

have not the nation's best interest at heart. There is too much demagogy, too much mud-slinging. In public speeches and magazine articles the authors are influenced by motives of selfishness or cupidity. Appeals are made for the purpose of creating a feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest when this is unnecessary and unjustified. It is not uncommon, in public discussion, to treat success as an offense; to consider the possession of wealth, however honestly acquired, as wrong."



It happens that just about the time that Judge Gary was making this speech a merchant-prince of the city of New York passed away. This man was a quiet, modest gentleman, who had started with nothing as a retail merchant in the city of New York, and had died possessed of very many millions of dollars. So far as we have observed, there has been no criticism of Benjamin Altman, and no disposition upon the part of anybody to consider his success as an offense. In other words, it has been recognized that he was engaged in a business which was entirely open to free competition. He made his money by the buying and selling of goods in a superior manner, or at least in such a way which so appealed to the citizens of New York that his business grew to very great proportions, and in so growing rendered a service to the city and its citizens, the door being all the while wide open for entrance of others into the same business, many of whom did in fact enter the same business during Mr. Altman's career.



Other instances of a like nature could be cited to show that there is in this country no general disposition to criticize people who make money in ways which are economically and socially justified, and that success is not, among any considerable portion of our people, regarded as an offense. True, many of the operations that have been carried on under the name of the United States Steel Company under the direction of Judge Gary, are regarded by many people as an offense, and the same is true of many other monopolies, but this is not based upon any objection to success in manufacturing or commercial enterprises. It is based upon a general and growing objection to monopoly; and the sooner business men recognize this fact and the distinction between what people generally do object to and what they do not generally object to, the better it will be for business men and everyone else concerned.

F. J. M.



BRITISH SENTIMENT ON THE LAND QUESTION.

San Francisco, December 1.

For the last thirty years I have given close attention to the course of events in Great Britain, particularly with reference to the development and progress of the Singletax movement there, and I have reached a widely different conclusion from that expressed in *The Public* of November 21, in the editorial entitled, "Is Lloyd George Fundamental?"

I cannot accept the classification of the British

people with the Hottentot. Nor can I believe that it is necessary to trick them into defending their own rights, or to coax them into doing what is for their own good. I am unable to accept the conclusion that the history of the British people shows them to be so sluggish and backward as this would imply. I recall the fact that Francis G. Shaw, one of the first eminent Americans to accept the great message that Henry George brought to his fellow-men, advised Mr. George to take his message to London and publish it there, telling him that, in his opinion, his own countrymen were not yet ready to accept it. I know that Henry George was not discovered in San Francisco, where he thought out and published to the world his great plan of social redemption. He left here having a few followers whom, as he himself said, he could count on his fingers. He went to New York and was discovered there by a score or two more; but it was in London and in Glasgow that his real discovery and recognition took place. When he returned from his first lecturing tour in Great Britain he was hailed as a distinguished American and dined at Delmonico's by the men of light and leading in the metropolis of his native land, most of whom, however, fell away from him when he returned next year.

Eleven years ago, David McLardy of Glasgow, one of the most careful and profound observers I have ever met, told me that he believed that the people of Scotland were then more deeply imbued with Singletax principles than the people of any other country in the world; that Glasgow was a Singletax city; and that it would be almost impossible for any candidate to be elected to Parliament from a Scottish constituency who did not declare himself in favor of the taxation of land values. Everything that has happened in Scotland since most emphatically confirms these statements.

Scotland still stands at the head of the class in knowledge of Singletax principles, but England and Wales stand not far below. The last thirty years have wrought wondrous changes in Britain. And those changes have not been brought about "by noise and shouting; by complaints and denunciation; by the formation of parties, or the making of revolutions; but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas." They have been effected by the long endeavor of such a body of able, earnest and devoted men and women as the world has never before known. There is not a nook or dell on the island from Land's End to John O'Groats, or from Yarmouth to Holyhead to which they have not penetrated. By discussions in Parliament and on the hustings; by addresses in halls, schoolhouses, lodges and churches; by open air meetings on the streets, in squares and in parks; and by instruction in political economy classes in which "Progress and Poverty" was taught by able and learned instructors, and examinations held and prizes awarded at the close of each term—twenty-one such classes were conducted during the year 1912;—by red van and automobile campaigns, and by the distribution of immense quantities of the most instructive and effective literature, the people of Great Britain have been educated upon the land question as no other people have ever before been educated anywhere in the world upon any public question. Has all this endeavor proved fruitless? Has all the seed thus

sown perished? I cannot believe it; nor do patent facts permit me to do so.

That the personnel of Parliaments and Congresses does not accurately show the true state of public opinion on the part of their constituencies I freely admit. But it does give some indication. We American Singletaxers are elated over the fact that some ten or twelve men in our Congress are favorable to the movement. But the British House of Commons has 173 members, known as the "Land Values Group," who, on May 18, 1911, signed a memorial to the Liberal Ministry urging it to levy a Budget Tax on all land values. And the municipal authorities of more than 500 cities and towns in Great Britain have petitioned Parliament for the passage of an act granting them power to make land values the basis of their local taxation. That the British electorate has been ripe for the practical application of land value taxation for the last decade at least, is shown by many indubitable proofs. Every one of the numerous seats won from the Tories during the last two years of the Balfour Government was won on the issue of the taxation of land values. A bill for the taxation of land values, introduced in 1904 by Trevelyan, an earnest and active member of the Land Values Group, passed to second reading in that Tory House by a majority of 16, and in 1905 the same bill passed to second reading in the same House by a majority of 90. And Balfour did not dare to make opposition to the measure a Ministerial question in either year.

The unprecedented victory won by the Liberals in 1906 was largely due to the prominence given to the taxation of land values by the Liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, during the campaign. And the great popularity which he enjoyed as Premier down to the time of his death as undoubtedly due very largely to his firm, unwavering stand on that question. This was shown by the intense enthusiasm with which his views on the subject were received at several immense public meetings addressed by him while he was Prime Minister. After his death there seemed to be a slowing down of the campaign for the taxation of land values, and a good many began to fear that Premier Asquith was going to disappoint the high hopes raised by his illustrious predecessor. The popular feeling manifested itself in the bye-elections which began to show a strong anti-Ministerial drift. Then came the introduction of the Lloyd George Budget, which immediately changed the aspect of things and turned the tide of public sentiment strongly in favor of the Government. The results of the two general elections in 1910 leave no doubt as to the state of the British mind on the question of the taxation of land values. And the bye-elections in the summer of 1912, in Northwest Norfolk, Holmfirth and Hanley, where that question was made the paramount issue, demonstrate the fact that the rural constituencies of England are as ripe for its settlement as are the urban.

At a little country town about twenty miles north of London, during the Budget campaign, the opponents of the measure called a public meeting for the purpose of denouncing it, and 400 people attended. One of the promoters of the meeting offered a resolution strongly condemning the Budget. Whereupon a Liberal in the audience offered an

amendment approving the Budget and thanking the Ministry for introducing it. The amendment was put to the meeting and twenty-two persons voted against it and all the rest voted for it. The mover of the original resolution goodnaturedly admitted that he was fairly beaten. I do not know how many more such towns there are in Britain, but I believe there are some others.

No good purpose can be served by minimizing the magnitude and importance of what has already been achieved in the struggle for the industrial emancipation of mankind. For the words of profound wisdom uttered by the immortal Lincoln during the struggle for the abolition of chattel slavery are as applicable to the greater conflict in which we are engaged as they were to that in which they were first spoken: "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it."

The recent history of the English people shows that they are not now where they once were, and where many Americans still imagine them to be. The conduct of the English electors at political meetings during the Budget campaign rather took the edge off the witty American apothegm that an Englishman dearly loves a lord. Lloyd George was rapturously applauded when he held up the dukes and landlords to contempt and ridicule. Sixteen years ago John Morley predicted that the House of Lords would continue to be an impregnable barrier to progress until on some fundamental proposition substantially all the people came to be ranged on one side and all the lords on the other. His prophecy came to pass in 1910, and he was cup-bearer when their lordships drank the hemlock.

I believe Lloyd George is fundamental, but that he is bound hand and foot by the Whig landlord contingent in his cabinet and party. They permit him to talk, but they will not let him do anything worth while. But I am more concerned to know that the British people are fundamental. If they are, they will find leaders to give effect to their wishes.

JOSEPH LEGGETT.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of *The Public* for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Monday, December 29, 1913.

Currency Bill Becomes Law.

The conference committee of the House and Senate came to an agreement on the Glass-Owen bill on December 22. The report was submitted to the House the same afternoon and passed by a vote of 298 to 60. All of the Democrats voted for it except Witherspoon of Mississippi, and Callaway of Texas. Thirty-six Republicans, thirteen Progressives and the Independent member, William Kent, voted with the majority. On the fol-