

posed to this gun-toting, man-killing practice in this day and age; and they are doing what they can toward bringing about the disarmament of nations. It is not a question as to whether the war was forced upon Germany, or imposed upon France; nor yet is it a question of Germany's whipping the Allies or of the Allies beating Germany. Rifles are poor instruments for determining truth, or for establishing justice. But, presumably, the war will end ultimately; and when it does end The Public hopes to see the nations disarm, and Justice come into her own.



To such as revile the paper, and accuse it of unfairness, this may be said: You may feel disappointed that The Public does not advocate your cause during the present war, but are you justified in charging it with standing for the other side? President Wilson has voiced the highest sentiment in calling upon Americans to remain neutral. These are portentous times. It is possible that this country may be the means of securing a lasting peace at the conclusion of present hostilities. But such a service cannot be performed by one holding the views expressed in either our French or German correspondent. Rather must it come from a people who, realizing their own delinquencies and shortcomings, yet having done a little toward setting up a democracy and establishing the rights of man, can say in all gentleness and sincerity: Here is a plan by which we have accomplished something; try it; we can all accomplish more by working together.

s. c.



Paying Twice for the Same Thing.

Chicago has been trying for a number of years to establish a system of outer parks that shall embrace spacious woodlands, dells, and picturesque spots in a state of nature. The question has been voted affirmatively twice at the polls, but has been defeated both times by some flaw or technicality. It will come up a third time at the November election. The interesting feature about the matter is that whereas the lands needed for these extensive parks could have been bought for five million dollars when the question first came up, the same lands will now cost fifteen million dollars. As these lands are all unimproved, the question arises, why the advance? Complaints are heard of the rise in the cost of living and of war prices; but food stuffs have shown no such soaring propensities as these wild lands. The owners of these lands have done nothing to them aside from a few

little touches to change their appearance. But there is one decided change. Whereas these lands were then in touch with a city of a million people, they are now in touch with a city of two and a half million people. It is quite clear that the people of the city as a whole have conferred this added value to these lands; and it is equally plain that under our present method of doing things the people who trebled the value of these lands will have to pay for them a second time before they can use them.

s. c.



Senator Sherman and the Singletax

In a public statement on September 27 Senator Lawrence Y. Sherman, of Illinois, unconsciously but none the less openly and clearly, admitted the superior fitness of his Progressive opponent for the Senatorship, Raymond Robins. The admission was in an allusion to the fact that Robins has a better grasp of economic principles than he, and is more willing to advocate just principles. All of this was involved in Sherman's reference to Robins as an advocate of the Singletax and his own confession of ignorance of and opposition to the principle. He further declared that while social justice legislation was being enacted and he was writing statutes, Robins was advocating Singletax. Well, whatever statutes Sherman may have been writing, it is clear that they have failed to establish social justice. They must have been the kind of statutes, the writers of which thunder loudly against evil conditions, but carefully avoid disturbing the causes of these conditions, or offending the beneficiaries. They must have been such statutes, the writing of which gives aid and comfort to predatory interests, because it deludes the public into a false belief that something effective is about to be done. While Sherman was thus engaged, Raymond Robins was endeavoring to show the people the right road to justice. For this he has earned the opposition of the Illinois plunderbund, and the reproaches of Senator Sherman.



What are Senator Sherman's objections to the Singletax? According to the Chicago Tribune they are as follows: "It is taking from those who have and giving to those who have not. It is a leveling of possessions. It is an equality of economic opportunity." In view of the fact that these objections were offered without so much as a word to show that the Senator has the slightest idea of what the Singletax is, his objections may safely be attributed to ignorance. He objects to the Singletax; first, because "it is taking from those who

have and giving to those who have not." Will the Senator maintain that none of those who have wrongfully obtained it, and that none who has not been wrongfully deprived? If he will not so maintain, then he must knowingly and deliberately have assumed the position that those, who have wrongfully obtained, should be allowed to keep, and to obtain more in the same way. Was that his position while writing "social justice" statutes? If he does maintain that no one has more nor less than is due them, what was the object of his statutes? Was he endeavoring to take from those who have what honestly belongs to them, and give to those who have not what was not theirs?



Concerning the principal statute which Senator Sherman helped to put on the books he is discreetly silent. This was the infamous Allen law which took from the people of Chicago the right to their own streets. Incidentally it was a case of taking from those who had but a little and giving to those who have much. It was taking from the people what belonged to them and bestowing it on some predatory corporations to whom it did not belong. That kind of taking and giving was clearly not objectionable to Senator Sherman. His objections seem confined to the return of legally stolen property from possession of the plunderbund to its rightful owners.



What can only be excused on the plea of ignorance is Senator Sherman's reference to Singletax as "a leveling of possessions." Before the campaign is over, if he has the courage to continue the Singletax discussion, he will contradict that statement more than once. In fact, he did contradict it in his very next statement: "It is an equality of economic opportunity." How can there be "leveling of possessions" with "equality of economic opportunity," unless all possess equal ability? Even Senator Sherman should be able to see the absurdity of the position he assumes. Is this lack of knowledge concerning Singletax a fair sample of the Senator's information on other public questions?

S. D.



Taxation in Ohio Political Platforms.

Both the Progressive party and Republican party of Ohio have taken advanced ground on taxation in their State platforms. The Progressive party declares unequivocally for county home rule in taxation and a partial exemption of per-

sonal property. The Republican party's declaration is not so flat-footed. It is "we pledge ourselves to home rule in the valuation and assessment of all property for taxation." Considering the source, such a pledge is gratifying indeed. Although it only speaks of "valuation and assessment" and is silent on the question of a tax system, yet this omission is not as serious as it may seem. Home rule in valuation and assessment is all that the city of Houston, Texas, has, and Houston's right thereto lacks even legislative approval. But the city has made good use of home rule in valuation and assessment. It has assessed land values at 70 per cent, improvements at 25 per cent, and personal property at zero. Given the right pledged to them by the Republican convention, Ohio cities can do the same.



The Democratic party's platform is silent on the tax question. Two years ago it declared unequivocally for home rule in taxation, but the pledge has not been kept. Possibly that explains the silence of this year. To have repeated the pledge would have directed attention to the failure to keep the previous one, and resulting questions and comment might have proven embarrassing.

S. D.



Progressivism in Delaware.

On State issues the Progressive party of Delaware has taken advanced ground. Besides declaring for the Initiative, Referendum, Recall, woman suffrage, municipal home rule, and the commission form of government, it adopted a taxation plank which deserves the approval of the State's thoughtful citizens. The plank denounces the tax system which handicaps the improver and encourages the land speculator, it declares inimical to progress the fact that so much unimproved land is held by persons who are making no use of it, and it advocates remedying this state of affairs by empowering counties and cities to untax labor and increase taxes on land values. These planks embody a policy that would be extremely beneficial to the State, and citizens of Delaware will do well to elect the legislative and executive candidates who honestly advocate this program.

S. D.



Using Vacant Lots for Propaganda.

A propaganda idea that might well be followed in other cities is that adopted in Chicago by Mrs. Annie Wallace Hunt as chairman of the Taxation Committee of the Woman's party. She is re-