

A Trust Betrayed

THE *New York World* publishes daily the following statement by its founder, Joseph Pulitzer, of the purposes of that paper:

"An institution that should always fight for progress and reform, never tolerate injustice or corruption, always fight demagogues of all parties, never belong to any party, always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to the public welfare, never be satisfied with merely printing news, always be drastically independent, never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty."

It would be an interesting comment on this high-sounding declaration to see a reprint of *World* editorial articles in which the injustice of present methods, under which enormous sums are annually permitted to go into private pockets for permission to live or do business on the earth, was attacked. Has the *World* anything definite to say about the "privileged classes and public plunderers" who are receiving hundreds of millions of dollars every year, that ought to go into the public treasury? Does the *World* show its "sympathy with the poor" by pointing out the chief cause of poverty? Is it "afraid to attack wrong" when it ignores the great fundamental wrong of private absorption of publicly-created land values? Is it "devoted to the public welfare" when it refuses to urge the adoption of the Single Tax, the most certain method for destroying special privilege and establishing a just social order? Has the fact that the *World* is in receipt of very large sums yearly from the speculative interests that are holding valuable land out of use in the expectation of being able to blackmail industry for permission to build upon it, anything to do with the *World's* silence on this all-important question?

Looking down—or up—from the shades, how Joseph Pulitzer must laugh at the success of his heirs in hoodwinking the gullible public into believing that the *World* is living up to the high ideals that he professed.

Mr. Marcossou Makes a Discovery

ISAAC MARCOSSON, author of those popular works of fiction, "Me and Lord Northcliffe," "How Kitchener Helped Me Win The World War" and other stories of great men who have been privileged to make the acquaintance of a modest unassuming American journalist, has emitted a few thousand words and many profound thoughts on the subject of taxation for the edification of the readers of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Mr. Marcossou has made some amazing discoveries, such as the fact that the American people are groaning under an oppressive burden of taxation; that the rich men who pay heavy income taxes would like to escape them, and that tax-exempt securities permit the "malefactors of great wealth," as they were termed by a former President of the United States, to dodge paying

their fair share of the public revenue. Nor is this all that the industrious compiler of opinions of the "thinking classes," the men to whose hands Providence has confided the property interests of the country, has discovered. Hear him: "After a canvass covering practically the whole of the United States it is evident that the overwhelming sentiment of the people is for a sales, or turnover, tax. I found that nearly everybody seems to favor this form of revenue."

Just when and how he made this canvass, reaching "nearly everybody" out of 100,000,000, people, he doesn't say. Probably by wireless, or through his highly developed sense of absorption, which enables him to hear what these millions are thinking. There seems, however, to be something wrong with his telepathic apparatus. Who did he canvass, and how? What leaders of thought did he allow to interview him, and tell him all about the tax question? A little information on these points would help the skeptical readers of what he thought was a contribution to the world's wisdom, to understand why he reached the same conclusion as those eminent friends of the dear people, Messrs. Irving G. Bush, Otto H. Kahn and Jules S. Bache. They are the "whole of the United States." They are "nearly everybody"—in their own opinion. So if they want the SALES TAX all America wants it.

Did Mr. Marcossou ever hear of the 6,500,000 American farmers, who through their great organizations have repeatedly denounced the sales tax as an infamous scheme to shift taxation from great wealth taken from the producers by special privilege, to the consuming public? Does he know that the American Federation of Labor, and other organizations representing the workers, have gone on record as irrevocably opposed to the SALES TAX? Doesn't he know that the SALES TAX is dead and damned, so far as any prospect of its being adopted by Congress is concerned? If he doesn't know this he is very ignorant. If he suppresses these important facts he is dishonest. The columns of the REVIEW are open to him for an explanation.

Spending Money To Reform Society

CHARGES by President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor that the fund of \$800,000 created by Mr. Charles Garland, of Massachusetts, for the purpose of promoting social reforms in the interest of the workers, has been in part devoted to the support of radical papers and organizations advocating what are alleged to be revolutionary doctrines, illustrate the troubles that arise when attempts are made to use large amounts of money for propaganda aims. How often have the ardent spirits who longed with the Persian Tentmaker to grasp the sorry frame of things and remould it, wished that they had a million dollars, with which they were sure that they could reform the world.

It was possibly with a clear insight into his own limitations that young Mr. Garland decided that instead of undertaking a reform programme of his own, he would give

his money to men whom he believed to be competent to use it for the welfare of those generally termed "the working classes." As Thomas Carlyle points out, properly speaking, there is no such distinction—"we must all work however we call our working;" and he held that if there is an "idler class" it exists only because the natural laws of production and service have been interfered with by foolish laws of man's working. Had the directors of the American Fund for Public Service devoted their attention to these laws, and worked for their repeal, they might conceivably have accomplished something for improving the condition of the workers. From the statement of their expenditures it would seem that they have merely been encouraging such mildly radical projects as labor papers, trades unions, and the socialist press. Nowhere is there a suggestion of new ideas for raising wages without increasing living costs; shortening working hours without decreasing production; or lightening the burden of taxation that causes high prices. With money to spend in the interest of labor the well-intentioned reformers seem to have no definite plans as to what they should do. Palliatives and socialistic schemes for government control of industry, impossible of fulfilment, appear to be their only suggestions for social betterment.

John Stuart Mill's warning, that where the object is to effect a permanent improvement in living conditions small means do not merely accomplish small ends, they accomplish nothing at all, might be profitably considered by the estimable directors of the Public Service Fund, and if fully comprehended, lead to the use of the remainder of the Garland money so as to further the amendment or repeal of legislation responsible for the disabilities of the workers.

Real Estate Editor Has a Queer Idea

A CLEVELAND company needed space next to a railroad, to receive, store and distribute coal and builders' supplies. In telling the story, the Cleveland *Plain Dealer's* real estate editor used the headline "Goff-Kirby To Invade West Side." Isn't that indicative of the average real estate editor's mental attitude toward industry? When some one, or a group of men organized into a company, start to do business, to do useful things, it is looked upon by the real estate editor as invading somebody or something; but when a speculator gets control of a piece of land, not to use it, not to do anything that is needed, the real estate editor emits sounds that would drown the noise of a barnyard full of poultry; for that, in his opinion, is great enterprise; that is foresight; that indicates public spirit.

What are the facts regarding this case? A speculator was holding a small lot of perfectly bare land idle, in the hope of making industry pay heavily for a chance to work. This company needed the bit of land, and after long negotiations, and long searching of records, and the payment of heavy fees to lawyers and an abstract company, paid the

speculator \$25,000 in cash as a bribe to stand aside and let the space be used. That is called "invading." We admit that there was an invasion of public and private rights; but the *Plain Dealer's* real estate editor doesn't see who the invader really is; he therefore twists and misrepresents in favor of the speculator and against those who struggle with heavy difficulties to keep business alive.

A Necessary but Disagreeable Task

THE following letter has been received from Mr. J. A. Hopkins, of the Committee of 48, and has reference to an editorial appearing in the March-April REVIEW, entitled "The Forty-Eight Futilities." Our readers are asked to refer to this editorial and make up their minds about it.

MY DEAR MR. MILLER:

I have read with astonishment the article printed in the SINGLE TAX REVIEW for March-April, 1923, in respect to the questionnaire which we have sent out on the Sales Tax.

I am not concerned at the moment with the personal mud slinging which is contained in this article, but I distinctly object to the scurrilous references to the Committee of 48 and the work which it has been doing. Furthermore, I particularly object to your printing an article containing statements which are distinctly untrue.

The article in question is unsigned and I am taking it for granted that you did not write it, but I am astonished that you allowed it to be printed. It is quite immaterial to me whether the SINGLE TAX REVIEW thinks we are in need of education, but when you state that we do not possess the courage of our convictions you are stating a deliberate falsehood, knowing it to be false when you say it.

When you quote Jules Bache and Otto H. Kahn and indicate that these are the only people whose opinion we have asked on this subject, you are also conveying a false impression which you know to be false, because the list of names from which you have taken these two also contains an equal or larger proportion of Single Taxers, liberals and men in all walks of life, and this fact is furthermore distinctly stated in every letter we have sent out so that if you have seen the questionnaire you have the letters.

Your statement that "the nature of this precious scheme can readily be understood when it is seen that it proposes to tax all the goods sold by merchants, but to exempt from taxation the stocks, bonds and other securities sold by the merchants of Wall Street" is another deliberate misstatement. Nothing of the kind is stated, but, on the contrary, this is set forth as a question in order to bring out the truth.

Under these circumstances, I wish to say that if the SINGLE TAX REVIEW will lend itself to any such disgraceful exhibition of journalism it does not deserve the support even of the Single Taxers for whose benefit the REVIEW is issued.