

position. A punishment is thus placed on men of fidelity to the public interest. The Pinchot type of public official is heralded as unfit for public life, and driven from official position. It is a defeat that borders dangerously on a triumph, a triumph that the future is likely to make complete.

† †

How to Conserve Coal Lands.

Puck (hum.), January 5.—In a way, it must amuse those Interests which have secured Alaskan coal lands when they see what a panicky hullabaloo their far sighted shrewdness has kicked up. We are not familiar with the details in the case, but it strikes us that the evil features of the occupation could be minimized with beautiful simplicity. If the coal lands of Alaska are to be developed immediately, if mines are to be dug and coal shipped in large quantities to consumers, the people of the United States possibly will profit by an increase of supply, and that will be a good thing. But if, as has been intimated, the Alaskan coal fields are to be held out of use for years, or until present coal sources are seriously depleted, then their holders should be made to pay proportionately for the right to "sting" future generations. The way to clip Monopoly's wings in a case like this is to tax coal lands as coal lands, whether in use or out of use. Then it will be a very rich or else a very foolish, unbusiness-like "Interest" which will pay for long a big yearly tax on a mine that isn't producing any revenue. Coal lands should be conserved, but by the people, for the people. Make it unprofitable to hold coal lands undeveloped and some of the wrongs we now worry about will right themselves.

† †

Henry George and Conservation.

Kansas City Star, January 4.—A reader of the New York Evening Post has taken that paper to task for referring to Gifford Pinchot as the originator of the conservation policies of the last administration. He points out that forty years ago Henry George published a pamphlet, "Our Land Policy," in which he called attention to the monopolization of public lands, including forests, water power and mineral deposits, and urged action by the States and the nation to protect the public interests. Of course, the conservation policy is essentially a part of the Henry George movement for conserving to the public the unearned increment of land values. The value of a vacant lot in the heart of a business district of a city arises from the presence of a crowded population and not from the labor of the owner. The rich income in ground rent that it will yield is really the return from a special privilege. The privileges growing out of increased land values long since passed into private hands. That is all the more reason for retaining control for the people of the privileges from power and mineral sites which private interests are now trying to acquire.

† † †

The landlords have been revelling in prosperity—in a bloated and diseased prosperity—at the very time when the people have been suffering the greatest privation and want of food.—Richard Cobden.

RELATED THINGS

CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT

TO THEM THAT DARKEN COUNSEL.

Guy Kendall in the London Nation of November 27.

†

"Forasmuch therefore as ye trample on the poor and take exactions from him of wheat, ye have built houses of hewn stone but shall not dwell in them."

"And the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord."

†

Forasmuch as your hearts are hardened, and your hands encumbered with gold,

Forasmuch as ye sell your judgment, as a stall-fed beast is sold;

Forasmuch as your eyes yearn backward to the feast of the full fat years,

Forasmuch as your brows bend earthward, when the sign in the heaven appears;

Therefore your feet shall falter, and the staff of your hands shall bend,

And the firm-set stones shall fall, for the house of the great hath an end.

Because your lips have watered for the price of the sufferer's pain,

Because ye have drugged men drowsy, and count their drunkenness gain;

Because ye have mocked their weakness, and flung them a grudging dole,

Because ye have counted their bodies, and found no trace of a soul;

For all this the hounds are gathered, and the huntsman's net is spread,

And ye hear their horn on the hills like a long-drawn wall of the dead.

As up in your high-built halls ye have careless lived, and content

If others have toiled and gathered, and ye have scattered and spent,

As ye fear to smirch your souls, or so much as a finger soil

With the scum of a nation's ferment, the grime of a people's toil,

Therefore your own fine hands have sullied your once fair fame,

And your speech that was bold and straight is now fall'n crooked and lame,

Till at last men say, Lo, these have woven their own rewards,

Who once were lords among people, where now the people are lords.

† † †

A. REVOLUTION OF THE RICH.

From The London Nation of November 27.

Of all the British people the Lords are, for the moment, to be envied most. It is not merely that all eyes are bent on them, that they have emerged into daylight, and are spoken of as having quite

an importance of their own. They have acquired a fresh and strange sensation; they feel themselves greater than they knew; they perceive in their natures the stir of mighty workings. They feel like the Egyptian calf when priests found under his tongue the symbol of the god; they feel like a dog-violet that has developed scent, or like a common oyster that has developed a pearl. They discover a new quality in their being, and enjoy the charm of unexpected revelations in themselves. They have been called Revolutionists.

Imagine the sensations of a Lord when his valet, softly entering with just a pleasing rattle of cups like silvery bells, wakes him in the morning with his tea and daily paper, and he discovers those filthy Radical prints are describing his action on the Budget as a Revolution! His sensations are then queerest mixture of pleasure and pain. He, the representative of stability, the hereditary guardian of property, to be called a Revolutionist! It is almost unthinkable in its horror. But, at the same time, is there not something a little dashing, a little dare-devil, in the name—a little "wicked," as women say, and possibly attractive? It seems to imply a certain spirit, at all events a certain courage. He sees himself in a new and horrible, but rather exciting, aspect. So feels the ambitious parvenu when, at a City dinner, the first twinge of aristocracy's gout shoots through his toe. So feels the British matron when, waking in a fever hospital, she reads above her bed the label, "Scarlet; female; 403."

That scene in the House of Lords with which the Revolution opened—how well it concealed its revolutionary significance! It was afternoon, and the electric lamps struggled against the wintry river mist, but the decorated Chamber was nicely warmed to a regulated temperature, and the Lords reclined in comfort on stuffed leather seats. Every seat was full, and each was heavy with prosperity, for though you raked the kingdoms of the world you would hardly find that number of such wealthy men in a single one of them. Side by side with those whom the Bishop of Bristol justly called "the physical hereditary Peers," sat the spiritual hereditary Peers, whose lineage of holiness the Bishop traced back between twelve and thirteen centuries, and why he stopped short of nineteen centuries we cannot tell. There the spiritual descendants of Christ were seated in ecclesiastical splendor of lawn, representing (to quote the Bishop once more) "the terrible conditions of the very poor," and adding the considerable incomes of sanctity to the more secular riches around them. The gloomy, but august, place of assembly was further crowded with statesmen and counsellors, whose personal distinction, rather than physical hereditary right, gave them the claim to be present. They, too, were men of substance, living in comfort, well dressed as any Peer or bishop of them all; and among them sat a real

and actual King, whose sporting interest in the scene endeared him to all sportsmen's hearts. To complete the sense of grandeur and security, there ran the double line of peeresses, who (to quote a reporter with knowledge of such things), "in their furs and winter clothes, gave somber hues rather than brightness to the picture."

Such was the scene under which Revolution lurked in ambush, and how complete that ambush was! When we speak of Revolution we think of the fervid hands upstretched for liberty in the Tennis Court; we think of the Feast of Pikes, of women in their wretchedness drumming to Versailles, of levies in mass, and a nation risen from the lowest depths against tyrants. "Your mob," says the historian, speaking of Revolution's natural manifestation up to this year of grace:

Your mob is a genuine outburst of Nature; issuing from, or communicating with, the deepest deep of Nature. When so much goes grinning and grimacing as a lifeless Formality, and under the stiff buckram no heart can be left beating, here once more, if nowhere else, is a Sincerity and Reality. Shudder at it; or even shreek over it, if thou must; nevertheless consider it. . . . The thing they will do is known to no man; least of all to themselves. It is the inflammablest immeasurable Firework, generating, consuming itself.

Who would have thought that the House of Lords could ever have shared the title of Revolutionist with that mob? The House of Lords which, so often in our history, did nothing in particular and did it very well—was that to become the inflammablest, immeasurable Firework, generating, consuming itself? Those comfortable gentlemen on padded leather, who had never known hunger since their baby bottle, who had never been driven by the lash of want, and had that morning, probably without exception, enjoyed warm baths—were they to be the genuine outburst of Nature, communicating with her deepest deep? These Lords, who so long had gone grinning and grimacing as a lifeless Formality—were they suddenly to become the symbols of sincerity and of the things that are real? We may shudder at it; but, nevertheless, we must consider it. For, indeed, the thing they will do is known to no man; least of all to themselves.

Listen again to the historian who sounded the depths of man's spirit:

Hunger and nakedness and nightmare oppression lying heavy on Twenty-five million hearts; this, not the wounded vanities or contradicted philosophies of philosophical Advocates, rich Shopkeepers, rural Noblesse, was the prime mover in the French Revolution; as the like will be in all such Revolutions, in all countries.

The great historian who sounded the depths of the human spirit was obviously wrong. He would have to pay out more line for his plummet now. Here, among our British Revolutionists, is no hunger or nakedness, but flesh of good-liking and

winter clothing of the best. No nightmare oppression lies heavy on those five hundred hearts. What, then, is the prime mover in their Revolution? Is it the fear of reducing the broad margin of their pleasures, the fear of being compelled to deny themselves the extra man to dress them, the extra motor to carry them about, the extra copice for their poultry? No other nightmare that we can see lies heavy on them. Quadruple the provisions of the Budget, and hardly one of them would yet be forced to work an hour a week for his life. Multiply the Budget by ten, and hunger and nakedness would still not have come within their sight. Hunger and nakedness, said the historian, will be in all countries the prime movers of Revolution. Would he were here now to see the Lords, marshalled in their stiff buckram, grinning and grimacing as lifeless formalities, as they set out to overthrow the established order of their country!

They are out for Revolution; they have raised the flag of disorder; they are prepared for the plunge into chaos—into “temporary chaos.” We know what they would say to the bewildered anarchist, or to wild claimants of political rights, who thus threw the land into confusion and wasted her resources by millions together. But the Lords also are aware of the momentous issues to themselves. They will face the risk, says Lord Lansdowne. If need be, they will meet their doom, says the Duke of Norfolk. There is always something impressive about a man, no matter how humble his position, who goes out to meet his doom. Without calling ourselves Revolutionists like the Lords we can all feel some touch of human pity, some glow of admiration for him who snatches up rifle, revolver, or even a long knife, and takes his stand upon the barricade, in protest against unendurable oppression. He is there for the simplest and highest right of man—the right of himself and his kind to live their own lives as long as they live at all. He has set everything at stake. Nothing but the shame of unbearable tyranny would have driven him to that last act of desperation. For him it is life or death, it is almost certain death, and nothing but an open shirt stands between him and doom. The guns are heard upon the street; the houses crash; the dust arises. Dark figures are seen stealing round the far-off corners; the air shrieks with bullets as their rifles flash in the gathering dusk. The man is at his place, waiting; he draws his old hat over his eyes; if freedom cannot be won, at least he may strike a blow at the agents of oppression. Such a man the present writer has often seen die, and when he sees the Duke of Norfolk going out to meet his doom like that, he will not withhold his admiration.

But the Lords risk nothing, and they know it. If the defeat of their Revolution is the worst their enemies can imagine, what will they suffer or

lack? Lord Lansdowne drew a pathetic picture of a “bread-winner’s heir” who might find himself so burdened with death duties owing to his great inheritance that he would be very unhappy. Lord Willoughby de Broke revealed the nature of his apprehensions by quoting a wretched parody, which “saw fox-hunting abolished by an order from the State.” Such are the terrors which these Revolutionists are called upon to face. Truly, as Lord Ribblesdale well said, these are the sobs of the well-to-do, and nothing is more unimpressive than the crying of the comfortable. Strictly, we may say that the overthrow of an established constitution is always revolutionary. But there is something ludicrous, something that does not work out, in a Revolution for the defense of riches. If it were not for the thought of what must come, we might almost agree to drop the word, lest by its use for the action of Lords we besmirch the honor of those thousands who have died with heroic minds in the Revolutions of Liberty.

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THE LANDLORDS’ LAW.

Four Leaflets Issued by the Land Values Publication
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What the Lords Are Fighting For IN MANCHESTER.

Ship Canal and Land Value—What the Landlords Receive.

In 1896 Mr. E. T. Hooley, the company promoter, bought Trafford Park estate for £360,000.

In 1897 he sold the estate to the Trafford Park Estates Company for £901,000, making a profit of £540,000 in the transaction.

Land which was sold at the rate of £327 per acre in 1893 was sold at the rate of £4,840 per acre in 1902.

For 56½ acres of undeveloped land which was taken for the Ship Canal and which was assessed for poor rate at £19 per annum, the late Lord Egerton of Tatton received under award £63,240, or 3,328 years’ purchase of the ratable value.

What the People Pay.

The making of the Manchester Ship Canal, with the consequent increase in population and trade, sent up the value of the land, but the people who paid and are still paying for the Canal have got none of the value. The ratepayers of Manchester have been paying an average rate of 8½d. in the £ for the past fourteen years to meet the interest on the capital spent in making the Canal.

This is the Landlords’ Law.—The land specu-