxpayers' Association, individually and collectively, to a newspaper debate, articles to be limited to 500 words each. I lay down and stand ready to prove the following propositions regarding the Houston plan of taxation, most of which are self evident.

It lessens taxes on a majority of homes in Houston, for as to the majority, the improvement values exceed the land values. It will also ultimately lessen office rent and the rent of stores and dwellings, if it is not already doing it.

In the long run, the exemption in whole or in part of building improvements from taxation will neither benefit nor injure the owners of office buildings, apartment houses and dwellings for rent. The saving to them in taxes will be offset by the reduction in rents caused by increased competition among landlords resulting from an increased number of buildings to rent, for the Houston plan greatly stimulates the construction of such buildings. Ultimately it benefits renters only, and not landlords.

It makes Houston famous all over the country. It advertises the city favorably as a place where capital may be used in the employment of labor in factories and stores without being fined by onerous and annoying taxation. It acts as a perpetual bonus, attractive to all enterprises which tend to make a city great and prosperous.

While the Singletax idea carried to its logical conclusion would, of course, ultimately impair land values, its partial and moderate application as now applied by Pastoriza will greatly enhance land values in Houston, because it accelerates the growth of the

city. It will be time enough for owners of unimproved and but partially improved land to appeal to the courts when Pastoriza attempts to so raise the tax on land values as really to depress the price of land.

To tax property according to the constitution and laws of Texas is utterly impossible. A tax on personal property catches the poor man all right. He has so little he can only hide a small percentage of it. Not so, however, as to the rich man. The most drastic laws ever framed have failed to put 5 per cent of a millionaire's personalty on the assessment rolls. The man unwilling to pay a far greater tax in proportion to his wealth than his neighbor is compelled in self-defense to commit perjury every time he lists for taxation his personal property and credits and swears to his assessment rolls. A serious and determined effort to tax credits and personalty with anything like uniform impartiality, including bank deposits and money loaned by banks and individuals as the constitution and laws require, would greatly increase interest rates, result in the withdrawal of bank deposits, bring ruin and destruction upon any community attempting it, and cause three-fourths of its taxpayers to be sent to the penitentiary for false swearing.

To kick up a row in the courts in connection with the matter as it now stands would be suicidal. To cast doubt upon the validity of the Houston tax rolls by an effort of that kind would lead to chaos and confusion highly detrimental to the growth of the city. It would kill the goose which under the present plan will continue to lay golden eggs for Houston real estate owners if let alone.

Taxes on things produced by human labor are passed on to the user or consumer and increase living expenses; taxes levied on land values, which are the gifts of nature, cannot be shifted, and tend to reduce the cost of living.

[See current volume, page 563.]



Tax Reform News.

The Cleveland Singletax Club has addressed a communication to the Municipal Finance Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, which is considering the constitutional amendments proposed by the Ohio Tax League and by the State Board of Commerce. The letter, signed by Henry P. Boynton, president, speaks concerning the propositions as follows:

The Ohio Tax League Proposal: This proposal, while apparently not drawn or initiated with due care, has the merit of giving the legislature broad powers to exempt from taxation such classes of property as it sees fit. This would break down the uniform rule which is the chief obstacle to tax progress in Ohio.

The Ohio State Board of Commerce Proposal: Two emphatic criticisms are registered against this proposal. 1. The proposed ordinary limit of the tax rate, one per cent, is so low that it precludes the untaxing of industry and will probably necessitate an even greater burden upon intangible personalty than is now levied. Quite aside from the question of the moral right to tax industry, it seems