

racv. It made her throughout a free trader and finally a Singletaxer. Whether or not she was right on all these questions or any of them is of secondary importance. The great consideration is that in deciding upon them she made democracy her touchstone.

But her decisions were not reached without weighing the questions themselves with reference to their own respective merits. Although democracy was at all times her inspiration, reason was her guide. Her reason may not have led her where yours would have led you or mine me; but it was her reason, not ours, and whoever tested it would wisely hesitate to discount its clarity or power. Her democratic faith was logically articulate whatever the concrete instance—chattel slavery, suffrage, free trade, money-monopoly or land monopoly.

With all her interest in public affairs, an interest as comprehensive and intense as that of an ideal senator, this champion of democracy was none the less a model home maker. Married to the founder of the famous Avery agricultural implement factory at Louisville, Ky., Susan Look Avery was the mother, the grandmother and the great grandmother of a family notable for personal virtues and civic spirit. In her home affairs no less than in her public interests, her career puts to shame the spineless theory that women must despise common duties to be efficient in private ones. That they must be negligible fools in the larger home to be wives and mothers in the smaller.

Not all, whether men or women, can live the useful life that Susan Look Avery lived, or pass out of it as normally and happily. Industrial maladjustments do not yet permit this to the many. Her economic path was nearer the line of those who are rich enough to be free but not rich enough to domineer. It is the line toward which all industrial life seems tending and to which it must come if civilization is to go forward instead of backward. To bring on this better life for all Mrs. Avery donated her abilities and her energies, her time and her means; and soon after the close of her ninety-seventh year, without pain, without any gnawing regret, without fear, but as at the end of a good day's work, in full possession of her mentality and full enjoyment of her outflowing love, she slept.

The love of this wonderful woman, strong in its personal qualities as all normal human love is, overflowed the bounds of personality as all democratic love must. Her democracy neither bent nor cringed; it was upright and stalwart. To condescend in a world in which all are equals, brothers and sisters of one great family, would have been

as impossible to her as cringing. Of brummagem democracy she hadn't a particle; with God's democracy of human brotherhood she was all aglow always. Cremation has dissipated the physical elements of her body; but is it rational to suppose that she herself, that splendid spirit of democracy personified, is no more? Are not the probabilities greater that her body's death was her own re-birth? Be that as it may, however, there is at any rate, about the long life she lived before this death, a reality that invests the memory of her with angelic charm—the charm of love and thought free and unafraid.

LOUIS F. POST.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### THE LOWER RENTS DINNER.

New York, January 31, 1915.

On Saturday night, January 30, about 250 ladies and gentlemen met in the well fitted dining parlor of the Fifth Avenue Restaurant to listen to Surgeon-General W. C. Gorgas, and other speakers expound the doctrine of lower rents and the reduction of taxes on homes. Incidentally they heard Hon. Frederic C. Howe explain the gospel of political democracy.

Frederic C. Leubuscher introduced Hon. S. S. Goldwater, Health Commissioner of New York City, as the toastmaster, who paid a high compliment to the guest of the evening, and said he shared with General Gorgas his belief in the economic cause of disease.

Mr. Howe expressed his belief not only in the economic cause of disease but in the economic foundations of society. He said Mr. James Bryce had given currency to the idea that American democracy had failed because our people were too greatly interested in money-getting, and thus had but little interest in their government. I want to characterize this as untrue. American democracy has failed because the institutions under which the people have been compelled to work would have failed in any country.

Mr. Howe declared that Hamilton and the Hamiltonian distrust of the people constituted the heaviest burden the American democracy has been compelled to carry. His philosophy was based on a fear of the people. I want to say that any people would have failed who based their political philosophy on the conviction that the people can not be trusted. In the first place, we start out with an inflexible constitution, a constitution which cannot be changed except by almost superhuman effort. Then the Hamiltonian fear or distrust of the people introduced the practice of the veto. The upper house can veto the lower house, the President can veto both houses, and the supreme court can veto the action of the two houses and the President. Think of trying to run a business on such a principle as that; think of running any agency of modern life with such a philosophy.

Our state constitution took the Federal Constitution as its model, and refused even to permit the gov-

error to select his own cabinet, another expression of the same fear of the people. The constitutions of many of our states limit the biennial session of the legislature to 40, 60 or 90 days, though the work of organizing and getting bills introduced and considered takes usually 30 days at least. Most of the men who are going to form the new constitution are animated by the same distrust of the people.

Foolish conservatism or reaction and privilege have but to control only one of the five or six agencies of government to control the entire government. Is it fair to ascribe to democracy the failure of many of our institutions under conditions by which the people's action is everywhere blocked? Is it any wonder that democracy so paralyzed has failed?

Mr. Howe urged the adoption of the Initiative and Referendum and told of a recent debate in the House of Representatives, when Congressman Kent was told by an opponent of the measure that "under the system of Direct Legislation the people would go straight to hell." "Maybe they would," replied the Congressman, "but in that event they would have a return trip ticket."

The speaker declared his belief that a constitution should describe and provide only for the machinery of government. He said he was in favor of abolishing the bi-cameral system and vesting power in one chamber. He declared for home rule in cities, and said the cities were in bondage to men living one hundred miles away, who meet for a few months once a year, and he closed with a plea for a form of government that shall recognize not property but people, and in which the collective will may organize and make its purposes effective.

Gilbert E. Roe told something of what had been accomplished for democracy in Wisconsin and kept the audience in good humor by his sallies.

General Gorgas, whose subject was "The Economical Cause of Disease," began by a review of the work of the United States for the suppression of yellow fever and other diseases of an epidemic character; told of the disappearance of fevers in Panama as a result of the transfer of the workers to free land where, at a slight cost they were able to erect habitations. He said, "What we did there on a small scale you are trying to do here on a greater. The principle is the same."

Gen. Gorgas said the cause of pneumonia was well known. It is of a vegetable parasitic character. But its exact form of transference is not so well known, though it is probably much the same as in typhoid forms. But we know that as men are moved further apart the ratio of transference is smaller, and when maintaining healthful relations of distance from each other the ratio of transference is nil. The general effect of lower rents would be to maintain this healthful relation of distance—in other words, to do away largely with unhealthful congestion.

Gen. Gorgas said that his remarks might properly end here, but he was tempted to go further. He then devoted his time to the relation of higher wages to disease and boldly avowed his belief that a higher rate of wages tended to the decrease of all forms of disease. He said this conclusion was the result of observation and experience, and he instanced illustrations drawn from "what he had seen and part of what he had been."

The speaker said he had been where he had the

power to say go, and men went, come, and they came. It was in his power to adopt any regulation of a purely sanitary nature. But though he hoped to see this reform adopted by the people he would not impose it upon them, even though he possessed the power. (Cries of "You're a democrat.") The people must be educated to want it. "But I have to recommend to my friend, the toastmaster, Hon. S. S. Goldwater, the Single Tax as the most important sanitary measure that could be adopted by the department of the city government over which he presides."

An address by Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the most eloquent of women orators, concluded the speechmaking.

The social attractions of this most successful dinner of the Society to Lower Rents and Reduce Taxes on Homes were notably increased by the presence of Mrs. Mary Fels, Tenement House Commissioner Murphy, Hamlin Garland, Registers Hopper and Polak, Dr. A. Jacobi, Chas. H. Ingersoll, Dr. Mary D. Hussey, Benjamin Doblin and others whose work for economic and civic betterment have made them distinguished figures in the life of the city.

JOSEPH DANA MILLER.



## OHIO SINGLETAXERS ORGANIZE.

Cleveland, O., Feb. 3, 1915.

Ohio Singletaxers celebrated Groundhog Day, February 2, at the Hotel Hartman, Columbus, by the first state gathering held in fifteen years, and plans were made for the organization of a state league which will endeavor to plant at least one club or committee in every county in the state.

The name chosen was The Ohio Site Value Taxation League. Henry P. Boynton of Cleveland was made president; Carl P. Brannin of Cincinnati, vice-president, and George T. Spahr of Columbus, treasurer. Discussion of a political program brought out conflicting views as to the expediency of home rule, specific exemptions of classes of property from taxation and the repeal of all constitutional checks on taxation. Decision was deferred for one month.

Among those who took part in the general program of the day were Carl Nau, Peter Witt, Mayor Newton D. Baker, John D. Fackler, A. B. duPont, Edward W. Doty and J. P. Vining of Cleveland; Herbert Bigelow, Daniel Kiefer and W. P. Halenkamp of Cincinnati, William Holloway of Akron, George Edwards of Youngstown, H. P. Skinner of Middleport, and Elizabeth Hauser of Girard.

During the noon hour, David Gibson picketed the so-called Chittenden corner in the business center, carrying a box sign which set forth the rise of values on that site from \$3,500 in 1837, to \$280,000 at the present time and asking, "Who made this increase in value?" Speculative land prices were coupled with hard times in the argument on the sign, which attracted much attention from passing crowds.

H. P. BOYNTON.



## LEVI H. TURNER.

Boston, Mass., Feb. 5, 1915.

The death of Levi H. Turner on January 16 at his home in Quincy, Mass., calls for a review of his life