

Public Meeting of the Henry George Congress

THE public meeting of the Congress was held on the evening of September 12. The *Times* stated the number present at 300, but there were probably more. This included quite a number of strangers and non-Single Taxers, whose presence was highly gratifying. They listened with interest through the entire programme.

Mr. Frederic C. Leubuscher, who presided, said:

"Were I not chairman I should indulge in some recollections of Henry George, because I have known him just 41 years ago this month, and I met him not only in the political campaign of that year and other campaigns that followed, but at his home, but perhaps there may be another occasion when I can make such a speech.

"The first speaker will be Mr. Jose Miguel Bejarano, Secretary of the Mexican Chamber of Commerce in the United States. That is a body of Mexicans resident in the United States, which has been instituted for the purpose of not only fostering trade relations but good feeling between the United States and Mexico. I think you will agree with me that never in the history of this country has there been so much use for such a body. Not only to foster good feeling between these two countries but between the United States and all of Latin America. One of the most heinous crimes of this century has been to my mind the attack of this great Uncle Sam of 120 million meters high on a little boy called Nicaragua.

Senor Bejarano, who has been a Single Taxer since he was 12 years of age, is secretary of this body and devotes all of his time to fostering good feeling between the two countries."

ADDRESS OF MR. BEJARANO

The following is an abstract of Mr. Bejarano's speech:

The year 1915 began a new life in the republic of Mexico and the most important achievement since 1910 was the educational campaign resulting in the establishment of 3700 rural schools throughout the country; where the percentage of illiteracy had been 85% it had now declined to 62%. The Mexican Federation of Labor was more powerful as an influence than the corresponding Federation in the United States, for it had an immense social as well as an educational and political significance.

The economic policy of the government was explained, and Mr. Bejarano stated that land banks had been established, but he deplored the still prevalent catch-as-catch-can forms of taxation and gave numerous statistics indicating the heavy burden which the income tax and others imposed upon the Mexican people.

There are three main classes of taxes in Mexico: 1, Federal, extracting 271 millions of dollars; 2, State governments, extracting 49 millions; 3, Municipalities, extracting 53 millions—a total sum of 373 millions of dollars.

It seems that the state taxes are the heaviest and most

unjust, but the speaker expressed the hope that time and education would improve the bad tax conditions.

Geographically and topographically there is great diversity in the land of Mexico. There are 500 million acres, but the cultivation amounts to about two acres per person and the most of the land remains waste.

There are four features of the land system:

1. Farms which had their origin in the Spanish grants received from the Spanish conquerors.
2. Small farms—same origin.
3. Collective holdings—held by Indians and pueblas under a system of land tenure prior to the arrival of the Spaniards.
4. Homesteads—which are of recent creation.

The irrigation system of the Indians, highly developed at the time the conquerors came upon the scene, is still of great value.

The Indian system of land tenure was more or less based on a community idea, and private ownership originated when the conqueror Cortez gave allotments of land to his followers.

Mr. Bejarano gave a summary of the way in which small land owners had been deprived of their land because they were too ignorant to know how to combat this, and how, in 1915, the first law for rehabilitation was passed and the land illegally taken away from villages was given back. One-fifth of the total population was given land by the government, and in addition farm implements, seed, new tools, etc., to supplant the antiquated implements and methods. The agricultural banks make loans on future crops (one year), on machinery and animals (three years), and upon implements (three years).

He concluded by reminding us that Mexico is only in a state of development and that we could only look for improvement in so young a republic when time and education have put in their leavening influence.

Mr. Leubuscher: When I was a young fellow I used to wait for the weekly arrival of Henry George's *Standard* as nowadays the young men wait for the *Saturday Evening Post*. In the pages of the *Standard* often appeared the name of a medical missionary in China, a man who has since translated Progress and Poverty into Chinese. Dr. Macklin, that missionary, will now address you.

ADDRESS OF W. E. MACKLIN

What China needs more than anything else is education and development. With 95% of illiterates, you are not likely to develop an ideal Single Tax republic in a few years.

The Chinese are very intelligent. They take the highest honors in our colleges and institutions. They are great philosophers and poets. But their civilization can only be compared with the civilization of ancient