

Regeneracion.

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What About the Single Taxers?

"I will guarantee to take from this fall, or any fall in the world, five hundred men who have been the worst criminals and lawbreakers who ever got into jail, and I will go down to our lowest streets and take five hundred of the most abandoned prostitutes and go out somewhere where there is plenty of land, and I will give them a chance to make a living, and they will be as good people as the average in the community." The quotation is from Clarence S. Darrow's well known address on "Crime and Criminals," and it is played up in the last number of the "California Social Democrat," the official Socialist Party organ of Los Angeles.

That is good work; excellent work. It is good propaganda, most excellent propaganda. It goes straight to the heart of things and "carries" with the power that truth, blunt, naked, unadorned—and truth alone, possesses. Writing such as that gave Henry George a reputation wide as the world itself some thirty years ago; rousing every nation to a sense of the cancer that is eating away the vitals of our civilization—the denial of free and equal access to the natural opportunities of life, the exclusion of the masses from nature's banquet table, the permitting this earth to be the gambling counter of finance. Having demonstrated which, with intense earnestness and eloquence, Henry George forthwith executed what always has seemed to me one of the most extraordinary somersaults on record. For, by some freakish twist of thought, this great man apparently persuaded himself that it was right and proper for his followers to participate in that very infamy of real estate speculation he had condemned as the root cause of all misery and crime. It was as if William Lloyd Garrison had attempted to build up his anti-slavery movement by trafficking in negroes.

Doubtless there may be honest differences of opinion as to the wisdom of Henry George's repeated declarations that the way to promote a great cause is to drag it into politics. To me such advice appears a stupidity, arising from failure to understand that politics is simply the game of catching votes; that the political arena is the natural breeding ground of debasing compromises; that the haze of politics, with its infatuation for spell-binding oratory, has always the fatal effect of obscuring truth; that the ceaseless war of factions reduces the consideration of the most vital problems to the crawling question, "Will it pay?" But Henry George thought otherwise; and the prophet, the man with a profound message to humanity gnawing at his heart, himself turned politician. Naturally he could not play the game; naturally he was no match for the petty intriguing talents that used his popularity and teachings as stepping stones to office.

When, from what is deemed "policy," a great treason is committed; when the denouncer of slavery himself turns slave-driver, everything goes wrong. An army of parasitical offenses starts feeding on the carcass. Men of feeble principle but powerful ambitions understand instantly that the guard has been relaxed, and that they can force their way without difficulty into a party that tolerates denial of its own fundamental tenets. Their influence quickly makes itself felt; the twaddling popularity hunter forges to the front; Jesuitical counsels take the place of simply truthful statements; new names are coined by those who fear a show of radicalism will scare the public; instead of heading the vessel straight for port long tacks are taken, that her real destination may not be surmised.

All this befell the Single Tax movement more than a generation ago.

Time and events are required for the testing of all great movements, which must be judged by large considerations and not in detail. But the last twenty-five years have been years of exceptionally great activity, and opportunities for testing the real vitality of the Single Tax movement have been many. Put to the test it has broken down, not once but invariably. Never has it shown any individuality, character or backbone of its own; always it has sought shelter under the wing of some superior force. Never has it shown any serious sense of its responsibility as the guardian of a grandly revolutionary doctrine; one so intrinsically powerful that all it needs is freedom to shout its warning from the housetops. On the contrary, it has strained itself unconsciously to trick out this native giant in court attire, that it may "permeate" the palaces. Those who know the movement will bear me out in the statement that "permeation" is the word most constantly upon its tongue.

I am not exaggerating in the least. Any straight-thinking man will admit at once that condemnation of our land system sits ill on the lips of those who themselves are working it for all it is worth. Yet, almost invariably you will find real estate dealers active and prominent in Single Tax councils. When I lived in Portland, Ore., the president and secretary of the Single Tax club were partners in what happily proved a fallacious attempt to work up a real estate boom; and they had not even necessity as an excuse, for one of them was a millionaire. When I moved to Los Angeles I found a corporation lawyer, subsequently appointed police commissioner, the local oracle of the movement. When death removed him his place was taken by another lawyer, who remained to his own dying day tangled up in real estate speculations. Is it possible that such men, always with a real estate deal of their own trembling in the balance, can attack the iniquity of land monopoly as their master attacked it? It is not possible, and all the eloquence of the lawyers and preachers who swarm in the Single Tax movement could not make an honest, clear-sighted man believe it possible.

Henry George taught most speedily that, as long as private property in land endured, nothing could be done to alleviate the condition of the masses, since all improvements enure to the landlord's benefit. He wrote "Social Problems" to show that free municipal light and water, car services, better schools and all the reforms so dear to the heart of Milwaukee Socialism would result only in higher land values and increase of rents. Yet the man whom Single Taxers most delighted to honor, after their master's death, was Tom Johnson, who made Herculean efforts to secure 3-cent car fares for Cleveland. If Henry George's teachings are true Tom Johnson actually devoted himself to boosting the price of real estate.

Henry George taught that "charity" prolonged the life of our unjust system, and diverted attention from the prime cause of poverty—land monopoly. Some two years ago I tried to induce noted sociologists to unite in an exposure of the "humbug" of "charity" and obtained many signatures to a manifesto I had prepared. I expected a favorable reply from the editors of "The Public" and "The Mirror," the two most prominent Single Tax writers in the country, but both declined, the former going on written record as favoring "charity." Henry George taught that strikes and bitter discontent must continue as long as land monopoly endures; that they are society's proper punishment for disregarding the basic principles of justice. His most distinguished English disciple, Lloyd George, has earned the adulation of the wealthy by smothering the recent English bread upheaval, and Marlon Reedy, noted Single Taxer, slobbers all over him, comparing his action to that taken by Roosevelt when he "settled" the coal miners' strike. Marlon Reedy knows well that the "settlement" settled nothing, merely postponing the day of reckoning.

Henry George wrote, as the one conclusion of his long enquiry: "This, then, is the remedy for the unjust and unequal distribution of wealth apparent in modern civilization, and for all the evils which flow from it: WE MUST MAKE LAND COMMON PROPERTY." To make the point emphatic he gave the last six words a line all to themselves and set them in italics. Yet the Mexican Liberal Party is doing today in Mexico, at enormous risks and with a self-sacrifice that is almost superhuman, the very thing Henry George declared we all MUST do. Yet from his humblest camp follower to its bouquett and feasted and flattery-beset leaders the Single Tax movement is as silent as the grave.

It is a silence that in itself one of the most portentous of lies; a betrayal as treacherous as any recorded in revolutionary history. In letters that have come into my hands some of these "leaders" assure their followers that they are "watching." If Madero—five-million-acre Madero!—declares for the Single Tax they will lend him their support. How shall I designate such a policy? It has not been artificially emulated, it is naturally heremphroditic.

For all we know the Mexican Revolution may be crushed by force of arms, although at present it is showing astonishing powers of resistance. Its leaders may be sent once more to jail, as they have been so often in the past. But, however that may be, this much is certain—within six months the Mexican Revolution has done far more to bring about the realization of the land for the people than have thirty years of the mealy-mouthed tactics of the Single Taxers; just as the recent bread riots in England accomplished more in a few short hours than did all the parliamentary harangues of a century past. Great human wrongs that have endured for ages do not yield to kid-glove treatment. The liberties that will make man, at last, master of himself, and banish for ever want and fear of want, are not to be purchased by a few cheap displays of oratorical fireworks.

More than thirty years ago the reading of "Progress and Poverty" created a genuine revolution in my own individual life just as it did, according to their dying speeches, in the lives of certain of the Chicago Anarchists. For, it taught me, as it taught them, that until primary causes have been removed all tinkering with the problem of poverty is worse than useless. If I criticize the Single Taxers, therefore, it is not because I am not true to it, but because I remain true to it; just as I always have remained entirely loyal to Socialism's fundamental truth that economic dependence is the root of all slavery. What I condemn alike in the Socialists and Single Taxers is their abandonment of the really powerful propaganda for the sake of the cheapest kind of political victories—victories which cheat the world with the delusion that progress is being made. What I admire in the Mexican Revolutionists is that they refuse to participate in that fraudulent pretense and declare boldly, both in words and by the acts which speak far more eloquently than can any words, that without the economic independence, that possession of the land alone can give nothing can be done.

Today I watched Los Angeles' Labor Day parade, and tomorrow I shall read fulsome eulogies of Labor's display of strength. It is all a sham; a hollow, nauseating humbug. Labor in America has no triumphs to celebrate. Labor in America is sinking deeper every year into the slough of absolute economic dependence on the monopolists, who have gathered the nation's life into their talons. But from American Labor no genuine protest comes, because long ago it exchanged its birthright of virile rebellion for the drugged mess of potage served up to it by scheming politicians. Apparently, therefore, it is to the purer breeds and the simpler peoples that we must look for the overthrow of conditions we ourselves denounce unceasingly but to which we lack the courage to apply the ax. For the moment Mexico is in the lead.

WM. C. OWEN.

Released on Bonds

Enrique Flores Magon and Anselmo L. Figueroa, members of the Mexican Liberal Party Junta, were released from jail Wednesday, Sept. 6, on bonds furnished by Mrs. Laurens and R. F. Forrester. The case against the members of the Junta comes up for hearing Sept. 30.

The visit of Lord Cowdray (Sir Westman Pearson) to Madero a few days ago has been seized upon by Madero for giving his views concerning foreign capital and trusts in Mexico. He says:

"Lord Cowdray, representative of the house of Pearson, called upon me in order to inform himself as to what my intentions were with regard to the important undertaking which he has in this republic. I stated to him that all capitalists, foreign as well as national, will have every guaranty under my government; that I would always, with pleasure, see foreign capital invested in Mexico.

"With regard to the concessions which he holds from the Mexican government, I assured him that if he duly complied with the respective contracts he has nothing to fear from my government, as my government will respect contracts and concessions which have been formulated with the late government and which have been effected in due form and in compliance with all legal requirements."—Los Angeles Tribune.

War between Proletariat and Privilege Unabated

Land Question Continues to Hold Center of Stage

Perhaps no more absurd charge was ever penned than that contained in the last number of the recently-born "Regeneracion," of Mexico City, in which Antonio I. Villarreal accuses the Mexican Liberal Party of being aided by the Mexican "Cientificos." Our last issue contained a crushing reply by Ricardo Flores Magon, from which a few extracts are here translated. Magon begins with the obvious reflection that "whoever has an atom of phosphorus in his brain understands that it is impossible for the capitalist class to foment a movement of so essentially economic and anti-authoritarian a character as is that of the Mexican Liberal Party—for no one places in his enemy's hands the dagger with which to pierce his own heart." He then piles proof on proof to illustrate the imbecility of the accusation, and we select a few, doing so more for the sake of giving an outline of the movement than for any other purpose. Magon writes:

"The entire wealth of the State of Yucatan is in the hands of the Cientificos. Nearly all the lands have been appropriated by the Molinas, the Peons, the Cantones—all prominent figures in the so-called Cientifico Party. These lands are now forcibly seized by the peons of the various haciendas; and these peons, according to the Mexican bourgeois press, Cientifico and non-Cientifico, are instigated thereto by the 'Magonist' agitators, as the imbeciles style the Red Flag Liberals.

"The hacienda proprietors of the State of Morelos, who are being despoiled of their lands by the proletariat of the State,—such men as the Escandons, the Torres and the rest of them—are closely affiliated with the Cientificos. The economic movement in that State is being fomented, as everybody knows, by the Liberal agitators.

"No one will deny that the Torres, Corral and the other Sonora men who have got the Yaquis lands into their clutches are Cientificos. We are advising our brother Yaquis to take possession of those lands, and among the Yaquis who have risen in arms to recover their lands are to be found delegates from this Junta.

IN LOWER CALIFORNIA

"All Mexicans know that the whole of Lower California is in the power of American, English and French capitalists, who obtained that peninsula as their property through concessions granted by Porfirio Diaz, at the instance of the Cientificos.

"Our delegates in the Chapala district, Jalisco, have kindled among our Indian comrades of that rich region the desire to recover their lands, which are in the possession of Cientificos and foreigners, according to the confession of the bourgeois press of Mexico and the United States. Would the Cientificos or the foreign millionaires give us money that our brother revolutionists might attack their interests in Lower California?

"Terrazas, Creel, Trevino and the other millionaire Cientificos are beginning to remove their cattle from Mexico, to avoid confiscation by the inhabitants of those districts in which the proletariat is operating under the Red Flag. Whenever our comrades are able to do so they are stopping the foreign exportation of such cattle."

As previously remarked these extracts are given as illustrative of the course of events in Mexico rather than in refutation of a charge too absurd for comment. One can understand a Morgan, a Rockefeller or a Carnegie subsidizing almost any political party; since, in the view of many rulers, all political parties have the effect of dividing the disinherited and substituting talk for action. But no one in his senses possesses that such mag-nates would subsidize the American proletariat to take actual possession of their railroads, workshops, mines and landed estates. Aside from many things that might be said about Villarreal and the degenerate "Regeneracion" of Mexico City, this much is certain—they are writing themselves down as asses.

As connected with these considerations we give the following extract of a letter to the "Appeal to Reason," written by Mrs. A. Kosovsky, Tampa, Fla., of which she has sent us copy: "We have read in your paper the words, 'Ask for a whole loaf and you will get half; ask for a half loaf and you will get nothing.' Actions speak louder than words. How can you then, in the face of these words, now remain silent on the subject of the Mexican Liberal Party Revolution, which is fighting so desperately for the whole loaf; realizing, as it does, that in the half loaf of political action there lies nothing for the starving, weary masses? They are not fighting for education and culture now; they are fighting for the right to live.

FUEL TO THE FIRE

All reports point to an increase rather than a subsidence of disturbances in Mexico, the approaching elections merely adding fuel to the fire. The mobbing, stoning and robbing, in Mexico City, of Bernardo Reyes, Madero's most formidable rival for the presidency, has been noted, freely by the American press, which also has given currency to the rumor that the important State of Sinaloa is about to secede and install its own government. The rumor lacks confirmation, but should it prove true, the action taken would mark a new development most dangerous to the properties interests. Guerrillas continue active in the State, "El Correo de la Tarde," of Mazatlan, reporting the authorities as not venturing to attack them.

Running through the accounts of outbreaks given in the latest issues of the leading Mexican papers one finds scarcely a State exempt. In Yucatan, notorious for the slavery on its hemp plantations, insurgency appears to be exceptionally active. One reads that federal troops have been despatched to put down the rebellious Mayas; that "numerous bands of discontented persons have risen in arms at Mama, and seized the authorities and leading citizens, while 'other uprisings have occurred in other towns of the same district.' At Dzununcun the inhabitants rose, shouting 'Death to Madero,' and troops were sent to restore order.

"El Diario" announces that the federal troops have received orders to exterminate the brigands with which the States of Durango and San Luis Potosi are infested. In the city of Puebla, according to the same paper, a hundred and fifty of the newly enlisted "rurales"—former Maderist soldiers—deserted, taking with them arms, horses, etc. In the State of Puebla a committee of eighty leading citizens waited on the governor to protest against the occupation of lands by the peasantry.

Here is a sample clipping from "El Imparcial": "A hundred rebels fell on Panuco, Veracruz, which they took without any resistance being made. They deposited the authorities and confiscated the public funds, in addition to disarming the detachment of 'rurales' sent to combat them. Most of the inhabitants sided with them." Here is another, from "El Norte," Chihuahua: "The authorities at Vicam and El Anil, Sonora, are making hasty preparations to defend themselves against about a thousand Yaquis who are threatening to attack the two towns simultaneously."

ZAPATA TOO CLEVER.

For several days the American press has busied itself with the struggle, in Morelos, between Zapata and the federal forces, the government having decided to concentrate on his subjugation. Madero complains that Zapata has broken faith with him, and all apparently agree that the Progressists' candidate for president was hoodwinked and made himself ridiculous. A few days ago the papers had it that Zapata had been killed in one of the numerous encounters that have taken place, but they now report him as having retreated to the mountains. The truth unquestionably is that he is pursuing the guerrilla tactics that have proved so successful in the past. At those he and his followers are adepts and easily able to get the better of the government's troops.

Spasmodic strikes are still reported, but the revolution's strength lies with the country population, which is taking possession of the land with much perseverance and unexpected boldness.

Working to Save a Life

Two hundred and thirty-eight dollars and ninety cents have been collected for the defense of Leon Cardenas, and the list is still open. The circumstances surrounding his prospective execution appear to us exceptionally atrocious. According to the certificates that his father and mother vainly endeavored to put in evidence, this mere boy, who has been found guilty of murder in Texas, is only just fifteen years old. His father has appealed to the Mexican ambassador and the appeal tells a miserable story, as follows:

The lad was arrested at Saragosa, Texas, July 23, on suspicion. He confessed, but only because he was told that otherwise he would be lynched, and there appears to have been no other evidence against him. The trial was held in the midst of great excitement, proffered proof of the prisoner's true age was refused, and all who attempted a defense were threatened with assassination.

Leon Cardenas' father, his sick mother, four children and an old lady were given two hours' time in which to leave the family home, the armed party that served the notice being headed by the sheriff. They were ordered to go a distance of twenty-five miles, the road leading through the desert, and suffered unspeakable hardships. When they reached a depot and attempted to take a train they had to seek protection. All round the case is stamped with the unmistakable brand of savage, unreasoning lust for blood.

Execution of the death sentence has been postponed to Sept. 30, and the accused's father is making desperate efforts to obtain a new trial, with a change of venue to El Paso county. Unquestionably his plea should be granted, and it would seem that Americans themselves should be anxious to save their own country from another of these all too frequent and monstrous perversions of justice.

Another Milestone Passed

With that clear and direct perception of the needful thing to do which lettered men, men of complex lives, nearly always lack, being befogged by too many lights, they move straight upon their purpose, hew down the landmarks, burn the records of the title-deeds.

So do the plain people. Temporizing men, sophisticated men, men of books and theories, made timid with much mind, Hamlets all,—they devise solemn indirections; they figure on compensation schemes, on taxation fooleries, on how-to-do and how-not-to-do at the same time. The simple man says, "No; you have told us, and truly, that this land was flicked away from us by a paper-title scheme. Its power lay in our admitting its right. Well, we no longer admit it; we destroy it. The land is ours; we take it." And they have driven off the paper-title men, and are working the ground on hundreds of ranches.

It is true there were other millions asleep in the storm; true that many of the awakened have been quelled with political hocus-pocus; true that a hundred and one reactionary forces are battling on the same ground. It is true that the world at large, outside of Mexico, is but little informed as to the real struggle. But that does not alter or diminish the truth that the Slaves of Our Times, in a nation-wide revolt, have smitten the Beast of Property in Land. And once a great human demand is so made, it is never let go again. Future revolts will go on from there; they will never fall behind it.—Voltaire de Cleyre, in "Mother Earth."

REEDY'S HALF TRUTHS

In the St. Louis "Mirror" Marlon Reedy expresses the opinion that "there's big new politics back of the coming murder trial at Los Angeles," and declares that "unquestionably one of the results of the trial of the McNamaras for the Los Angeles Times affair will be to hasten the coming of the time for political action by Union Labor." He opines that "the Socialist clamor in behalf of the McNamaras is, in short, a raid upon the conservative forces in the labor movement," and believes that the "fery literature" sent out will awaken Labor's class consciousness.

There may be truth in that, but what about the effect of the direct action Labor has been taking so vigorously of late throughout the world? Does not the McNamara case itself attract because of its supposed connection with direct action? Does Reedy think the expulsion of the land monopolists, now proceeding with such feverish energy in Mexico, will have no educational effect? Does not he, a seasoned thinker, know that silence is often the most deadly form of lying? Why does he present only one side of the question? Can he not think outside of politics?

New York Workers Indorse Mexican Revolution

Union Square Mass Meeting Excites Profound Enthusiasm

The New York Revolution Conference is showing great activity, although most of its leading members are overwhelmed with work in the international social movement. In the matter of the capture of Rangel and his comrades, as in previous emergencies, the Conference came promptly to the rescue, and it is keeping up a persistent agitation that is sure to bear substantial fruit. At its Union Square mass meeting, Aug. 26, it again did much to rouse New York to the importance of the Mexican Revolution.

More than a thousand remained to the end of the meeting, although rain was falling. The speeches, made in six languages, elicited great enthusiasm. Ben L. Reitzman acted as chairman and introduced as the first speaker of the evening Bernard Sornaker, who delivered a most spirited address in Jewish. He was followed by William Thurston Brown in English, Jaime Vidal in Spanish, Emma Goldman, Max Baginski in German, Samuel Boris in Russian, and an Italian speaker, whose name unfortunately we have not learned.

Following Emma Goldman's speech, which is reported as having moved the audience deeply, a collection was taken up, from which \$20 has been forwarded to "Regeneracion," a balance being reserved for further propaganda. The Italian Socialist Federation rendered the Marsellaise and the meeting concluded with the singing of the "Internationale." The red flag of the Italian Socialist Federation and the banner of the District Council of the I. W. W. were prominently in evidence.

The meeting was reported extensively by the New York papers, but in a manner that would be amusing were the subject not so serious; for with one accord they seem to have been astonished to find Madero unpopular. We do not expect them to read "Regeneracion," but we supposed that some Mexican news found its way into New York editorial offices. At Metropolitan "Saenger" Hall, Brownsville, Brooklyn, a most successful meeting had been held the previous evening, under the auspices of the Liberty Group of New York. Samuel Boris was chairman, and gave a rousing address in Jewish and English. He was followed by Jack Walsh, who spoke on behalf of the I. W. W. in English; by Dr. Michael Cohn in Jewish and by Bernard Sornaker. The admission charges realized \$33.40 and a collection brought another \$22. The group has forwarded \$25 to Regeneracion, reserving a balance of \$10.45 for agitation purposes.

We have received a remittance of \$6.15 from "Volne Listy," of New York City, which is publishing a long review of the entire Mexican situation for the benefit of its Bohemian readers.

From Chicago, Voltairine de Cleyre sends us two subscription lists accompanied by check for \$12, and much news of active propaganda being carried on by comrades there and in Buffalo, N. Y. We are in hopes of hearing from Boston, and feel confident that the agitation started so vigorously in New York will spread to Philadelphia. "Regeneracion" has a large subscription list in Pennsylvania, which should be a most promising field.

Will End in Talk

Although it is somewhat outside of our province, we hazard the prophecy that there will be no railroad strike. In the first place, the leaders' conception of a strike is a starvation contest, and for this the railroad workers are ill-prepared, inasmuch as the legal fraternity has been and is dipping heavily into their pockets. In the second place, so far as Los Angeles is concerned, too many of the workers are prospective owners of small homes bought on the installment plan, and there is no greater social coward than the city worker who has a house and lot half paid for. This is one of the many points at which land speculation—encouraged by Fels and other Single Taxers—gets in its deadly work.

Make it a Success

Do not forget that a re-union for the benefit of "Regeneracion" and the Mexican Revolution will be held at Italian Hall, Sunday evening, Sept. 17. The committee having the preparations in charge is most anxious for volunteer assistance, as it is felt that a successful meeting will lead to many others of a like character.