

nized leader is Dr. Thomas E. Will, a Harvard graduate, formerly president of a Kansas college, and long identified with various radical movements for the common good. He has made a special study of the District situation, and preaches the gospel of political freedom at regular street meetings. In this open-air campaign he is ably seconded by James Hugh Keeley, and other speakers are occasionally heard. This organization has drafted a bill, recently introduced in Congress by Hon. Warren Worth Bailey, which authorizes the people of the District to frame their own municipal charter. Among others who have been active workers in the District suffrage cause for many years back are E. W. Oyster, now one of the District assessors, and E. J. Dakin, both of them veteran Singletaxers.

The Citizens' Committee of Forty was organized last November. Its avowed purposes are to watch the Congressional situation and to unite the business and professional elements, labor organizations and government employes in support of such measures as will secure popular government. Its Chairman is Dr. A. J. McKelway, Southern Secretary of the National Child Labor Organization and a Democrat of the fundamental type. Its Vice-chairman is Dr. Harvey W. Wiley of pure-food fame, and its Secretary, Louis Ottenberg, a hustling young lawyer. This committee has framed a bill, introduced in the House by Hon. D. O'Leary, which provides for the creation of a commission to investigate the relations between the Federal and District governments, to hold public hearings, and to frame a modern and democratic charter for the District. A bill along these general lines has recently been adopted by the House District Committee and is expected to pass the House during the present session. Much depends upon the personnel of the proposed commission. If it is fairly democratic, Congress will soon have the opportunity to enact a new Organic Law which will include not only municipal self-government but a permanent and equitable settlement of the disturbing "half-and-half" question. The friends of the commission idea believe that Congress is ready to act as soon as the right kind of a plan can be worked out. If the commission plan fails, powerful financial interests will, no doubt, continue to oppose any change in the present form of government.

There are many indications of a strong local sentiment in favor of genuine popular government, including equal suffrage for men and women, and the initiative, referendum and recall. No matter how efficient our District government or how democratic in spirit and purpose our present District Commissioners may be, the people of the District want to have a voice in their own government.

WM. DUNCAN MACKENZIE.



REVOLUTIONS IN OLD MEXICO.

Monterey, Mexico, July 1.

It should be clear to the minds of all well-informed persons that the present revolution in Mexico is a social war, a struggle that has at its bottom the land question. In fact, the three great revolutions really deserving the name, in the history of this country, have been on the land question.

The insurrection for independence from Span-

ish rule in 1810 was led by a priest named Miguel Hidalgo. He saw the great injustices done the Indians by the taskmasters in the haciendas of the rich. He was himself a half Indian, his mother being of the native race. He eagerly read French revolutionary books and was caught by the desire to ameliorate the condition of the Indians. His war cry was, "Lands for the Indians!" He knew nothing could be done unless the Spanish yoke was thrown off. In that work he was bitterly opposed, persecuted and finally sent to his death by the beneficiaries of vested rights, especially church and civil authorities. A decade after his death independence from Spanish dominion was achieved, for the idea had been widely diffused among the people and the rich class knew they must favor it if they were to save their riches.

In 1860 Benito Juarez, a full-blood Indian, and a group of patriots around him, led a movement in behalf of the poor oppressed classes, and against vested church privileges, and the effort to establish a Napoleonic protectorate on American soil. The Roman Catholic Church had in her possession two-thirds of the lands of Mexico, including the best and most valuable territory. This was the power that counted in politics, and Juarez saw that it was useless to oppose it unless it was shorn of its strength forever. Accordingly all church property was confiscated and in various ways distributed among the people. This was the real cause of the peace we enjoyed for thirty years, and not the menacing sword nor the crafty policy of Porfirio Diaz.

This sly old statesman had many opportunities to make his country a great one, especially had he taken pains to subdivide landed property and to destroy the land privileges of the rich class. He was surrounded, however, by a group of unscrupulous men, who boldly claimed to be making up a third party in politics, by the name of Cientificos. In fact they were working to profit by the old man's friendship and to get rich quick by abusing the law against the poor Indian small land owner. They even went so far as to use the military force of the nation to expel these land-owners from their own homes, where they had had immemorial possession.

This is the best explanation which can be given of the origin of such large estates as can be seen at present in Chihuahua, Morelos and all over the country. It is a noteworthy fact that the regions where war has waged the hottest ever since 1910, and where the revolutionary spirit has not been quenched by any means, are precisely those parts of the country where the largest estates are.

All the principal leaders such as Villa, Zapata, Gonzalez, Villarreal and others, including Carranza himself, are for the solution of the land problem, and are earnestly at work for it. In all of the States where the revolution has prevailed, Agrarian committees have been appointed by the proper authorities and they are working hard. We have heard those leaders themselves utter words to this effect: "If the revolution does not bring a satisfactory solution of the land question, then we may rightfully say, 'Accursed be the revolution.'" This shows that the end of the large land owner in old Mexico is near.

E. S. WESTRUP,

Member of Monterey Agrarian Committee.