

ple must keep themselves nerved up to the struggle for year after year, and election after election, or the tide for a moment dammed back will reflow and sweep away the work already done.

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The Cleveland people were nerved up for a long time, and stood by their own interests. Their intelligence for a few years seemed almost human. At last at the critical moment, because newspapers threw dust in their eyes, and there were some inconveniences in the street car service, the people balked and threw themselves down in the harness. They were tired. It was easier to drift. The drifting would be steered by the corporations. What was the use? Tired of hearing Aristides called the Just, and weary of the stress of the struggle toward Justice, the people quit—thereby spoiling their own work, not Johnson's.

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It is a great victory for the corporations. It shows the Machiavellian wisdom of their policy of never giving up even when it seems that all is lost. It contains a lesson for the progressives of Wisconsin and all other progressive States. The lesson is this, the corporations are never beaten. They may seem to be wiped out in politics, they may seem to have quit; but they have not. The Government will slip back into their hands the moment the vigilance of the people is relaxed, the moment the issues can be confused. Johnson has had them beaten time and again, but they have never ceased the fight. The people must be as ceaseless in their struggle for the right as the forces of plutocracy are sure to be for the wrong.

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And it does not square with intelligence for the progressive to get tired—for then he ceases to "progress." And, in the future as in the past, it will pay him to watch Tom L. Johnson, First Citizen of Cleveland.

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## MR. GOMPERS ON THE BRITISH LAND TAX DEBATES.

From a Description of a Visit to the House of Commons, Written by Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor.

From the Chicago Daily News of August 7.

The bill under discussion was the one that sent the hosts defending vested rights into shocks and shivers—that providing for the taxation of land values. I was much interested in listening to the speeches on the subject, as on many a summer and winter evening in America, through the course of the last thirty years, I have heard the subject more than broached by impassioned single taxers. But as the debate on various clauses of the bill

proceeded it became apparent that the "confiscation" so feared by opponents of this tax is yet many a long day off.

The American system of taxing real estate is in England hardly begun. "Accommodation" land—that lying near built-up districts—vacant and untilled, is here not subject to any taxation whatever. The bill proposes 1 cent annually on every \$5 of its capitalized value! Farm land would pay a small percentage, say perhaps 10 or 20 on its unearned increment, when this has passed 50 per cent beyond its present existing price!

Is it anything remarkable that I was occupied in watching the manner of the statesmen present rather than being absorbed in their matter? I, who had heard the apostles of taxing the unearned increment 100 per cent, every bit of it! The bill is no doubt a good beginning—that is, the taxation of the unearned increment of the land—but I was witnessing a play in which the opposition protested against being "robbed" of the land their forbears either stole or had bestowed upon them through privilege.

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## THE BRITISH CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

From the London Nation of May 1, 1909.

Mr. Lloyd-George is a new man, with a new problem, the financing of social reform on Free Trade lines. As the lives of politicians go, he is at once younger and less highly trained than most of his rivals and contemporaries. He has behind him no prestige of birth or of family history or of a brilliant University career—none of the useful, friendly props which in this most conservative of lands sustain the first trembling essays of its statesmen. He is a fresh type even among our conquerors. He lacks Disraeli's opulent and attractive literary genius; he has no private fortune, like Chamberlain. He belongs to a class almost as near to the people, the actual tillers and workers, as Mr. Burns. And he proceeds from a dependent nationality, not from the central governing race. He is an orator of genuine quality, but up to Thursday night he had only made one speech in the House of Commons that could be called great; a personality of originality and charm, yet owning no large and attached following outside the borders of his own country.

Mr. Lloyd-George's success is indeed an effect of pure genius, exercised in an atmosphere peculiarly fitted and prepared to receive it. The British aristocracy can still boast a Balfour, the English middle classes an Asquith. Mr. George is the first remarkable product of Welsh democracy, of a country where the mass of the people can struggle with powerful possessing forces without being thoroughly depressed and impoverished, like the Irish nation, and without losing natural