

comprised 32,000 acres, and extends from the city of Redding, about 25 miles southerly along the Sacramento River, and includes within its boundaries the two towns from which it receives its name. One of the members of the Board of Directors, Mr. Brown, proprietor of a flour mill at Cottonwood, is an old-time Singletaxer. Mr. C. W. Barkuloo, the President of the District, is president of the Bank of Anderson.

On October 29, last, the Imperial Valley Irrigation District (which was organized in 1912), by a ten to one vote, decided to issue \$3,500,000 of bonds, and take over the works of the California Development Co. This Imperial Valley Irrigation District comprises 500,000 acres. It is probably the largest publicly-owned irrigation system in the world. It is located on the southern border line of the State of California, and takes its water out of the Colorado River in old Mexico, in a ditch or canal that runs ninety miles before it reaches American soil. This Irrigation District, like the Anderson-Cottonwood District (which is about 600 miles north of it), uses the singletax system of taxation.

There are three other Irrigation Districts in California operating under the Singletax: Oakdale, Modesto and South San Joaquin. They have a total area of about 250,000 and are located in San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties at about the center of the great Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, which extends for about 400 miles from Redding on the north to Bakersfield in the south. Thus a total of about 750,000 acres of rich, irrigated valley land in California is now operating irrigation systems under the Singletax.

The Pitt River project in Shasta County will place about 300,000 acres under irrigation, and the Iron Canyon project will be able to deliver water to 225,000 acres in Shasta and Tehama Counties. In a few years by the development of these great projects California will have a total of 1,275,000 acres of the richest land in the world, upon which will grow oranges, lemons, figs, olives, peaches, pears, grapes, alfalfa, grains and a multitude of other products of the soil. A forty-acre farm in these irrigation districts enables a farmer to give his family every comfort, and the man who has sixty acres "under the ditch" is rich. And this in great valleys where the snow never falls and the temperature in winter rarely reaches the freezing point.

The continued extension of the Singletax in the irrigation districts of California is giving the farmers and business men in all parts of the State practical examples of the benefits that flow from a system of taxation that punishes indolence and rewards thrift.

EDWARD P. E. TROY.



POLICE DESPOTISM AND CITIZENS' RIGHTS.

New York, Jan. 18, 1915.

Some men are pugnacious, and others are pugnacious only when opposing an infringement on their rights. Samuel W. Simpson is such a man.

Judge Rosalsky of the Court of General Sessions of the City of New York, on the 16th day of October, 1914, reversed the conviction of Mr. Simpson for distributing a circular with a petition attached, and addressed to the Governor and to members of the Leg-

islature of the State. Judge Rosalsky based his decision on the ground that the law did not apply to distribution of petitions on the streets of the City of New York.

Promptly thereafter Mr. Simpson was again arrested for distributing a circular entitled "The Cause of War," and advertising the meetings of the Manhattan Singletax Club, without a petition attached. He was again convicted and an appeal was taken to the higher court. Judge Joseph L. Mulqueen decided that "The distribution of advertising circulars to people in or upon any of the streets, avenues or public places of the City of New York is not a violation of Section 408, Subdivision 5 of the Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of New York," and reversed Mr. Simpson's conviction and ordered that his fine be remitted.

The Police Commissioner of New York City was then notified by me, as Mr. Simpson's attorney, if any more arrests were made under Section 408 of the Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of New York for the distribution of circulars, handbills, leaflets or pamphlets, action would be brought against the City of New York and against the individual policeman for false imprisonment, and he was requested to instruct the police of the City of New York accordingly.

Infringements of rights must be pugnaciously fought.

HARRY WEINBERGER.



AN ARTFUL DODGER AS ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Philadelphia, Jan. 12, 1915.

Recent experiences of a taxpayer in an application to the Hon. John C. Bell, Attorney General of Pennsylvania, should be brought to public notice. The General Assembly, by Act of May 12, 1911 (P. L. 287) exempted machinery of all kinds from taxation in the second class cities, Pittsburgh and Scranton. Under the law (1844, P. L. 486, Sec. 32) machinery in all other parts of the State is taxable as real estate when owned by the owner of the real estate on which it is situated (70 Pa. 381). It has been so taxed, and is so taxed today, in other parts of the State, except in Philadelphia; there the Board of Revision of Taxes has ignored the General Assembly, the Supreme Court and the following provisions of the Constitution, viz.: Article 9, Section 1—"All taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of subjects within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax." Also, Article I, Section 12—"No power of suspending laws shall be exercised unless by the Legislature or by its authority."

Regardless of the policy or impolicy of taxing machinery, it is impolitic and dangerous to allow an irresponsible County Board to override the Constitution, the General Assembly and the Supreme Court. Therefore on September 26, 1914, a taxpayer of Philadelphia applied to Hon. John C. Bell, Attorney General, for permission to use the name of the Commonwealth (that being a necessary form) without expense or trouble to the Commonwealth's officers in a taxpayer's suit to compel the Board of Revision of Taxes of Philadelphia to observe the law. On September 29 the Attorney General asked for authori-

ties justifying the application to him; these were furnished, and the rules of his office having been complied with, a hearing was appointed for November 6 in Philadelphia before Hon. Morris Wolf, Deputy Attorney General; defendants were duly served with copies of the charge with ten days' notice. The accused officials did not contest the application; it would naturally appear that permission should issue as a matter of course. But instead the Attorney General suggested that the complainant, instead of serving the Board of Revision of Taxes, should serve the individual assessors (their appointees and subordinates). This was done; new papers were prepared and served, and another day appointed for a hearing. Again the defendants failed to contest the application. Again the permission should have issued as a matter of course; it did not.

Later another day was set for a hearing; again the defendants failed to contest; permission was then expected as a matter of course; it was not granted; and on December 10 the Attorney General refused permission, suggesting that permission be obtained from the District Attorney. This was a matter that had been passed on before; his attention was called to the fact that the proceeding was not of a criminal nature; that the violation complained of was not of city ordinances, but of a statute of the General Assembly; that no local body or power in Philadelphia had any control over the Board of Revision of Taxes; furthermore, that the Attorney General had already made this objection two months previously, and had yielded the point; and that having already held two hearings and much time having elapsed, it seemed late in the day to raise an objection already disposed of. Finally, however, on December 30 the Attorney General declined to grant permission (a mere formality), again suggesting that application should be made to the District Attorney.

From the statements made the public may draw their own conclusions. The question before the Attorney General was not complicated; his office was not responsible in case of error; his requirements were met; a prima facie case was made out, not disputed. His delay seems inexcusable, and may amount to a denial of justice.

SAMUEL MILLIKEN.

FOOD PRICES IN GERMANY.

Starnberg, bei Munich, Bavaria (Villa Lipps),
Dec. 23, 1914.

I would like to ask the authority for the statements on p. 1164 in regard to prices of food in Germany. We live in a small town, about twenty miles from Munich, and we have hardly found any difference so far in prices, and all sorts of food are as abundant as usual. The good house bread, the staple food of middle class people, is exactly at the old price, fifty pfennigs for the two and one-half pound loaf. Remember 50 pfennigs are only 12 cents, and that the German pound is 500 grams, that is nearly one-tenth heavier than the American avoirdupois pound of 453 6/10 grams. Work out the problem and you will find that we are paying almost exactly 4½ cents per pound for house bread.

Vegetables are as plentiful as ever. Why should they not be? They are too bulky to send in large

quantities to the front and the supply was large this year.

We get all the eggs we want at about the usual winter price for prime fresh eggs, 3 cents apiece.

We had a big English cock pheasant the other day. It furnished dinner for four. It cost two marks, that is 48 cents. Step into a poulterer's in Chicago and ask him what he will charge you for an English pheasant or even a Canadian grouse, which is not half as large.

ROBERT W. HALL.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, January 26, 1915.

Commission on Industrial Relations.

In the hearing before the Industrial Commission at New York on January 18, Roger W. Babson declared absentee landlordship the greatest handicap to both labor and capital. The Associated Press reports made him say absentee ownership of industries. On January 19, Ida Tarbell testified. She advocated scientific management, saying that it resulted in shorter hours and higher wages for efficient labor. "We know," she said, "that people have a right to short hours, to recreation—in a word to more life." On being asked her opinion of the cause of inequality of women's wages as compared with men's, she said: "There are many reasons why women's wages are low. For one thing they are an unstable quantity. And then they go into industry untrained. They are not worth much to industry naturally." She spoke very highly of the treatment of its employes by the Steel Trust. The employes, she said, were opposed to the abolition of Sunday work since it would reduce their earnings. The company stores of the Frick Coal and Coke Company she considered a philanthropy. Upon this Chairman Frank Walsh read from a report showing that these stores yield a profit of 517 per cent. Miss Tarbell declared that the Steel Trust maintains a model village in Vandegrift, Pa. She was asked whether workers are not forbidden in this town to attend organization meetings. She knew of no such prohibition. Whereupon Chairman Walsh read a proclamation of the Burgess referring to "demonstrations by persons, mostly non-residents," which "engender ill-feeling among our neighbors and citizens," and forbidding any assemblages, marches, parades, public meetings or public demonstrations upon the streets or private properties "until such time as may seem more expedient." Miss Tarbell was followed on the stand by Congressman David Lewis of Maryland. He remarked that he had come to the conclusion reluctantly "that the whole theory of private