

Here's The Position:
How About It?

The situation in these United States, and particularly on the Pacific Coast, is exceedingly threatening, or promising, according to the point of view. To the monopolist, anxious to retain the product of his thefts, the situation is threatening. To me, as one of his victims and self-dedicated to the mission of helping to make him disgorge, it is most promising. According to figures published recently by the United States Labor Commissioner, there are two millions out of work. That is exclusive of the enormous army of habitual tramps, etc., who have freed themselves from the habit of toiling for the robber. It is also exclusive of the even larger number of unworkable; those so debauched and crippled by our inhuman society that it would require omnipotence to get a day's labor out of them.

On the Pacific Coast the situation is exceptionally bad. I quoted recently an eminent authority, Dr. Walker Williams, as estimating the habitually unemployed of London at 20,000. Our Los Angeles chief of police officially reports our unemployed at 40,000. London is the world's metropolis, with a population of some eight or nine millions. Los Angeles is an overgrown parasitic village, with a little over 450,000 inhabitants. To state these facts is to tell the story.

From men who have been up and down the coast recently I gather that in San Francisco conditions are even worse, and, as was inevitable, Mr. Hearst is making his sensation by attacking the police for the increasing number of highway robberies committed in broad daylight. In Portland, Oregon, it is said to be impossible to buy a job. In Seattle, Washington, it seems to be little better, and over in Vancouver, British Columbia, where single-tax limited led to an enormous boom, soup kitchens are running day and night and the situation is desperate. Reliable reports tell me that all along the railroad tracks men are camping in numbers greater even than in 1893, and many a time have I heard the remark that a repetition of those panic days would cause a revolution in this country. I am skeptical as to that, but I believe that during the last twenty years we have got rid of many delusions that formerly held us in chains. There is evident today a determination to hoot down fine words and vague abstractions; to distrust the brittle promises of politicians and public functionaries, and to help ourselves. That is promising. The best religious text I know, though it is not in the bible, is—"God helps those who help themselves."

My experience of mass meetings has been varied, and has filled me with contempt, but I am inclined to make an exception of that held at Blanchard Hall, December 21. Not because the hall was packed to overflowing; not because the audience was enthusiastic; but because it showed that clear-sightedness which comes, and comes only, when men are in deed earnest. The platform was crowded with reformers, who made reform speeches of the customary type, proposing palliatives which would not even palliate. But invariably the house rose almost as one man when the palliatives were exposed. That is promising. The indispensable work is still the remorseless exposure of humbugs. Until the American people get out of the habit of loving to be flim-flammed, nothing worth doing can be done.

Perhaps I may be pardoned for saying that I myself denounced the proposition that the unemployed be set to work on what are called erroneously "public" works. I stated that such a course would benefit mainly the real estate speculators and monopolists, who are themselves the cause of all this trouble. The important thing is not that I said it, but that it is true, and that the audience instantly grasped the truth and shouted its approval. The Central Labor Council was responsible for that proposition, by which the pirate feed would be fed still fatter by the cheap labor of the unemployed.

As an illustration, Councilman Reed is responsible for elaborate municipal railroad schemes, which center largely around Griffith Park. They will make Col. Griffith, who is today a millionaire, a multi-millionaire, and add greatly to the value of the fifty-thousand dollar mansions that adorn his miles of property. Apart from all other considerations, Col. Griffith has lived here some forty years, always in luxury and always without doing one stroke of work, though he has been most active in inducing others to make the improvements that enhance enormously the value of his enormous properties. He is the perfect type of social parasite, and we certainly do not want Socialist councilmen or stupid Central Labor bodies to load us down still further with that sort of burden.

When we squeeze out the humbug we shall solve the problem; and before. The unemployed want things, not words. They must get them; they must get them by insistence, and they must get them from the robbers, not from the robbed. They must not go whining round to their fellow workers, who have been bled already to exhaustion. They themselves must go boldly for the hold-up men and demand restitution. When they have the courage to do that they will get plenty of backing in this city, for ninety per cent of us know how the speculators have been flaying us, and we are sore all through about it.

Crime, of the most unpardonable, because most utterly un-social character, has been the steady occupation of the leading citizens and institutions

of Los Angeles for years past. They have been lying, and lying knowingly, on a colossal scale; not from necessity but of deliberate choice, that they might pocket millions. They are really criminals; utterly anti-social and caring only for the gratification of their own inordinate appetites; utterly regardless of the suicides, the ruined hearts, the broken homes, their lying obviously begets. There are not many of them, and the names of the leaders we all have by heart. They are the Chamber of Commerce land boomers and the proprietors of our daily press.

According to ordinary justice these people should be whipped, and whipped soundly, for the misery they have caused. But I am not a believer in revenge, and I am aware that there is one extenuating circumstance. These people act as they have acted because it is "Business," and the American public, as a whole, sustains them in that vile attitude. It would seem unjust, therefore, to single them out for special punishment, but we certainly should make them pay back the millions they have obtained by false pretenses, and we ought to have the wit and pluck to put that through. Those millions constitute the proper fund out of which to deal with this emergency, and we should not be stingy in their administration. The men and women flayed by these millionaires have had to pinch and scrape along for many a weary month as best they could.

Two distinct sets of people are interested in having this question solved correctly; first, the unemployed; secondly, those of us who, though still employed, must labor for our livelihood. Each set, as it seems to me, should attend to its own business. The unemployed should see to it that they get the things necessary to live, and that they are not exploited; that the opportunity to work shall come to their sole and exclusive profit, and that they be not used as suckers to pile up more wealth for the wealthy. As for us who are employed, we should see that the bill is paid by those who ought to pay it.

With all this the Mexican Revolution is mixed up. Time and again I have pointed out that Los Angeles has become the Mecca for the pirates whom an outraged Mexican proletariat is driving beyond its borders. Here they are made much of, and our social leaders vie with one another in congratulating this city on having added to its population another set of vampires. This is the time to stop all that; once and for all. Terrazas, for example, has lost his colossal Mexican holdings, but he has still, they say, a trifle of \$8,000,000 poked away in American banks, and, of course, steered straight for this city. Here he thinks he will be safe; here, like so many others, Americans and Mexicans alike, he hopes to be able to live in luxury without doing one stroke of work. I have some faint hope that this unemployed problem may start an avalanche which will send him scuttling back to Mexico, as being, after all, the safer place for thieves.

To this article I append an editorial, taken from the "Los Angeles Record" of Dec. 20. It may serve to drive home the moral I try to convey, and should help, at least, to illustrate how identical is man's struggle to re-establish, on both sides of the border, conditions that shall meet more satisfactorily life's elemental needs. In the belief that the struggle is upon us; in the belief that it will bear us to heights of happiness and mental eye today can measure, and in the belief that in the struggle itself we shall find our highest joy, I feel justified in wishing all our readers a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." From no other point of view could I do so without writing myself down as a disgusting humbug.

WM. C. OWEN.

Villa's Example

Gen. Villa, low-brow and ex-bandit, has done what might have saved Madero. He has confiscated, so far as possible, the vast estates of Terrazas and the Creels, declaring that the property shall be given to the widows and orphans of his soldiers. Terrazas' land holdings comprised about two-thirds of the state of Chihuahua, and if the rebels win, this land may be divided among the people, providing that Villa has his say. Does it look like brigandage? Man is a land animal. It is not well that a Terrazas own two-thirds of a state and that 99 per cent of the people therein be, consequently, poor, miserable and hopeless. Can you reasonably expect loyalty to law and order, or a neat discrimination as to what is right from people who have everlastingly been poor, miserable and hopeless?

He is a fool who expects that when an oppressed people seize the power of reformation and restitution, they will be nice about that they do in redressing their wrongs.

Villa has struck at the great curse of Mexico. He has done, to an extent, just what the masses of Mexico want done, without waiting for constitutional legislation to do it. If he persists in this policy and his example is followed by other victorious rebels, it will not be long before the Huerta regime vanishes. Confiscation by right of might has an ugly look. So does the knife of the surgeon who cuts to save life. Lucky the land that has a sure legal cure for oppressive monopoly. ("Los Angeles Record.")

The Young People's Socialist League devoted the collection at its "hobby" night meeting Saturday week to the Rangel-Cline Defense Fund. The receipts were \$601.

Mexican Notes

So far as the Los Angeles press is concerned the sensational Mexican headlines are showing a tendency to disappear, the city having discovered that it has a Mexican problem of its own in the shape of the unemployed. Same causes and same results; all tangible assets grabbed by the moneyed mob; a swarm of penniless, workless proletarians. The board of supervisors, county charity organizations, etc., are full of schemes for putting thousands to work on the improvement of our State and county roads. It is dollars to doughnuts that the improvements will be made where the political managers have gobbled land, which will rise immediately in value. In Los Angeles the land question, which has thrown all Mexico into the bloodiest kind of revolution, should be up, at least, for investigation; but not by Socialists of the Councilman Wheeler kind can help it.

The military operations of the last week in Mexico can be dismissed briefly. At Guaymas, Ojeda's troops have been deserting and mutinying. The surrender by the Federals of this important port appears imminent. The Federals are most strongly entrenched at Ojinaga, some seventy miles from Juarez and on the frontier. Villa, who has 2000 men at Juarez and 5000 at Chihuahua, is reported as declaring that he is content to leave the Federals bottled up at Ojinaga, while he makes preparations for taking Torreon, 200 miles south of Chihuahua. On the other hand, the Federals assert that Salazar and Orozco will advance from the North, while forces are sent from Torreon on the South, to catch Villa between two fires.

However, little confidence appears to be felt in this official threat, although Huerta may be able to get better work out of his soldiers in the North since he was able recently to send them \$250,000 and pay up part of their back wages. He is reported as having also obtained an international loan sufficient to meet the government's bond interest, due next month.

In the "Chicago Tribune," one finds the statement by "Observer" that any number of European financial houses are ready to advance Mexico all the money she needs, since no amount of revolution can destroy the country's natural wealth. That is true, but it is also true that the lenders want to feel assured that their borrower will continue to hold the reins of government; that he will have the power of taxation and confiscation which only possession of government gives. It is the fear that there may be no government in Mexico which makes the bankers hesitate.

Zapata Nearly Caught.

December 18 Zapata was reported as having formally demanded Huerta's surrender. The Zapatistas have been active in the States of Mexico and Tlaxcala, and Emiliano himself came near, being captured when raiding within thirteen miles of Mexico City. The better opinion seems to be that he is biding his time and waiting until Villa has worked his way South. A juncture of forces against Mexico City will then be possible.

There has been much money trouble in Mexico City. The Bank of London and Mexico having suspended, it has twelve State branches, and it and the National Bank are practically today the only banks of issue. Huerta accordingly declared the last ten days of this month a legal holiday, thus abolishing the banks from necessity of making payments during that period.

Tampico is being attacked once more, and the rebels, who are said to have lost 1000 men in the previous attempt, are represented as expressing great confidence in their ability to take it. But the federal gunboats are still there, with heavy guns commanding the situation, as at Mazatlan and Guaymas.

De la Barra reached Tokyo, Japan, Dec. 22, and talk of a Mexican-Japanese alliance grew plentiful. In fact, Japan is represented as having already shipped heavy cannon and much ammunition to Huerta.

Things much stranger than such an alliance may happen, for, as "Observer" and many others point out, there is great fear in Europe that United States intervention will mean permanent annexation, to which many European powers, and probably Great Britain in particular, are much opposed. Oil is the king of modern industry, the Russian field is playing out, and whatever else happens, a sure supply of oil the British fleet must have.

The situation undoubtedly has grown most complicated; and, apart from the peasant's war of confiscation, which goes on merrily all the time, an international game of diplomacy is being played which has for its stakes the possession of the Mexican and other Latin-American markets. "Current Opinion" for this month devotes pages to extracts from European papers, and especially those of England and Germany, all insistent that the United States cannot be allowed to deal single-handed with the situation. That is making the interventionists pause, and another powerful factor has come into the problem. There are some two million additional unemployed in the United States, and plutocracy may well be meditating that it needs defense at home.

MAKE WHEELER FACE YOU
If the unemployed would take a single instance, such as the proposed working them in Griffith Park, and take the trouble to find out all about it, they would understand the brace game they are up against. Land monopoly is proposing to work them to a finish, and its agents are such as Socialist Councilman Wheeler. Some capable radical should force Wheeler to debate this question. If the inside history of Griffith Park does not open the public's eyes, nothing will.

The Unemployed Our Men in Jail.

Los Angeles, hitherto singularly indifferent, has awakened suddenly to the fact that she has an immense unemployed problem on her hands. The ball, after several unsuccessful pushes, was finally set rolling at the luncheon of the Home Rule Tax League, Dec. 16, which resulted in the meeting at Blanchard Hall, mentioned in our editorial. Since then, as we are informed, the German-American Alliance, which claims a membership of some 12,000, has taken up the question; even the "Times" has to admit editorially that the situation is grave, and, in a word, all sorts of people begin to interest themselves.

That is all very well, but experience shows conclusively that the one important thing is the amount of energy the unemployed themselves display.

At the meeting named—with T. W. Williams, secretary of the Socialist Party, in the chair—numerous civic associations, representatives from the Labor Temple, L. W. W., and other radical bodies, were on the platform and expressed their views. A resolution calling on the City Council to "immediately employ these idle workers" was passed, and an amendment introduced by C. F. Grow, on behalf of the Central Labor Council, calling for \$5,000,000, instead of the \$500,000 originally proposed, adopted. This was presented to the City Council the day following and referred to its finance committee.

The pith of the remedy suggested by our Labor Council is contained in the following clause:—"Whereas it is obvious that the employment of these idle men, either on the public lands or on public works, will enormously enrich the city; to the end that this section of the city be not so obvious, to the contrary, it is quite obvious to him that this statement is a lie, and he protested accordingly. The 'public lands' are improving roads, etc. All such work, and all park improvements, enhance enormously the value of the adjoining properties, which are owned by private persons, and often by the big land monopolists who are almost entirely responsible for present conditions. All the enrichment that the city—the ordinary citizen—will get is a slight decrease in the danger of being held up by hunger-maddened men. A few such will accept the city's charity, tendered in the shape of work, and there the thing will end."

If it were proposed to employ these unemployed in making overalls in the Brownstein, Newark, Lewis factory, or candies at Bishop's, or rivets at Llewellyn Brothers, from Labor Temple there would come a terrific roar over the conspiracy to supply manufacturers with cheap labor at the public's expense. Yet our Labor Council is perfectly willing to supply our land monopolists with that very thing, although it is well known that they are the ones who have been booming Los Angeles to the skies, in the hope of selling their real estate at the famine prices they have established.

Truth is truth. No amount of rhetoric or political pull can make the proposed solution sound. Instead of having to beg the city for a job, thus benefiting the owners of "additions" and running up the price of land still higher, the unemployed should be given free access to the means of production, that they may employ themselves and put into their own pockets the full worth of whatever their labor may produce. That would be a sound and permanent solution of the problem. The one proposed is quackery.

Hundreds, at least, of the unemployed now know that what we are writing is true. As a rule the members of the L. W. W. all know it, and their spokesmen voice that sentiment. The Single Taxers know it, and indeed it should be clear to every one who takes the trouble to think into the subject.

In reality, we are not interested in what others do for the unemployed, but in what they do for themselves; in the virility of their attitude, the consistency and clearness of their demands, the manhood they display. In the number of meetings spontaneously springing up, there seem to be some signs that they may rise to the occasion. If they don't, nobody else will. The force needed for the necessary change is not in the well-to-do, however sympathetic they may be, but in the unemployed themselves.

The day of charity is passing; the doctrine of vicarious atonement is exploded; no manna falls from heaven to feed the starving. It must be gathered by their own right hands. Meanwhile, the agitation is spreading all along the coast, and we anticipate that the meeting called for Christmas Day, at the Plaza, will draw a record-breaking crowd. Luckily the men all know that fine words fill no empty stomachs. They are learning as the Mexican peon has learned.

GEE! WHAT LUCK!

"The Wooden Shoe" is in luck, for the San Francisco police have forbidden its sale on that saintly city's streets. We remember that Benjamin R. Tucker—a cold enthusiast if ever one existed—used to squander hard earned dollars on publishing economic works for the instruction of an invincibly unappreciative public. Nevertheless, as the Sunday-school primers have it, virtue finally comes into its reward, and one day he took it into his head to translate and publish Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata." That being an aged philosopher's plea for sexual asceticism, our postoffice department naturally decided that it was an indecent publication and forbade it the use of the mails. Tucker, they say, made several thousand dollars; all he ever scooped up, or is likely to scoop up, out of revolutionary propaganda. So, a happy and prosperous New Year to you, Brother Cook!

Christmas compels us to go to press on Wednesday, which is the night the Rangel-Cline Defense Fund meets. It is, therefore, impossible for us to give a detailed account of money received since our last report, but the financial secretary tells us it will run over \$100. We trust that after the holidays receipts will be still larger, for these fourteen trials call for heavy expenditures.

The cases are set for trial, Jan. 5. Don't forget that.

Texas is not letting up in its hostility to those of our comrades who are endeavoring to plead for their imprisoned brothers. Tomás Farrell Caldero is the latest victim, having been arrested while speaking from a soap-box on the streets of El Paso, Dec. 19. He was sentenced immediately to four months imprisonment, after which he is to leave the town. Caldero is a Los Angeles man and member of the Mexican Liberal Party, whom we know well. He is a good speaker, of the seriously logical type. That is his crime.

FORMAL PROTEST.

We publish, as requested, the following protest, in which two branches of the L. W. W., at Phoenix, Ariz., have taken up the cudgels on behalf of "Regeneration" and as against "La Huelga General." At the same time we express the hope and belief that the period of personal attacks has come to a natural end, since both the Mexican and unemployed agitation have become so large and threatening that they may well exhaust our time and energies.

Our English-speaking readers care not a jot whether Gen. Oils or was not interested in some company from which cannon are alleged to have been purchased several years ago. What they want to know is if the Mexican disinherited are struggling bravely for emancipation, and whether their American brothers are likely to follow their example. We should think Spanish readers would hold similar views, and we expect they do. The protest follows:—

We, the undersigned members in good standing of the Industrial Workers of the World, named in committees of the same with the consent of Local 272, of Phoenix, Arizona, Branch 1 (American) and Branch 2 (Mexican), in ordinary session the 1st and 4th of December, 1913, have agreed unanimously to launch an energetic and solemn protest against "Huelga General," which is considered the organ of this organization, to instruct, educate and organize the working class, in the form best suited to enable it to seek its emancipation.

But, as appears, "Huelga General" is not travelling in accordance with the doctrines that constitute the sacred mission which the struggle imposes on all conscious workers. On the contrary, the said paper has dedicated itself to the obstruction or destruction of the cause by giving space in its columns to certain articles, written by ambitious mercenaries who seek only to take the life out of the revolutionary movement of Mexico, and who, dragged along by the vain pretensions of wise intellectuals, have proposed to divide the proletariat, sowing hatred, by means of intricate and calumnious, in their attacks on "Regeneration," organ of the Mexican Liberal Party. We are in accord with that paper, since we consider that its principles pursue the same ideal we ourselves pursue in this organization, and that we ought, therefore, to be united in the cause, and not permit any one enlisted in it to degrade or deflect the course of the struggle, as "Huelga General's" correspondent has been doing, in Nos. 6 and 7, of September 27, 1913. In No. 14 of November 22, of the same year appears another article of the same stripe, entitled: "Questions for him who can to answer."

Such is the educational propaganda that the organ of the Industrial Workers of the World, calling itself "Huelga General," is carrying out; making itself nothing more than the accomplice of unworthy writers who do not dare to sign their articles for fear of becoming known and being expelled from the organization.

Therefore, in the name of the organization, we protest solemnly to all the libertarian press and the locals of this institution of the L. W. W., asking them to take into consideration the matter of this formal protest against the manner in which "Huelga General" is proceeding. Dec. 6, 1913. (Signed) M. Lugo, S. G. Linsey, Jose S. Torres, Nick Mortensen, J. E. Stoll, Enixek S. Beck.

DIRECT ACTION.
Juarez, Dec. 22.—The home of property of Jacob E. Touche, a native of Turkey, valued at \$500,000, was confiscated by Villa and Touche paid \$10,000 cash for the release of a sister. Touche was reputed to have amassed a large fortune in Mexico after entering the country many years ago with nothing more than a trained bear. His elaborate home in Chihuahua was one of the sights of the city.

OUR ARMY AND NAVY CADS.
President Wilson has resigned the honorary membership he accepted recently in the Order of the Carabao, composed of army and navy officers who served in the Philippine Islands during the four years that succeeded the Spanish-American war. It is stated that the President resigned because the order, at its banquet, Dec. 11, ridiculed the President's Philippine policies. We trust, however, that it was because the members sang in chorus, and have been in the habit for years of singing in chorus, the following brutal refrain:

"Damn, damn, damn the insurrectos,
Cross-eyed, kadiak ladrones,
Underneath the starry flag
Civilize 'em with a Krag."

To drive the matter further home we reproduce an extract from "Regeneration" of Sept. 27, which runs as follows:

"San Francisco, July 30.—The story of the killing of 2000 Moros in the Philippine Islands by General Pershing's soldiers was related here today by John McLean, a civilian employee of the United States army, Quartermaster Department, who arrived from Manila on the steamer Persia. He said 196 women and 340 children were killed in one day's fighting. When the Moros saw the battle was lost to the American troops they held their women and children in front of them as shields, and the fire from the rifles and machine guns of the troops mowed them down by scores. The news of the fighting was strictly censored at Manila."

Of Villa's butcheries we do not approve, but beside the United States army and navy officers who are members of the Order of the Carabao he shines as an angel of civility.

AGAIN "THE REBEL."

In our last issue we criticized an article in "The Rebel," which attributed the Mexican Revolution solely to the Roman Catholic Church. The demands of space compelled us to cut our criticism, and we now publish the remainder, which runs as follows:

Of course the article in question contains some truth. The writer, for example, is correct when he says that "Madero at once proved the sincerity of all his Socialist pretensions and dreams and promises by filling every important office with his nearest relatives," etc. These, and his immediate attempts to found a military regime, lost him, at once, the confidence of all sincere Mexicans—of whom there are many thousands—and, whether his death was due to Jesuitical intrigue or not, his speedy fall was certain. What evidence is there that the assassins were Jesuit agents? We much doubt if there is any. If there is, it is the absolute duty of every freethinker to drag it to light.

Diaz is represented by the writer as the enemy of the Roman Catholic Church, which is credited with his downfall. We don't believe a word of it. Diaz could not have been overthrown had not he catered exclusively to the rich, with whom the Catholic Church is always hand in glove. Diaz—a gentleman who always played both ends and the middle—made himself solid with the wealthy by marrying a Roman Catholic woman who was a noted pillar of the Church and influenced him greatly.

However, without entering into a detailed criticism of the article, for which we have no space, we register once more our protest against that belittling of the Mexican Revolution which is perpetuated when a writer represents it as the work of any particular man or set of men. It is the revolt of Life, made by the starving peon who means to have bread.

As we see it, economic exploitation of the most ruthless kind has brought about conditions in Mexico which have thrown her into violent revolution. The stream of life has broken through the dam that formerly confined it, and in the muddy waters Jesuits, speculators, politicians and all the bared wisdoms which get something for nothing and profit by the misfortunes of others, are fishing industriously. The great central fact, however, is that economic oppression has sowed the wind and that the hurricane is in strict accordance with the laws of nature. That central fact must not be hidden. We in particular have to make it clear because it knits the Mexican Revolutionary movement to that of the world at large. Everywhere similar causes produce similar effects.

IN THE LAWS CLUTCHES.

Everywhere the poor man is liable to be arrested on trumped-up charges, but the Southern States have the worst reputation in this regard, and it is recognized that when the victim is a negro or Mexican there are practically no lengths to which the authorities will not go. We ourselves have written much on this subject, more particularly in the Spanish section; for we are in constant receipt of letters setting out the injustice with which Mexican arrests have been made, and the harsh treatment meted out to those who, in the eyes of the law, are still regarded as innocent. Here is one, just received from a prisoner and dealing with his own case and that of a fellow-sufferer. We have the best of reasons for believing that both of these men are innocent of the serious crimes with which they are charged, and we have been trying to get counsel for them. The letter runs:

"I wrote you on the 3rd, but feel very sure you never got it. (accused of murder) is held incommunicado, and has not been able to get any answer to the numerous letters he has written. He has sent about ten letters, soliciting funds for his defense. A lawyer, any lawyer, should come to see me, for he will be paid. As for myself, I surely can raise \$50 more through the man for whom I worked."

"Court is in session today and they will deal with the case of —. He was arrested for going into a store to make purchases and showing \$200. They accused him of having stolen it, and they took the money. He is certain to be free, but he will not get the money back. At the last session of Court, held last April, — was acquitted. He is still held a prisoner, without his knowing why. They simply tell him that he will be released when it pleases them. "I have never received the paper, although I have spoken about it many times. It is five months since I have had a copy of Regeneration. Nobody has been to see me here, and I have been much alarmed by a recurrence of my old sickness. They have not allowed me either stamps or paper, to answer letters, and in every way possible they put difficulties in my path. This letter goes by the grape-vine route."

For obvious reasons we suppress names and other details that would identify the writer. He is anything but the unlettered peon with whom so many of his aristocratic fellow-workers find it impossible to sympathize. We submitted both his case and that of his fellow prisoner to a Los Angeles lawyer, who asks \$150 for the two defenses. It is not an unreasonably charge, as lawyers' charges go; for a long journey and the spending of much time will be involved. One of the men has quite a little property. The other has means of raising money; but it appears that every effort has been made to keep them isolated and helpless.

Such is the course habitually pursued toward the poor, especially if they belong to one of the weaker nationalities. If they have no money they may lie for months in jail on trumped-up charges, and finally be "railroaded" remorselessly. If they are known as having some little means they will be isolated and all imaginable pressure brought to bear on them, that they may trust their liberty to some slusher with whom the officials divvy up.

Finally, let us not forget that our Texas comrades face trial for their lives in a State that is the most notorious of all for such injustice as is sketched most briefly in the letter translated above.

Let us add that in all these Southern States the "fee system" prevails, officers and justices of the peace being rewarded in proportion to the number of arrests and convictions they effect. No more iniquitous scheme was ever devised, and for years past all writers on criminology have condemned it with the utmost vigor they could command. That avails nothing. The fact that it makes the fortune of officials outweighs all argument.

TEXAS, THE BEAUTIFUL.

In speaking of rotten conditions let us dwell first on those that exist while one is a prisoner "under the Law." Law in the State of Texas is a farce; more so than in any other State. A man going up for trial in (Bexar Co.) San Antonio, on the most flimsy evidence, is railroaded without the semblance of justice. If they see they can not convict a man they throw his witnesses in jail and threaten them, and, most generally, a witness does not stand under this "law of the land," and, naturally, their object is gained; that of sending a person to the penitentiary, where he is doled out to the "Managers" on the penal farms.

First of all, we see men who are not convicted, only "charged" with some "offense or crime," being led around the streets with chains around their necks, like wild animals; something that does not happen in any other State in the Union or in the world; not even in the darkest parts of Africa or in Exile Siberia. Russia is considered the worst country on earth, but one has to come to Texas to see outrageous treatment and brutality, such as no other country or State would allow. If one happens to be unfortunate and belong "up north," then, look out; for they try every way under the sun to have him convicted, and all the time Texas is advertising for the Northern people to come down and settle in the "beautiful State of Texas."

In the jails one finds the most filthy conditions, worse than hog pens, food unfit for hogs to eat, let alone human beings, and, if one makes a request for more or better, he gets even worse than he was served before. Then if he complains, he is threatened with all the tortures, from bread and water, down or up.

In San Antonio County jail there are 11 men who have done nothing other than voting. If our ideals and going to the rescue of the working class in Mexico, and who had the misfortune to fall into the hands of one of these man-hunters, who cannot hold his office as "Sheriff" in the State of Texas, unless he has some notches in his gun, or can boast of how many men he has killed, or what a "good shot he is." ("The Voice of the People.")

THE A. F. OF L. GABFEST.

In "The Voice of the People," Juliet Dumont reviews the recent A. F. of L. convention at Seattle in a manner that appeals to us, because we believe it to be the truth. He writes of it as "a general picnic and gab-fest for the already overfed, underworked and overpaid officials." He condemns, indeed, all these nonsensical conventions, which never accomplish anything, since they are always composed mainly of leaders and not of class agitators who bear the heat and burden of the fight. He makes these general reflections:

"No labor official can represent me or feel my aching back, and head. He only fights for his petty craft and graft. He has no ideal of Solidarity to work for. His idea of Solidarity is a solid job as an official. The rank and file are more courageous and more ready for a scrap on the job than are the officials, who are tied down by cowardice and the notion that they must set an example as 'law-abiding, cool-headed leaders.' Any revolutionary or fighting spirit manifested by the all-too-patient workers must be squelched and discouraged."

DON'T FORGET THIS!

The editor of this section will lecture at Labor Temple, Tuesday evening, Dec. 30, on "The Mexican Revolution Our Golden Opportunity." Admission will be free, and the lecture will be followed by the asking and answering of questions, and by discussion. The Socialist Party has kindly donated the use of the hall, and all profits will go to the Rangel-Cline Defense Fund, in aid of our imprisoned Texas comrades. The speaker of the evening will leave for San Francisco, from which point he expects to start a tour devoted to lecturing on this and kindred revolutionary subjects.