

principle and of ascertaining the true causes of such a perversion of moral sentiment. Such a state of things implies the existence of evils which cannot be really cured till their cause is known, and the shortest way to discover the cause is to give a hearing to the alleged reasons." If we are, as seems inevitable, to have an expansion of the powers of government and the state, we will do well to guard more jealously the rightful boundaries of individual freedom.

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The Italo-Turkish War.

The (St. Louis) Mirror (ind.), Oct. 5.—Italy's attack upon Turkey is a wanton one, made even as Turkey pleaded her helplessness. There is no valid reason for it. The treaties as to Tripoli are writ plain and all the difficulties, mostly invented by Italy after the manner of the wolf that ate the lamb for dirtying the stream below where the wolf drank, were clearly justiciable. The Turks are not Christians, but justice is due them none the less. But Italy is probably only a catspaw. When the facts prior to the attack are known, it will be found in all likelihood that other Powers connived at the movement, notwithstanding the professed indignation of the chancelleries. The Italian government's action is infamous. Its people are the most overtaxed in Europe and now the expense of a war is piled upon their backs. For what? For the benefit of a pack of concessionaires in Tripoli. If Italy's claims were just, there was the Hague tribunal; but no, that would not do; this was the time to make a grab in Africa. Is Germany behind it, having been prevented from taking Morocco? Is it a move to embarrass England's power in Africa? We shall see.

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Friends' Intelligencer (Philadelphia), October 7.—Italy goes to war with Turkey with a view to getting possession of Tripoli and Cyrene, because, say the Italian diplomats, "These regions should be admitted to the benefits of the progress realized by other parts of the Mediterranean." This sounds very fine. And yet the International Peace Congress which was to have met in Rome this month had to be postponed till spring on account of the prevalence of cholera in Italy. A true devotion to progress and human welfare would in these days keep cholera out of Rome, as the fever has been cleared out of the once pestilent Panama. There are a few of the people of Italy who see through their government and its designs and who are opposing the war and calling attention to the need for taking vigorous measures for introducing the "benefits of progress" among the squalor and poverty and disease-breeding conditions of Italy itself, especially Sicily and Southern Italy. These who protest are as yet so few and have so little strength on their side that they are cried down as unpatriotic and riotous, and they are shot and hustled by the soldiers. But the movement represented by these protestors, against the war is growing in Italy, and the time will come when the people will be strong enough not to permit themselves to be rushed away into war under false pretenses, and to the neglect of important duties at home.

RELATED THINGS CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT

THE WORLD'S WITENAGEMOTE.

For The Public.

German jungles' open spaces once were legislative halls,
Where free peoples met in conclave and knew not law's technic thralls.

Plain of Salisbury's eighty thousand cast their viva voce high,
Fearing not some vain court's veto, knowing not its nay or aye.

Then the thrall of law fell o'er us, did we as some ruler said—
Walked we o'er the rocks of ages by the hand of custom led—

Ruled by far-off congress, cortes, by some reichstag, parliament,
Robbed of sovereign will and power, swayed by dead hand's precedent.

Now a ripple sweeps earth's people as a wavelet sweeps the sea:
Asks a workman of his brother, "What has life for you or me?"—

Asks a Cornwall miner's helper of his Lehigh brother nigh—
Nigh by spaceless, thought-filled lightning and by Union's comrade tie.

So the word goes out in wavelets, flows in wave on wave o'er earth,
"Come to conclave! Come to conclave! Let us find a man's true worth!"

"Come to conclave! Come to conclave!" herald voice of Demos cries;
We will find, if found it can be, where the springs of power rise."

So they're coming, men are coming, through the day and through the night,
Coming upward, coming homeward, to the world's grand plebiscite.

I am going, you are going, thrilled by sweetest cosmic note,
To one world-wide mighty conclave—to the World's Witenagemote.

RALPH W. CROSMAN.

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BUSINESS MEN AND LAND VALUE TAXATION.

Speech by Joseph Fels to a Special Meeting of Business Men at Birmingham, England,
October 4, 1911.

I am going to speak on the taxation of land values. Some of you may regard this as a question for politicians, or for socialists and other

reformers who interest themselves in the justice or injustice of social institutions. I am not a politician. I sometimes describe myself as a Conservative-Liberal-Socialist; but if I were a party politician I should do all I could to run my party on the taxation of land values as the very best policy to keep it in power. If I were a moral teacher or a social reformer I should advocate the taxation of land values as the soundest moral principle on which to found a society.

But seeing that I am neither a moral teacher nor a social reformer, but most of my time only a plain business man, and for the rest an ordinary mortal, I am going to talk to you as a business man. Some of you are manufacturers and merchants. So am I. Some of you have investments in railways, mines and other industrial concerns, and all of you, no matter what you are labeled, depend for your professional or business returns on prosperous industry. Now take the manufacturer or merchant. As a ratepayer he is called upon to contribute to the rates in proportion to the value of his building. The larger his factory or building or warehouses, the more convenient they are made for the workers and himself, the higher is his assessment and the higher the amount he pays in rates. Commodious and well-finished factories, with up-to-date machinery, are good and desirable things. We want more of them. Their construction gives employment to builders. They enable employer and employed to turn out the best material in the shortest time. I say it is bad business to make us pay a fine under the name of collecting rates in proportion to the money we spend on our factories and warehouses. It keeps us from spending money in this way and hampers business all round.

Now I want some of you hard-headed men of Birmingham to tell me why we should suffer this treatment when we erect and improve our buildings? I am putting this question to you as a business man. I am going to Yorkshire and Scotland where I know other keen business men are to be found, and I am going to put the same question to them. I have never got a satisfactory answer to this question. I am here to charge it against your present system, that it is bad business from beginning to end. I am an American, and Americans do foolish things, but I doubt if they have initiated anything as foolish as this, which they copied from Englishmen. We merchants don't deserve to be tarred and feathered when we improve our buildings. We don't deserve any treatment of that nature.

I know you have to raise revenue for local and national government; but I am not going to admit that you need to injure your business in order to run the country. I say whatever rights the state has, it has no right to make it difficult for men to carry on their business in decent premises. I wonder how many of you here could tell me of

instances where the rates were increased in consequence of improvements made?

I will give you one or two illustrations of how this system penalizes the enterprising man.

I will take the first from America. In the city of Portland, Oregon, a new warehouse was completed about a year ago. The building cost £100,000, the elevators, machinery and furnishings, cost £40,000 more, and one thousand people are employed in it. During the current year, the firm which owns this warehouse will pay about £3,200 in taxes under the General Property Tax system; under the taxation of Land Values it is estimated that they would pay about £2,560. This would give a reduction of £640 in the amount paid, and would do something to encourage an enterprising firm.

I will give an English illustration. A few weeks ago, the valuation of a rural parish was made. In that parish there is a section of one of our leading railway systems and a brick work. The rates payable by the railway company would be reduced from £1,121, the present payment, to £1,030 on a Land Values basis, and the amount payable by the brick work would be reduced from £300, the present amount, to £234. Further illustrations could be cited from every city and parish in the country, but I will not trouble you with more. In short, business enterprise would be encouraged in every way by the abandonment of the system which penalizes a man in exact proportion to his enterprise.

Now for the solution of the problem. You will ask where this relief is to be obtained, and you will perhaps tell me that taxation is a small item—that what business men chiefly need is a greater demand for their goods. The taxation of Land Values will give the necessary relief and create the demand for more produce. If you take the value of land, whether it is used or unused, as the basis of your taxation, you will get a largely increased revenue from land which has been held up against men who are willing to develop it. This increased revenue could be applied to the remission of the burden which falls at present on improvements. More important than this would be the other effect of taxing this undeveloped land. We manufacturers and merchants want customers. This is the way to get them. An idle man looking at idle land is no use to us nor anyone else. But the policy which would bring idle men and idle land together as busy partners in the production of wealth, would provide us with a market which we always need. The Taxation of Land Values is already helping us as business men in New Zealand, Australia and Canada. It is breaking up large undeveloped estates, and giving the settlers a chance of producing wealth; and these men make good customers for merchants in every part of the world. The same is true of Great Britain. Even the threat of an all-round tax on

