

rier between Englishmen and their own land. Those words held the key, the only solution, to the life-and-death problem with which European civilization is now irrevocably face to face. Down with the fiscal and economic barriers to the use of the earth; and democracy and civilization can be saved. Otherwise, after a frantic orgy of fantastic experiments, the world must go down into yet a darker valley of humiliation and terror. The responsibility of the statesman was never greater than at this hour. Woe to him and his time, if he face not the Sphinx with the true answer to her riddle. "The struggle that must either revivify or convulse in ruin, is near at hand, if it be not already begun," said Henry George, with prophetic vision.

The Mexican Situation

THE attempt of the Mexican government to control the Mexican Oil fields, whose ownership has almost entirely passed to foreign interests, has excited the alarm of those interests and provoked the energetic protests of the British and American governments on behalf of the menaced interests. The argument is much used that "foreign development" has been manifestly and entirely to the advantage of Mexico. Some candid comment on that claim is made by Prof. Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago, in the September number of the *Journal of Sociology*, 1918:—

"The trouble with the solution is that 'development' is always primarily for the benefit of the outsider Instead of uniting the capital city with every part of the country, as real railroads should, they connected absolutely separated and disunited producing areas with the cities of the United States. In case of war with us, the railroads of Mexico would be of little service for the transportation of Mexican troops; but they would enable the United States to flood the central plateau, the west coast, and the gulf seaboard with forces. In other words, the much-vaunted railroad development of Mexico was more advantageous for Americans than for Mexicans."

"So, too, the great petroleum fields of Tamaulipas and Vera Cruz are of little real benefit to Mexico. They increase the business of Tampico; they furnish labor to a certain number of hands; they produce a valuable material for world-use; they make fortunes for a few Americans and English speculators; but they contribute little to Mexico's upbuilding; they lead to political corruption, to local unrest and disturbance, to meddling and interference, to constant fear of intervention."

Theodore Roosevelt

THE death of Theodore Roosevelt marks the passing of a most unique and interesting personality, and, in many respects, an eminently useful citizen.

He was as remarkable by reason of his limitations as by his many great qualities. But, when all the former are

noted, there remains a residuum of useful achievement that entitles him to a high place among American public men of his period.

At the beginning of his career he was the close friend of Ernest Howard Crosby, and it was this chapter of his work for the reform of the civil service in association with the man who later became one of the high-minded leaders of the Single Tax movement, that can now be recalled with especial honor to the memory of the ex-president.

Single Taxers should hold him in high if qualified esteem. As Governor of the great State of New York he jammed through the legislature the special tax on franchises against the will of many of his most influential friends. This aimed, at all events, to take for the people's use the value they contribute by their presence and activities to their roads and highways.

Later he sought by energetic fostering of the conservation movement to retain as much of the natural resources, the forest and mineral lands, as had not already been alienated. He was the only president of the United States, we had almost said the only office holder in high place, who urged that the experiment of the Single Tax be tried, and he was the only one who openly endorsed the taxation of land values for municipal purposes. In this he went further than many democrats whom Single Taxers have supported for office, and much further than Bryan who took occasion to openly repudiate the doctrine for which we stand.

The language in which he urged the taxation of land values for cities we quote from an article which appeared in the *Century*, for October 1913:

"We believe that municipalities should have complete self-government as regards all the affairs that are exclusively their own, including the important matter of taxation, and that the burden of municipal taxation should be so shifted as to put the weight of land taxation upon the unearned rise in value of land itself, rather than upon the improvements, the buildings; the effort being to prevent the undue rise of rent."

Col. Roosevelt possessed a marvelously quick intelligence, but his mental powers were not profound, and the vast material that he left in the shape of books and magazine articles is, for the most part, ephemeral and of slight value. His "Life of Cromwell," which he wrote soon after the appearance of Morley's great work, pales by comparison with that of the great Englishman. His estimate of American statesmen was singularly wrong-headed at times, and his judgement of his contemporaries was often quite as faulty.

But with all his great limitations he left a wholesome impress on American life and politics. His services to the cause of radicalism consisted in starting a trend of thought in the United States that prepared the way further for advance. As times goes on we shall profit by the work he did. If America owed him nothing more, this is enough on which to base a demand that his name be held in lasting and grateful remembrance.