

One Socialist At Least Speaks Out

Los Angeles, the "chemically pure" is wallowing in scandals, as preliminary to the selection of a new set of administrative rulers. That which, being the most spicy, necessarily attracts universal attention is over the "White Slave Traffic," in which a band of young girls is denouncing a horde of moneyed men, pillars of the church, philanthropists and what not. I myself do not read that sort of stuff, having learned long ago that, when women have to sell themselves, a considerable percentage will take the job that pays, regardless of all details. About the only piece of evidence I noticed was that one of these young innocents consented to giving an elderly millionaire a bath, and received eight hundred dollars. It takes an ordinary working girl some three years of slavery in a factory to store up to earn that much, and thousands will make that comparative calculation, with appropriate reflections. A few others, still more reflective, will understand that gentlemen, whose only occupation is receiving rents and clipping coupons must have their little pleasures or die of ennui. A society rotten to the core, and nowhere more rotten than in the so-called City of the Angels, where the church lords it imperiously while churchmen grovel, day and night, at Mammon's feet! No city in the world will skin you more mercilessly, and none snivel more unctuously as it performs the operation.

The other, which is of international importance, since it will affect, and most profoundly, the entire revolutionary movement—is the exposure of the inside workings of the Socialist Party movement. The "Times," which has secured the services of a most competent informer in the person of the late "Reverend," but still exceedingly alive, Edward Adams Cantrell, is conducting the enquiry, and with all the zeal which is its habit when it has the drop on a mortal foe, Mr. Cantrell has been of the Party's chosen few for years; has been admitted freely to the Holy of Holies; knows all its secrets. This information he is handing out daily through the "Times," with copies of letters, accounts and other entertaining exhibits, which speak volumes for the fidelity with which he kept his record. I postpone further criticism until next week, both because I wish to have the full reports before me, and because I am not inclined to write hastily on a subject so serious. As I have passed some twenty active years in Los Angeles much information has been thrust upon me; information I have never sold or sought to sell; but information that, cured me long ago of all inclination to gather round the Socialist Party trough. Next week I shall analyze the Cantrell letters completely and coldly as I can, with comments from my own experience. Meanwhile, as the lawyers say, I lay a foundation, by quoting extensively from the magnificent article on "Bread and the Soul," contributed to this month's "Metropolitan" by George D. Herron. I am one of those Anarchists, whom the Socialist politicians delight in vilifying. In Mr. Herron's plea for what he labels "Socialism," I find my thought and aspirations most accurately mirrored, and I contend once more that the distinctions drawn are drawn by Jesuitical politicians to ostracize those whose honest criticism they would stifle at all costs. The extracts follow, but I recommend our readers to buy the "Metropolitan" and study the article in its entirety.

It is urgent that the Socialist conception of society be explicitly and stoutly pronounced. For there tends to prevail, in these days, a corrupting conception of Socialism as a mere extension, a fictitious increase, of the existing society. The word has been stretched to cover any number of plausible proposals, of idle propitiatory reforms, which are not even Socialistic in their trend—proposals and reforms which Socialism would render superfluous. And the health and heartiness of the Socialist movement are sapped by a mongrel host of noisy parasites, religious and political, who can find no other body upon which to fasten themselves. It is time that the beginning and the end of Socialism be made plain; that its intentions toward society be stated honestly and without apology; that it purify its garments, nor suffer them to be worn by masquerading evangelists or politicians.

Any true understanding of Socialism must begin with a frank recognition of the economic basis and control of society. All social power, in its last analysis, is economic. No matter what the nature of such power may seem to be, its substance is the private possession and disposal of common necessities produced by common labor. Putting it simply and symbolically, the world's bread is the key to the world's control; and the quality of this control over bread determines the quality of the world—determines its social groups and its individual types. Whoever owns the bread that I must have or obtain it, he is the owner of me—whether I know it or not. From the modes by which the bread of men is gained, or from revolts against these modes, rise not only the customs and institutions of society, the dominion of states and classes, but also the gods and temples, the philosophies and faiths, the schools and sciences. The power of bread is the power of life and death, both physical and spiritual; it is the power to release or imprison, the mind's attention, to open or close the regions of man's advance into the unknown and the unconquered.

Again, there can be no true understanding of Socialism apart from the

recognition that society, by the system of social production for private profit, is divided into two classes, engaged in perpetual war with each other: one a producing and the other an exploiting class. Substantially stated, the present organization of the world is in order that a comparatively few may compel the labor of the many, and appropriate its fruits. Existing political institutions have no other end than this private seizure of social production, over and above the lowest scale of living which labor can be coerced into accepting. That the capitalist works, does not argue against the existence of his class. Or that the ruler works, does not argue against the parasitical nature of his position. The work of the capitalist consists in the exploitation of the real producer; the work of the ruler consists in the defense of the property of the capitalist—without which capitalist, the ruler could not be. And between the workers and the class that possesses itself of their product, there can be neither identity of interest nor social peace.

Nor ought there to be. It is an utterly irrational and immoral society, an insanely wasteful industrial arrangement, by which the bulk of the world's population is engaged in producing wealth it is never to enjoy. It is really a world of slaves we are living in; and freedom, either of labor or spirit, is a fiction. Free labor and free men have no existence apart from a community of ownership and interest in production. As the work of the world is now carried on, the production of things proceeds through the destruction of human beings, soil and body. And to close our eyes to this, to consent to a society that divides mankind into owners and workers, masters and servants, rich and poor, governors and governed, is indeed a hopeless infidelity toward life; is the most absolute atheism of which one can be guilty.

Capitalist society is the destroyer of the individual. Under the profit-making system of production, we have only masters on the one side and herds of dependent toilers on the other. And in the great industrial nations, there is a decreasing individualization of man. Indeed, it is doubtful if there exists in the world a wholly developed individual. The lives of those who have and of those who have not are alike swallowed up in a needless struggle for physical existence. Capitalism is the organization of a violent coercion of the individual; and the end thereof is social disintegration and universal deformity. For wherever industrial development begins, under capitalism, whether in Japan or China, in Pennsylvania or Poland, there the decay of man begins. It is the capitalist increase that is making the world a desperate shambles, and filling the minds of men with despair as to the human future. It is through capitalist centralization that men are herded in the dirt; the disease and the ugliness of tenements, of factories and mining shanties. It is through capitalism that so many millions of children never behold the green fields, nor anything but the dilapidation, the barrenness, the dumb and helpless sorrows, of congested industrial populations. And it is Socialism that will restore greenness and gladness to the earth; that will release children from the blight and brutality of modern industry; and set their feet once more among the fields and put flowers in their hands and in their cheeks.

Even from the standpoint of material values, capitalism is the universal destroyer. It is time that the Socialist truthfully returns the charge which the capitalist falsely makes as to the intention of Socialism concerning the needful property of the individual. It is capitalism that is the real destroyer of private property, and of social property as well; and Socialism comes as the savior and preserver of private property. It is in the destruction of private property that the first curse of capitalism lies. Under capitalist or profit-making production, it is but to comparatively few that property is possible; and that only through social exploitation. Under a true Socialism, in a free and communistic society, each would be able to have that which is peculiarly his own; would be able to possess private property which the individual must have in order to express and fulfill himself.

The ancient and increasing dream, as old as the mind of man, as new as the unborn future, of a cooperating and communistic world, providing equal freedom and choice for all its members—the realization of this dream is as certain as the continuance of man. The mankind that is great enough to dream the dream is also great enough to fulfill it; to translate it into daily and universal fact. For near the hour of possibility, fulfillment, man is cramped and stifled by his present intolerable conditions. He is breaking down the bars of his manifold prisons. He is demanding breathing room in the universe. The soul is spreading the wings of an immeasurable expansion. And it is possible, when we waken from our political delirium, from our industrial insanity, from our fanatical unfaith in freedom—when the stain of history is washed away and the cleansed and upstanding soul discovers itself—it is possible that we shall then be as much greater than what we now are as what we now are is greater than the ancestral age of scientific dogma.

GRAND PARADE, MAY 4.
Workers and all who sympathize with the struggle for Land and Liberty are asked to remember that May 2 a parade will be held, having for its immediate object the urging the release of the members of the Mexican Liberal Party now imprisoned in McNeil's Island. The parade is timed to start from the Plaza at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

"Times" Scores Land Monopoly!

What is the matter with Mexico? Precisely what is the matter with the United States, Great Britain, and every civilized country in which the masses are protesting against drudgery and starving in the midst of plenty. In a word, the matter with Mexico has been, is and, apparently, for some time to come will be—MONOPOLY. For proof we quote extensively from no less an authority than the "Los Angeles Times," a paper that, while fighting to the death all revolutionary movements, has usually the courage to publish the evidence on the other side, however detrimental to its own case, the evidence may be. From E. G. Carpenter's articles on Mexico, published weekly in the "Times," we take the following information, which, we suppose, would have been received by the Socialist and Labor press with scornful incredulity had it appeared in "Regeneration."

"The great trust here is the land trust. Something like one thousand families own the bulk of the good lands of Mexico, and for generations have been ruling the country. They have had their lobbyists here at the capital, and when they have pined the statement have had to dance. The power of this land trust was well known to Porfirio Diaz, and the opposition to it brought about the downfall of his administration. President Diaz knew that the time had come to divide up the lands, and he was planning to tax them with a view of so doing. But the power of the hacendados in the Federal Congress and the State Legislatures was more than he could overcome, and he failed. He tried to tax the big estates which were not in cultivation, and to this bring about their division. But he was balked at every turn, and the result was his downfall.

Promises Unfulfilled.
"It was upon promises to bring about a land division that Madero made his campaign for the Presidency. He stumped the country, saying that if he became President he would so tax the big estates that the owners could not afford to keep them. He also said that he might compel the hacendados or large landholders to give farms to men who were working them. He told the peasants that their wages would soon go up to \$1 a day. He said they would have a chance to buy land, and that he would create a class of small farmers. "It was these big landholders, that largely aided in bringing about the defeat and death of Madero, and President Huerta and his party are indebted to them. The common people, however, have learned too much and gone too far to recede. The government knows that there can be no permanent peace without a movement toward a division of the lands, and Congress is now trying to bring forth some scheme which will result in such division. One plan which is agitated is the restoration of the communal lands about the towns to the Indians who formerly owned them. And there are other plans to wipe out the feudal system, which now gives a few families this great land monopoly, and makes them the ruling aristocrats of the country. The fight of the future is to be between the landless and the small landholder and the land monopolists, and it will go on in one form or another until Mexico belongs to the many instead of to the few.

Lords of the Earth.
"How would you like to have 5000 families own the whole United States? Such a division would be somewhat the same as that which exists in Mexico today. There are men here who own millions of acres of farming and grazing land, and who in addition have mines, houses and gold and silver. Let me give you a few instances. The biggest landowner of all is Don Luis Terrazas of the State of Chihuahua. He and his immediate relatives own outright over 7,000,000 acres of the most fertile lands of Northern Mexico. They keep it in big tracts and the most of it is employed for stock raising only. Terrazas brands 60,000 calves every year and he has on his place enormous droves of horses and mules and flocks of sheep and goats. He owns nearly all of the land between Chihuahua and the United States boundary, and you may ride farther than from New York to Washington on the railroad in crossing his farms from north to south.

"They are wider from east to west than the distance between Baltimore and New York, and indeed the boundaries are so poorly defined that the people here say that Terrazas does not know how much land he has and that he could lose a thousand beef cattle and not feel the loss. He is without doubt about the richest man in Mexico. He is worth something like \$100,000,000 and is the autocrat of the State of Chihuahua.

"Another man who has millions in this same State is Enrique C. Creel, who was formerly the Mexican Ambassador at Washington. He is a son-in-law of Terrazas, but is said to be worth about \$20,000,000 in his own right, much of it being in land and cattle. Mr. Creel was born in Chihuahua. His father was a Kentuckian, who came to this country during the Mexican war and later on settled here. He had a family of seven, and Enrique C., the eldest boy, was named after Henry Clay.

The Madero Family.
"Just across the border of Chihuahua is the State of Coahuila, where the Madero family owns its vast estates, which are now liable to confiscation, and a little to the southward, in San Luis Potosi, is Encarnacion Ipinia, who holds more than 1,700,000 acres. Ipinia has live stock which exceed in number many times that of all the cattle, camels and sheep owned by Job, the famed monopolist of the Land of Uz, and he also raises corn, wheat, beans and potatoes. Nevertheless, not one-twentieth of his lands

are under cultivation, and his Indian workmen cannot buy an acre to hold in fee simple.

"Another big owner in the same state is Mrs. Sarah H. De Lee. She has over a million acres, and of these she cultivates only 50,000.

"In the State of Tlaxcala, which is about half the size of Connecticut, thirty-nine persons or families own all the land, and this notwithstanding the population is almost 200,000. In the Territory of Tepic, which has over 170,000 inhabitants, the country is practically owned by thirty-one families, and in Tamaulipas lives Manuel Gonzales, who owns 3,500,000 acres, or an area which is almost two-thirds of the State of Massachusetts. Nevertheless, Gonzales cultivates only one acre in every 700, and his vast herds of peons do not own the land upon which their rude homes are built.

"The State of Vera Cruz is largely made up of tropical lowlands, and its properties are about the most subdivided of all the Mexican states. Nevertheless there are many landholders there possessing from 150,000 to 250,000 acres each, and a man named Braniff, who is of British and Spanish descent, has 32,000 acres planted to wheat and many square miles devoted to cattle. He has thirty acres of lawn in his home grounds and he lives like a lord. His hacienda employs 1800 men, and it takes a population of more than 5000 to care for it. Ten thousand cattle feed upon its pastures, and among them are some of the best animals which fight in the bullring at Mexico City. This plantation has large irrigated areas and its owner has erected dams and canals at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The plantation has railroads upon it and a flour mill worked by electricity.

The Money-Spenders.
"In Yucatan there are also large estates, some of them exceedingly profitable, owing to the cultivation of hemp. The same large holdings might be cited in other parts of the republic, but this will show you how the lands are tied up and kept out of the hands of the people who would cultivate them.

"These hacendados, as the plutocrat landholders are called, have money beyond the dreams of avarice. They usually live magnificently upon their estates, but just now, while the rebels and bandits are moving about over Mexico, a large number of them have come here to the capital, while others have left for Madrid and Paris. In some cases the fighting is going on upon their haciendas and they want their families to be saved from the danger of being taken from the hands of the rebels. A few of these have rented or bought houses here, and for the past two years have kept off their farms. "It is on some of the biggest estates that most of the fighting goes on. Take that of Terrazas. The rebels of Chihuahua have torn up the railroads, and the Mexican Central line, which goes south from El Paso, has been long out of running. The trouble there has largely come through Terrazas himself, who is said to be as autocratic as the Czar of Russia. He is now an old man, but his sons rule, and it is they who are trying to protect the property."

Mexican Notes

According to a special despatch to the "Los Angeles Times," dated Mexico City, April 30, Zapata has sent a communication to Huerta to the effect that the capital will soon be under rebel management and that a revolutionary government, from President downward, will be installed. The notice is described further as stating that all the Northern leaders are working under Zapata's orders, and that when the assault is made it will be by a united force. The "Times" considers that the threat is not an idle one, as that very day eight more towns had fallen into Zapata's hands, and the entire Isthmus of Tehuantepec together with the city of Oaxaca, was now under rebel rule. Gen. Aguilar, who has been hitherto a staunch supporter of the government, is reported as having joined Zapata, taking with him all his armed following and military supplies.

In our judgment this report is entitled to more credence than most of those that have been flying round in such profusion. There is not the slightest doubt that Huerta's position has been growing constantly weaker, and that almost the entire sentiment of the country is against him. Furthermore, time tries all things, and time apparently has pointed out Zapata as the one leader strong enough to survive and, therefore, the one round whom all would naturally rally if a rally should be possible. It is also only just to suppose, alike from Zapata's record and from the nature of the case, that he should finally grasp power, he will take immediate and most drastic measures to restore the land to the people. Apart from any question of willingness or unwillingness to keep faith, on such a man the lessons of Diaz' downfall and Madero's tragic end can scarcely be wasted. If there is a man in Mexico who should know that until land monopoly has been abolished there can be no lasting peace, that man must be Zapata.

If He Should Succeed.
The possibility, therefore, that the program, as stated by Zapata, will be carried out, brings us face to face with the social question in its most formidable phases. Should Zapata succeed and prove faithful, what will the vested interests of European capital? Will these monopolies be content to let their holdings go, that industry in Mexico may have the great estate an unprecedentedly forward stride. That unquestionably would be the immediate effect of putting into force such a program as that to which Zapata stands pledged, and one can write with confidence that Mexico would become, at once, the easiest country in the world in which to make an ample living. It would set an example that the disinherited of every country would not be

slow to master. Juarez is Mexico's most important port of entry along the Southern border, and the fact that the Federal troops have been ordered to evacuate it and march to the relief of Chihuahua shows how hard pressed the government is. The rebels have recaptured Jimenez, hold Rosalia, taken a few days ago, and their forces are reported as stretching from the neighborhood of Parral to Bachimba, thirty miles South of Chihuahua.

According to a special Washington report to the "Tribune," under date of April 29, the situation in Mexico had been discussed at length in that day's cabinet meeting, even the Japanese embargo being, for the moment, laid aside.

An Eagle Rock despatch of April 29 is responsible for the report that Gen. Aubert and Lopez had entered into negotiations with Carranza, and that to this was due the sudden cessation of activity in the zone which the latter controls. The loss of Aubert would be one of the most serious blows the government could sustain.

Warned to Leave.
From San Antonio, Tex., comes a despatch, dated May 1, to the effect that a representative of Carranza has been sent to Juarez, urging the people to leave without delay, while the railroads are still open, as the city will be attacked shortly.

The State Department of the Constitutionalists, located at Piedras Negras, has issued a statement which runs, in part: "Diaz offered to put himself entirely at the disposal of Carranza in every way and to carry out any orders given him. His offer to obey Carranza in all things was as complete as possible. Carranza absolutely refused to entertain the offer in any way, and ordered the emissaries to leave the country at once, which they did."

The situation, therefore, appears to stand thus. Felix Diaz and Huerta are in open hostility, and the former has been seeking alliances which have been refused. This is entirely in accordance with what was to have been expected, for although Felix Diaz and Huerta in combination succeeded in seizing the governmental reins, neither has ever had the backing of the country, any more than had Gen. Reyes, when he strove to establish a military dictatorship. Rule by the army is the last thing Mexicans want. They have had a long and tragic experience of what that means. Between 1500 and 2000 federal troops were reported, May 1, as having been landed at Guaymas, in anticipation of a threatened attack by land and sea, which is expected within the next few days.

Free transportation has been furnished, arrested for selling items which have left Cananea, owing to the closing down of plants. News of a general closing down of banks and industrial establishments also comes from Hermosillo, the capital of Sonora. On the other hand, Huerta is reported as having procured a loan of \$7,500,000 through the Pearson (English) oil syndicate.

Gen. Leonard Wood has returned from an inspection of the border and reports that whereas, a few months ago, he found public opinion unanimously against American intervention, he now finds a complete revolution in that regard. Our understanding is that Gen. Wood is exceedingly likely to express sentiments which are pleasing to the authorities and himself. It is said that the maps kept in the offices of the general staff of the United States army, at Washington, show a steady closing in on Mexico City, and that the staff expects that the Mexican government soon will be cut off from communication with the outside world.

A DIRECT ACTIONIST.
"In this one hellish town (a mining town in West Virginia), there is more degeneracy per capita than in any town of equal population in the country, I believe. This town is owned by an extremely rich mining company, a company which has made enormous dividends through the oppression and ill-treatment of its workers. The head of the company is at present in England selling bonds. This settlement of misery and want, vice and crime, degeneracy and hopelessness, is a menace to the health of the rest of the inhabitants of the zone. It is my plan to apply the torch to this town, to BURN UP THE MISERABLE HABITATION OF UNPARDONABLE OPPRESSION. Such action will be attended to thousands of people. It will astound and shock certain mine owners, but the torch will be applied to this place, because the village is a decided menace to the health of the people living in the military zone over which I have charge. It is in my power to burn it up." (Extract from an interview given to "Grit" by Gen. W. D. Elliott, commanding State militia of West Virginia.)

BECOMES TRULY ADVANCED.
Japan, since 1868, when her government changed from the dual despotism of the Mikado and the Tycoon to a representative constitutional government, has made marvelous advances in adopting the political and commercial methods of western civilization. Among these advances has been the construction of a navy exceeding in number of ships and guns that of Russia, Italy or Austria, nearly equalling that of France or the United States and only surpassed by Germany and Great Britain. (Editorial—"Los Angeles Daily Times.")

MRS. PARSONS RELEASED.
Mrs. Lucy Parsons and George Kirkstall, arrested for selling literature on the streets without a license, were released on their own recognizances, by Justice Frederickson, last Wednesday.

The Justice has given no ruling on the point raised by Attorney Willard Andrews, viz., that the accused were "principals" and not "agents," and therefore not within the meaning of the ordinance. A ruling in his favor probably would invalidate the entire ordinance, thanks to which our "Good Government" officials raise a princely income by taxing small dealers for the privilege of earning a living.

Why Mexico Is Forced to Fight

"What is the Matter with Mexico?" by John Kenneth Turner, in the "Metropolitan" for May, is an article that every one interested in social welfare should read and ponder. We write "ponder" advisedly, both on account of the invaluable information it contains, and by reason of certain admissions which, despite Mr. Turner himself, proves that the case of Mexico is, on all fours with that of the United States. On his inference that feudalism is peculiar to Mexico, and does not exist in this country, we cross swords with Mr. Turner once more; but we have the greatest admiration for the services he is rendering as a bold and faithful chronicler of facts.

No one can read Turner's article without understanding clearly that, as he himself puts it, the Mexican people are in revolution because they want "things, and certain things"—first and foremost among which is the land. He makes it clear as crystal that they are not considering personalities, and that—to take the specific instance of Madero—the President's difference, the one desideratum being overthrown Diaz to get the land; when Madero promised them the land he was, for a time, the nation's idol. He broke his promise and became, most righteously, the universal target for hatred and abuse. A good, sound, practical, businesslike frame of mind, insisting on results; a distinct advance from the primitive, personallity-worshipping stage in which, as yet, the disinherited of other countries are apparently stuck fast.

Proof Most Positive.
An ounce of actual fact is worth several pounds of abstract argument and many tons of vague generalising as to whether Madero was or was not a well-meaning man. Turner thinks he was, but, among many other instances of his weakness, he gives us the full history of 40,000 acres in the State of Durango, adjoining a property of between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 acres, owned by an amiable gentleman named Tomas Villar. Not one acre of Mr. Villar's property was cultivated, but naturally he lingered for the 40,000 acres, which were all under cultivation or pasture, and worked by eighty-seven families who had been there from time immemorial. He got a decree of ejectment—an easy matter under Diaz (Villar is said to have boasted that he bought it for \$5000), and he attempted to evict them by legal measures. The occupants resisted and proved too strong for the local authorities. Then came, as always, the threat of federal soldiers. For the moment the Madero revolution saved the peasants, and when Madero had climbed into the presidential chair, they sent a special spokesman to Mexico City, who pleaded personally with Madero. Finally—in June, 1912—Madero confirmed the Diaz decree and the eighty-seven families were ordered to get out. Turner shows that Madero wished to see the troops and Mr. Turner interviewed their spokesman, a Mr. Vello, who said to him: "We do not care who is President of Mexico. All we want is to keep our lands. We expect soldiers. If they come we will fight, and if we are beaten we will have to join the revolution."

Lower California at Auction.
As illustrative of the extent to which the Mexican people have been ousted from possession of their own native land, Turner states that, January 27, 1913, Madero showed him a map of Lower California, in which were marked the land grants made by Diaz. The words he uses are: "That territory, equal in area to Alabama, had been sold in five vast tracts for about three-fifths of a cent an acre."

The following four paragraphs seem to us of special significance, and we reproduce them verbatim. They have a direct bearing on the "feudalism" argument to which Turner apparently still clings; thereby, in our judgment, belittling deplorably the Mexican Revolution's international importance. The paragraphs are as follows: "In the United States the farmer is a humble person; in Mexico he is a king of millionaires. The typical farm in Mexico is not of one hundred and sixty acres, nor yet of sixteen hundred, but of a million. The Madero holdings in Coahuila run into the millions of acres. Nowhere in the world, not in India nor Egypt nor any country, are found the vast cotton plantations that are discovered in the state of Durango."

"In news dispatch regarding the operations of the rebels, which recently appeared in the Mexican papers, it was casually mentioned that on one farm in the state of Puebla, the Atecingo, the rebels had burned two million pesos' worth of sugar cane. If the crop standing in the field was worth two million pesos, how much might the farm itself be worth?"

"Instead of showing a tendency to break up, this system has been steadily growing stronger. Always, since the rule of Spain was fastened upon Mexico, land has been held in huge tracts, and there have been feudal lords and serfs. But in Spanish times and later, after the independence, a considerable proportion of the common people had farms of their own, which insured them a fair measure of freedom. Under Diaz nearly all of these small holdings were swept away. The big farm reached out and swallowed the small farm beside it. The big farm did not need the new ground for purposes of production. Indeed, production was only a remote consideration. Invariably only a small fraction of the million-acre farms is cultivated. The big farm grabbed the little farm for two reasons: first and most important, to prevent the people from working for themselves—that is, to leave them no other means of livelihood except to become peons on the big farm; second, for specula-

tive purposes. "Constitutions Do Not Count." "The result of this land concentration was to give to Mexico a system analogous in all of the essentials to the feudalism of Europe in the sixteenth century. The authorities, state and local, civil and military, were the same unquestioning servants of the sacred lord, as they had been of the hacienda lord. The power of the hacienda was even greater, if possible, the exploitation more severe. The hacienda possessed not only the right of the first night, the power to pay or withhold pay at will, the power to dictate the daily living of the peon to the final detail, but also, practically speaking, the power of life and death itself. In the capital was a written constitution which proclaimed that all men were free; but to a man who owned a million acres and ten thousand peons this constitution meant nothing—and it meant nothing to the peons."

We call special attention to the fact that, as admitted by Turner, it was under Diaz that the small holdings were swept away; that Diaz, under the influence of Limantour and the "Cientificos," was modern capitalism incarnate; that modern capitalism reproduces feudalism, and, of necessity, for feudalism is nothing but the ownership of people acquired by monopolizing the land without which people cannot exist; that it thus "prevents the people from working for themselves," and that, instead of destroying feudalism, it has given it an enormous impetus, putting the earth up to auction and delivering it into the keeping of the speculators with the longest purse.

Mexico is not a country suffering because it is a century behind us. On the contrary, it is a country suffering from a feudalism begotten by capitalism of the most up-to-date type; just as is the United States. The cause of Mexico is, therefore, essentially the cause of America's disinherited, and of the disinherited throughout this needlessly poverty-stricken world. No country presents us with a more clear-cut picture of the universal social problem.

Touching Bedrock

"In a recent editorial the 'Los Angeles Times' delivered itself thus: 'Absentee landlordism, once the curse of Ireland, is absolutely impossible under the liberal and democratic laws of California.'"

It seems incredible that any serious writer, dealing with a State which from its infancy has made land speculation its commercial cornerstone, could indulge in such balderdash; and the foregoing extract was properly taken up by the "Los Angeles Record," in its leading article of April 10. We reproduce the article in full, both for its intrinsic merit and as a significant sign of an advancing public opinion.

While our Socialist candidate for Mayor is thundering against monopoly of light and electric power, there are thousands who are asking why he does not attack the basic monopoly, that of the soil, from which must come the light and power. Of course, the answer is that he and his party are afraid; afraid of alienating the votes of thousands who have yielded to the land speculation fever, and are up to their necks in debt on unpaid instalments. These people are the finest boosters the great land monopolists could find, for their financial life depends on their keeping up the price of their investments. They are impervious to argument, would punish remorselessly any party that threatened their shaky interests, and the Socialists must have their vote. Therefore the Socialists cannot run straight, and therefore, instead of being a help to the emancipation movement, they are the heaviest of handicaps.

After quoting the passage given above, the "Record" comments as follows:

Here, indeed, is news. First, the inference that absentee landlordism is no more the curse of Ireland. Since when did it cease to be?

Second, that absentee landlordism is absolutely impossible in California. Since when?

How about the great Haggan grant of 44,000 acres, adjoining the city of Sacramento, owned for a generation by a group of Kentucky horsemen, who held it almost wholly out of use, for speculative purposes? How about the Glenn ranch and the other great ranches of the San Joaquin, Sacramento and Santa Clara valleys, owned by Eastern and European banks and syndicates and held for speculative purposes? Doesn't the Times disparage deals in the Sacramento river in operation on leases and sub-leases by Japanese and other aliens, who turn over their hard-earned profit to enrich the coffers of the absentee land owner? How about our great cities—is it not a fact that some of our finest blocks are owned in Paris and Amsterdam? It is.

The evils of absentee landlordism may be mitigated by "the liberal and democratic laws of California," which, by the way, the esteemed Times has had mighty little to do with either framing or enforcing, but that "absentee landlordism" is not only entirely possible, but quite the thing, from Tia Juana to Trinity and from Truckee to Tule, is a proposition which would not limit of debate in the minds of anyone outside the editorial room of the "Times."

Absentee landlordism is always a curse, has always been, and will always be, whether the owner of record lives in the next block and collects his rent in person or dwells at Interlaken and does business through his solicitors. And just as long as our laws, however "liberal and democratic," recognize, protect and promote landlordism, whether the landlord be absentee or presentee, or any other institution which permits a man to "reap where he has not sown," and to gather where he has not sown—just so long will our land laws be a curse and not a blessing.