

that the charter was a "high-brow" affair and hostile to the "poor man." Appeals of this kind to blind class and party feeling undoubtedly had great effect and no doubt deterred hundreds of voters of the type customarily imposed on by the politicians, from giving the charter any open-minded consideration whatever. These voters are now beginning to see their mistake and when the tide turns we believe it will run far and fast our way. The support for the charter by Ex-President Eliot of Harvard is worth noting and, needless to say, was most gratifying to its framers.

The fortunate acceptance of commission charters by voters of Lowell and Lawrence on the same day of the narrow defeat of the Cambridge charter, should not be considered as in any way reflecting on the relative merits of the latter. The far more glaring evils in those two cities—they had become a notorious State-wide scandal in Lawrence—had demonstrated the need of a radical change, while in Cambridge conditions were still such that the cry of "Let well enough alone" could be used effectively. This alone would account for the more prompt acceptance of commission government in those cities than in Cambridge.

Observant Progressives find great encouragement in the fact that a charter of such an advanced democratic type could in the course of nineteen months be brought in a city like Cambridge to a point where a change of 400 votes in a total of over 11,000 cast, would have caused its adoption. The encouragement increases steadily when one considers the line-up of the local press, politicians, and stand-patters the charter had to face; the ease with which the charter could be misrepresented and ridiculed among the uninformed; the fact that there was no public demand whatever for a new charter when it appeared; the fact that the summer vacation habit kept the bulk of the charter support out of town for a large portion of the most valuable part of the campaign season; the fact that all the work of drafting the charter, arranging and addressing meetings, of conducting the campaign, the preparation and issuance of campaign literature, the getting of 1,000 signatures to get the measure on the ballot was entirely the work of a few unpaid unofficial volunteers. The funds for the campaign, some \$2,700, were raised by private subscription in response mainly to solicitations by mail, about one hundred and fifty citizens contributing. On the whole, the result for the cause of progress in Cambridge must be regarded as wonderfully good. It means to many of us that Massachusetts is really as "insurgent" as California or Wisconsin—that Massachusetts only awaits the appearance of a leader appealing to the old Massachusetts love of candor, public spirit, dignity and ability, to resume her former place of leadership for freedom and democracy.



Here should be recorded a recognition of the fine public-spirited work for Cambridge of Ex-City Solicitor Nichols of Haverhill, Messrs. James A. O'Keefe, R. F. Bergengren, Charles T. Murray and L. M. Ranger of Lynn, all leaders in the work which established similar new charters in their home cities. These men gave most cheerfully and generously of

their time and fine abilities to help us here—in speaking and otherwise—as willing volunteers in support of the common good. Without their help we should have made no such progress.

Other non-residents who rendered us strikingly valuable help are ex-Senator J. W. Bucklin of Grand Junction, Colo., Mayor (then City Solicitor) N. D. Baker of Cleveland, Prof. A. R. Hatton of Western Reserve University (Lecturer on Municipal Government at Harvard last semester), Ex-Mayor Head of Nashville, Tenn., U. S. Senator Owen of Oklahoma, George Fred Williams of Boston, U. S. Senator La Follette, and last but by no means least, Mr. John E. Blair and Commissioners Coates and Fasset of Spokane.

In closing it should, in justice to Senator Bucklin's brilliant work in Grand Junction, be repeated that his preferential system of voting has been a main cause for the enthusiasm and devotion of the most influential leaders and workers for the Cambridge charter—including some of the most experienced political leaders of the State and city,—and interest in it is rapidly developing in neighboring cities and throughout Massachusetts. It appeals at once to the disinterested voter as a simple and attractive means of escape not only in city elections, but in direct primaries and elsewhere, from the distressing choice between the raw plurality system, or the crude and clumsy plan of double elections.

LEWIS J. JOHNSON.



THE SINGLETAX IN SOUTH AFRICA.*

Johannesburg, So. Africa.

Young Lucas, the lawyer, set it going. He is a Singletaxer. Some of his Singletax friends advised him against joining the Labor party here, so far as Singletax is concerned. But he doesn't carry his brains in his boots.

Before Lucas joined the local Labor party, they were bitterly opposed to Singletax. After he joined, his enthusiasm conquered them and they took it as part of their program. The municipal election followed. It came off last October.

As soon as the canvass began, the Singletax part of the Labor party program was seized upon by the Opposition as a vulnerable point for attack. They worked it for all they thought it worth, and so forced it to the front as practically the one issue of the election. Lucas was in his element, and the Labor party, nothing loth, backed him to the finish. The whole town rang with Singletax.

Then the gods helped us further. They tempted the directors of land companies here into making speeches against the Singletax. This was the one thing needed to "tip the beam," and it tipped. When these land monopolists entered the field against us our battle was won.

The result at the election was wonderful. There were 15 Labor party candidates for the City Council and 11 were elected. Of those who lost, one failed by only 4 votes and another by only 14.

As several independents in the Council are pledged to Singletax, there is a clear Singletax majority in that body, and the Council will petition the legislature for powers to put the Singletax in force for

*See The Public of November 17, 1911, page 1170.

municipal purposes. Their petition will probably be granted, and then you will see in Johannesburg another Vancouver.

It seems funny to me to be writing in this strain, for I am a Socialist, and the Singletax was to me only a year ago a harmless and perfectly useless fad. But there must be some virus in the idea, for I feel quite enthusiastic about it now.

GEORGE C. MOSSES.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

LOS ANGELES AND THE McNAMARAS.

In the California Mountains.

It may be interesting to have a few of the comments of the Sierra mountaineers on this remarkable affair. They are very plain, hard-working, out-spoken men and women. Many are Socialists, Singletaxers, supporters of trade unions, believers in La Follette and Woodrow Wilson, in Governor Johnson and in Right Things.

Until the McNamara confession there was a general disbelief that any man or men, in any union, would commit such atrocious crimes. There was a universal desire to see fair play, and to have the McNamaras clearly proven guiltless. The subject was very widely discussed, and quite generally with regret over the historic attitude of Los Angeles and especially of the Los Angeles Times toward organized labor.

Then came what seems to most of us one of the most surprising events of the century, and we could not but feel profoundly grateful to Lincoln Steffens, and to all who supported his suggestions. Nor could we fail to note the opportunity offered for the amelioration of class-feeling in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

I have never yet found a Socialist, a union man, an insurgent or any sort of reformer in these mountains who believes in dynamite or assassination. Plain, honest Americans will not stand for crime, nor for that ancient doctrine of evil—that "the end justifies the means." Perhaps, however, it is time for some re-reading of "Put Yourself in His Place," that great novel of 40 years ago, in which Charles Reade sets forth the blind and wicked terrorism which some trade union men have sometimes practiced.

That was a terrible book, but in its time it helped to clarify men's thoughts. Reade saw, as we are seeing to-day, that only by the words of education, argument and the ballot-box, can labor organizations come to their own.

It is gratifying to observe how general and widespread is the comment: "I am mighty sorry for the thousands of honorable union men who put up so much money and so much devotion for those fellows. Now let them weed that element out of all their organizations." Further, one finds among our more thoughtful citizens a very earnest hope that the people of Los Angeles will not fail to seize the psychological moment to grant to organized labor its rights, and so unite all classes in a common civic patriotism. For to us in the mountains it appears that Los Angeles has been as far wrong in one direction as San Francisco has been in another. Especially do we wish to have an end to class-feeling of the bitter sort

which has prevailed in Los Angeles, and we want more of the Golden Rule.

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN.



DYNAMITE VS. REASON.

Whitefish, Mont.

Labor is guilty. Yes, certainly. But do not think for a moment that Capital does not have to shoulder a share of the responsibility.

We read about the conflict between Labor and Capital. I prefer to consider it as a conflict between Labor and Dividends. The percentage of accidents in our industrial establishments is appalling; and a very large proportion of them are avoidable by the use of proper safety appliances. Unfortunately the furnishing of proper safety appliances cuts into Dividends.

Again and again we read of Labor stepping into the cage and going down into the mine where with light hearts and willing hands they dig the dusky diamonds which furnish the power to turn the wheels of our industrial system and warm our homes. Boom! Crash! and scores of them are dead in the dark depths of the mine. Their wives and children, mothers and sweethearts gathering in weeping groups around the mouth of the mine, know full well that proper safety appliances were not provided by the owners of the mine because they cost money; know that their loved ones are dead and that they must face the cold world as widows and orphans, in order that the stockholders of the mine may receive dividends.

We shudder at the enormity of the McNamaras' crime—we could not believe it until they confessed—but we shudder again when we read of scores of funerals occurring at one time in some little mining camp, the result of some clearly avoidable accident.

Labor spends its youth, manhood and womanhood laboring in the cotton mills. Old age, ill health and many other causes, avoidable and otherwise, impair their earning capacity, and to keep the wolf from the door the little innocent children are taken from play and school and put to work in the mill. Day by day their tender lungs are filled with the lint of the mill, their cheeks grow pale, their bodies thin. The helpless parents see these conditions and they know that the bone and sinew, the brain and nerve of the young and growing generation are being ground into factory of Dividends.

I might write of the avoidable railroad accidents, the sweat shops of the great cities, the fire traps of the big factories,—but our whole industrial system tells the same story of human sacrifice in the interest of Dividends.

Do these conditions warrant Labor in the use of dynamite to destroy the life and property of their so-called enemies? Certainly not.

The noble army of patriots under Washington were nearly all from the ranks of the working classes. In the face of untold suffering and hardships they fought and won for themselves and future generations a measure of liberty and freedom hitherto unknown in the annals of history. They placed in the hands of every freeborn American the all powerful, universal and unlimited ballot. The world at large will yield a certain amount of excuse for the serfs of Russia in the use of force and bombs to in-