

pesos of present revenue corresponding to certain charges (street car and telephone franchises, the use of the streets, certain sumptuary taxes, etc.), so that a balance of 24,000,000 pesos would remain, which would fall upon real estate, apart from improvements. As the value of land held in private hands is estimated at 4 billion pesos, an additional tax of 6 mills on the peso would give 24,000,000 pesos, that is to say, sufficient to make up the cost of municipal administration.

"I trust that, if the Hon. Council agrees with the Executive Department in the opinions above expressed, it will grant authorization to negotiate with the National Congress the reform of our city charter, with a view to obtaining the important advantages to be derived therefrom for the taxpayers, not only on account of the fairness of the Tax, but because it would restore to productive activity many and extensive portions of the City's area today held out of use in speculative anticipation of a natural rise in value."

(We may add that in the Budget for 1919, Dr. Llambias introduces a radical reduction in the list of licenses, permits, etc., which bristle in the Tax bills of the previous year. He substitutes one assessment of $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ on the Rating of a business property for the various charges for Signs and Advertisements, the Inspection of Weights and Measures, the Analyses charges, and the Awning License. The above substitute Tax will be incorporated with the General Tax, with evident advantages in economy of collection as well as clearness to the taxpayer.)

An interesting pamphlet on Town Planning, by Mr. Angel Silva, Jr., of Buenos Aires, has reached us. It is a reproduction of a paper presented by Mr. Silva to the National Congress of Engineering, in Sept. 1916, at which Congress Mr. Silva was Secretary of the Section of Architecture. In his paper Mr. Silva made a strong plea for the taxation of land values as the necessary base for the planning and construction of harmoniously designed cities. While a good deal of the paper is occupied with references to foreign initiatives and experience, there is also plenty of local color. The work gains in importance by the fact that the Congress indorsed its conclusion by formal resolution. It may be added that Mr. Silva was for several years President of the Argentine Single Tax League. He also served as Director of the National Graphic Register of Property and of the Realty Survey of the City of Buenos Aires.

Pan-American Commercial Reciprocity

THIS is the title of a work by Dr. Jose Custodio Alves de Lima, Brazilian Consul-General, Inspector of Consulates in Central and North America and Asia. The little pamphlet has special interest for Single Taxers. Its author, a strong and influential advocate of closer commercial relations between Brazil and the United States, through progressive reciprocity agreements, is at the same time perfectly convinced that a prior or concurrent condition, (par-

ticularly in the case of his own country), should be a change in the tax laws toward a Single Tax on land values.

"In some circles," says Dr. Alves de Lima, on page 9, "if anybody suggests the transformation of our tributary system to a land tax, even on a gradual scale, as it has been practised, with marvelous results, in our most southernly State of Rio Grande do Sul, we hear the following questions asked: 'What will become of our public revenue? What will the administration live on?'"

"The gradual substitution of export duty by a land tax is such a feasible and easy task that it does not even deserve the honor of a discussion. All such revenue, be it levied by municipalities, state or federal governments, follows an invariable and fixed law, gradually growing in direct ratio with the increase of the utilized land under taxation, whether in the cities or in the country.

"In the present case, all that is necessary is to eliminate the export duty on goods going to the United States, maintaining, however, the import duty against those countries which do not favor our products as does the United States."

"I maintain also," he adds on page 14, "that we have not yet realized that the solution of our great problems is completely subordinated to the substitution of a land tax for our present tributary system; that, unless this is done, Mother Earth will bring forth no fruit; that, until such prosperity is reached, Brazil will never attain a permanent state of economic independence. That nations, like individuals, must have the means of material subsistence for the maintenance of their moral and political independence."

We venture to suggest that our national Congress, which apparently can conceive of no other method of revenue collection than the promiscuous pillage of all wealth in sight, might for its own instruction and advantage consider the quite opposite fiscal tendencies now making headway in Latin-America. It will be a serious anti-climax if, having incurred a colossal war debt to make the world safe for democracy, our own capital and enterprise should emigrate to those southern lands, attracted by a greater fiscal and economic freedom.

"THE SOCIAL QUESTION" (La Cuestion Social) by Dr. Andre Maspero Castro, Buenos Aires, is a little work of 110 pages, published in the current year. Dr. Maspero Castro is the author of three other works on economic questions, his first being his thesis for Doctorate, entitled "The Single Tax," which was awarded the Gold Medal by the Faculty of Law of the University of Buenos Aires, in 1915.

Like all that he has written, his present work is enriched by a copiously selected bibliography. It is the work of a militant rather than meditative writer. Dr. Maspero Castro is president of the Reform Party in the Argentine, in whose programme the Single Tax stands a main fiscal issue.

MAYOR HYLAN declares that the most important question in New York City today is: "How can we lower rents?" If Mayor Hylan really wants to find out let him take a course in Progress and Poverty.