

On the next page it says that "all powers of the city, unless otherwise provided in this charter, shall be exercised by, through and under the direction of the Mayor and Commissioners as the city council." And that is all there is to that. After that it is up to the commission. They are to appoint a clerk, auditor, treasurer, engineer and attorney. They are to apportion their own duties. They may create any unpaid boards they please. All told in the simplest language, and in short and crisp sentences that a layman can follow.

The civil service commission is continued. Elections are regulated by the charter more minutely than any other process of government. Here alone are forms provided for petitions and for the ballot. But the conduct of elections may be determined by ordinance. The ballot includes preferential voting and the requirement that the number of first choices must be complete or the ballot does not count.

The Initiative, Referendum and Recall are retained from the present charter.

The debt limit is fixed by general legislation. The provision of the present charter is retained which forbids any contract to spend money unless it is in the treasury. Except that after the tax levy is made the collection of taxes may be anticipated up to 80 per cent by the sale of certificates.

The city is empowered to acquire by eminent domain any property it may need for any public purposes, in or outside of the city. It has also power to acquire the property of any public utility by condemnation.

Franchises may be granted for terms not exceeding twenty-five years, with clauses fixing maximum rates, and the right reserved to control and regulate the holding, to require publicity of accounts, to censor issues of capital stock, and to submit to arbitration any labor dispute that interrupts service.

A good deal of stress is laid by advocates of the charter on the non-partisan features and the elections at large. Non-partisanship is carried to the point of forbidding on the ballot any distinguishing mark to tell what a candidate represents. On the other hand the charter does not fall into the error common under the primary laws of supposing that a candidate to be absolutely pure must be proposed by himself alone. It permits filing by petition and putting it up to the nominee to accept.

It will probably be opposed by public utility corporations and brewery interests. It has opposition from Socialists who insist on having their vote identified at all stages of the game. It is likely to be opposed by many of the Labor vote who suspect the consolidation of the tickets will turn the government over entirely to the rich folks who live in the East End. A school house and church campaign is being carried on for it, however, with the general support of commercial bodies and middle class business. The little band of agitators, except the Socialists, are all for it. The chance of its adoption seems good.

Duluth, Minn., November 23.

J. S. P.



I want a minimum wage for everybody.—Oscar Straus.

Tut, tut! you don't mean it just like that, do you? —Syracuse Post-Standard.

## LAND MONOPOLY IN ARGENTINA.

Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 16, 1912.

For some time past this country has been experiencing the blighting effects of land monopoly exteriorized in a great agrarian strike. The trouble began in the maize-growing area of the Province of Santa Fe.



The maize growers, generally men of small capital, are in the great majority leaseholders. Only about 450 men own approximately 21,250,000 acres. They lease to growers. Originally (some 50 years ago) this land cost about \$5 United States money per acre; to-day the owners demand about this sum per acre as rental (paid in advance), or, if worked on the shares system, from 30 to 54 per cent of the crop. In many places the land has been cropped continuously for 20 years without fertilizing of any sort.

The rise in rental has been very great during the past 4 or 5 years; and whereas in former times, while rentals were moderate, the storekeepers were sure of being paid for goods once the crops were harvested, the excessive rentals now render store payments impossible. As a result the small traders, finding they could not collect their accounts, refused to give credit, and the maize planters and their helpers were thus face to face with starvation. Crops were ready for harvesting, but no one would give them either food or clothing, nor advance money to pay the harvesters.

Confronted with this difficulty, the croppers convened a public meeting at Casilda—a town in the center of the maize zone. Some 5,000 to 6,000 attended, and it was decided to strike.

The example of the Casilda growers was followed all over the north, and soon all renters were on strike.

They demanded a reduction in rental and a 3-years' lease in place of a year-to-year contract.



For over 2 months the strike has been on. In some parts the landlords have reduced rents and the croppers have again commenced work, but in others the strike continues.

In many districts the croppers have formed leagues. They found it impossible to treat individually with the giant landowners.

The latest move on the other side has been the arrest, and imprisonment without trial of the chairmen of a number of district leagues, as also of other officials. These poor wretches are treated as if they were slaves. They are denied the right of public meetings, they are cast in prison as agitators—just because they demand that they be given a chance of working their holdings on terms that will enable them to live and to feed their families.

Thus we are having the "Crofters" question and the "Irish" question repeated over here.



The trouble has only commenced. The fight will be a long one—and may in the end lead to consequences that will leave their mark on the history of the country.

Rental values have reached such extremes that

very few can pay their way. Indirect taxation is increasing by leaps and bounds. The country is borrowing at an alarming rate. Under President Alcega something like \$45,000,000 United States gold was added to the national debt, of which the greatest part was spent on useless warships—none of which could enter the River Plata, owing to shallowness of the water.

Every tangible asset is being traded off to foreigners. Railways, tramways, electric light, water works, even the very ports of the country, except Buenos Aires and La Plata, are under concessions—in the hands of foreign corporations that can and do demand so much per ton on all goods going over their wharves.

Port Belgrano is owned by the Rosario-Porto Belgrano Railway Co., Port Ingo White by the Southern Railway Co., Puerto Galvan by the Pacific Railway Co., Port of Rosario by a French company, Port of Santa Fe by another French company. The city of Bahia Blanca is, practically speaking, owned by the Southern & Pacific Railway Companies between them. One or other owns the markets, the water-supply works, the trams, the electric light—in fact every municipal service that could be made a revenue-producing concern has been sold to foreign capitalists. The rates for wharfage fixed under the Rosario Port concession are such that the shares have been sold on the Paris Exchange (France) at 500 per cent premium.

The poor maize-growers are squeezed by these wharf rates, by railways, by taxes on drays, carts—on everything they possess—and then the landlord takes the balance. If any one raises his voice in protest he goes to jail. Such is the liberty men enjoy in this great country of freedom.

C. N. MACINTOSH.

[In corroboration of the foregoing letter, Dr. Charles L. Logan of Chicago furnishes the following condensed translation from an Argentine newspaper:

On August 16th, "The Nation," a daily paper of Buenos Aires, published an extensive account of the "Agrarian Movement" in the corn-growing district of Argentina, which has taken the form of a strike on the part of the planters (renters) against the excessive rentals demanded by the landowners. Unions were formed, better terms were demanded and in a few cases obtained. At Cordoba six of the union officials were arrested and thrown into jail—no charge being made against them. At Rosario Dr. Netri, active in organizing local unions, urged a national federation of all local bodies. In Uriburu many meetings were held; a provisional commission has been formed by the Provincial authorities with the object of improving the condition of the renters. A meeting of all interested was called for a general discussion of the rural situation. At Simson, where the land is not in great demand, the rent paid by some is 19 and 20 per cent of the crop; others pay 15 per cent and three dollars per hectare (2½ acres), the latter class being in much the worse condition. An effort is also to be made to get a reduction in the price of farm implements. In Pergamino the government has commissioned Mr. Florencio de Basaldúa to enlighten the renters and landowners on a proposition to form a co-operative agricultural society. In explaining its functions, Mr. Basaldúa said the society would purchase all supplies needed by the planters at wholesale and retail at 15 per cent profit; would market all products to best advantage; would have a law passed compelling landowners to subdivide into small holdings, the same to be

sold to planters at current prices on long time payments at low interest, the Government to advance five million dollars and an equal amount to be raised by the sale of 5 per cent bonds guaranteed by a bank which would hold all mortgages. In his address, Mr. Basaldúa said that "the rights of labor are sacred, as are also the rights of capital, the latter being the sweat crystallized and the economy practiced by the present holders or their forefathers." In this case the "capital" is land values, and the gentleman failed to indicate those who really did the heavy sweating while the crystallizing process was going on.

—Editors of The Public.]



#### A Later Letter.

Buenos Ayres, September 30, 1912.

Just a line to advise you that the President of Argentina, Dr. Roque Saenz Pena, has just sent a special message to Congress affirming the Singletax.

Things here had got to such an extreme that it was either a change of fiscal policy or "bust." Fortunately Dr. Saenz Pena seems to be clear-headed enough to see this.

The message is a splendid affirmation of our plank—Tax monopoly, free enterprise.

C. N. MACINTOSH.

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## INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

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### ONE OF THE PROPHETS.

Joseph Fels in a Private Letter of August 30, 1912.

There is no doubt in my mind that a mass of people, constantly growing in number in practically every civilized country of the world, is coming more and more to understand what Henry George stood for in his lifetime, and more and more what he has left us in his books.

The rapidly increasing number of adherents to the economic teachings of Henry George is proof that, though dead, the man yet lives.

I, for one, am convinced that Henry George was one of the prophets of the great modern world; and, by the same reasoning, that his books are among the great bibles of the world—especially his masterpiece, "Progress and Poverty."

In many countries the propaganda for his reform rises above politics. It is indeed a moral fight. It is a religious fight—a fight for universal freedom among men.

Of the sixteen countries in which I am more or less intimately co-operating for this great cause, none are making greater progress for the time and money expended than the Spanish-speaking countries.



### SENATOR PERKY.

Boisé, Idaho, November 21.

To your list of Singletaxers in Congress should be added the name of Hon. K. I. Perky, recently appointed by Governor Hawley to fill the recess vacancy in the United States Senate caused by the death of Hon. Weldon B. Heyburn. Judge Perky is an ardent Singletaxer and has long been the confidential ad-