

RELATED THINGS

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"BE OF GOOD CHEER."

Be of good cheer, brave spirit; steadfastly
 Serve that low whisper thou hast served; for know,
 God hath a select family of some
 Now scattered wide thro' earth, of each alone,
 Who are thy spiritual kindred, and each one
 By constant service to that power and law,
 Is wearing the sublime proportions
 Of a true monarch's soul. Beauty and strength,
 The riches of a spotless memory,
 The eloquence of truth, the wisdom got
 By searching of a clear and loving eye
 That seeth as God seeth. These are their gifts,
 And Time, who keeps God's word, brings on the day
 To seal the marriage of these minds with thine,
 Thine everlasting lovers. Ye shall be
 The salt of all the elements, world of the world.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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THE BRITISH FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY.

From Editorials in the London Nation of August 28, 1909.

The two sections of the forward army, Labor and Liberalism, which seemed to be growing farther and farther apart, have come together. Enthusiasm has revived, and with it belief in the future. The old grievance of the British people, their divorce from the land, has been presented in a simple, practical form.

In the effort at self-justification, the great landlords have not only been guilty of acts or speech of revolting personal meanness, but they have made themselves ridiculous by asking a great industrial state to subscribe to the doctrine that the extent of their personal luxury is the measure of their public service.

The answer has been obvious. The nation has plainly intimated that it can do without its dukes, and that there is not a single useful function which they claim as their prerogative, from the maintenance of charities to the employment of labor, which it is powerless to provide for itself. Will the dukes discharge their aged servants? The state will look after them. Will they starve the hospitals? The richest of nations will not neglect its sick. Will they sell land? There will be plenty of bidders. Will they cease rearing grouse and pheasants? There will be more sheep and poultry. They can keep the neighborly feeling on which they pride themselves. They are not asked to play rural Providence any longer.

The heaviest blow which the budget has struck has been at the House of Lords and at tariff re-

form.* We doubt whether the friends of the latter cause will ever recover their attack on the land clauses.

The worst embarrassment has been reserved for the Lords. The mask is now fairly off the special kind of political hypocrisy which treats the House of Lords as a disinterested organ of the national will. The Lords cannot conceal their immense prejudice in this matter, their private, personal stake in the budget; they have proclaimed it to all the world. And it is no longer possible for them to pretend that in passing outside the British Constitution and trampling on the privileges of the Commons, they will be acting as clear-sighted interpreters of the public mind, going behind the forces of democracy in order to get at its reality. Agitation against the budget, sustained with the unlimited cash which the Protectionists command, and regular appeals to promising constituencies, have equally failed. The budget is so popular with the masses that an unconstitutional check to it might arouse a sudden fury of demonstration and action such as our politics has not known since the days of Chartism or the first reform bills. The position, therefore, of the Government is peculiarly strong. The Lords may bow the neck and pass the budget, as they are constitutionally bound to do. Or they may act as the French nobility acted in the first phase of the great Revolution. Each kind of procedure makes for the triumph of Liberalism.

We remember no Ministry that in its fourth year of office has rebounded so suddenly into popular favor. The advantage is not merely tactical. Not only have its opponents overreached themselves, but as sometimes happens amid the unrealities of politics, a shaft has been sunk into a deep and rich vein of popular interest.

Three considerations seem to us of governing importance. The first is the duty of safe-guarding free trade. The second is the largeness of the social issues which the working out of the budget involves. The third is the necessity of coming to close grips with the Lords. Here it is a case of "Thy head or my head"—there is no third course for the Liberal party.

If the budget passes, as in all probability it will pass, the question of the Lords presents itself again in a form intolerable to a great political organization, fresh from a legitimate triumph. We do not look forward with zest to another prolonged period of enfeebled compromises, or weaker surrenders, during which the Government will again be pushing bills up to the Lords, much as the attendant at a menagerie thrusts gobbets of meat

*In England "tariff reform" means the reverse of what the same words mean in the United States. The United States being a protection country, "tariff reform" is a movement toward free trade. England being a free trade country, "tariff reform" is a movement toward protection. —Editors of The Public.

between the bars of the lions' cages. We have come nearer the determination of the great quarrel than we have ever come before. We must note and make good our new ground.

The great land owners continue to devote a considerable portion of their summer holidays to instructing the nation in the elements of political economy. . . . How we have wronged these noblemen! Too late, alas! they have been induced to lay aside their native modesty, and to declare themselves as they really are, no cold monopolists, using the great estates with which Providence has endowed them, for their own profit, enjoyment, and aggrandizement, but warm-hearted stewards, concerned only with the welfare of the tenants and retainers for whom they find land and employment. The arduous task of fox hunting they perform to protect their tenants from the devastation of such vermin, while they spend laborious days among their moors to shoot grouse for the sick poor. Malicious fiction-mongers have invented myths of crofters cleared out in hundreds to make way for deer, of miles of glorious scenery dedicated to grouse and pheasants and forbidden to man, of close villages where there is no liberty to live without the license of the squire, of holdings and allotments rented to working men at six or eight times their farm rental, of extortion practised upon municipalities and other public bodies needing land for parks or other public purposes. Read the Conservative press of England, and you will be staggered at the unscrupulous audacity of such inventions of Radical malice.

What are we to make of such a presentation? Reflection brings up several definite points of inquiry. Why are the great rural land owners so terribly perturbed that they bend their intellects to construct these naïve defenses? The budget does not threaten to break up the deer forests of Atholl for small holdings, or to tax Lord Londonderry's shootings, or to confiscate the 183,200 acres owned by the Duke of Portland. There is, we repeat, nothing in the budget to justify the suggestion that great rural land owners must retrench expenditure, dismiss their servants, and enter upon "a new way of life." Only so far as these persons own city and mineral lands are they invited to contribute more largely to the public revenue. If, indeed, they were so public spirited as individually they profess to be—they would willingly serve their country by this contribution, not out of their present but out of their prospective unearned wealth. But even this call of the Exchequer is a very gentle one. Allowing for the increase of death duties, it can amount to a very few millions out of the vast sum, about two hundred millions, which they take each year for owning the land which certainly they did not make, and to which the work and wants of the people have given value. No! It is not the present taxation that frightens them.

It is the valuation. If they could get the Lords to screw up their courage to the point of knocking out compulsory valuation, they would be quite content. Valuation is the enemy. Why?

The answer is plain. Hitherto they have piled up rents and screwed up tenants in renewals of leases with impunity; they have reaped vast increases of income from public improvements, to the cost of which they have paid a mere pittance, with impunity; they have plundered railroad companies, municipalities, the state, by swelling the value of pieces of land, with the assistance of "experts" whose opinions could be put to no authoritative test, with impunity; upon these very lands which they sell so dear they have paid almost negligible rates by the connivance of a submissive rating authority, with impunity. All these highly profitable abuses, and many more, are bred of secrecy, and will disappear with publicity. Every land owner has hitherto been free to hold up the public in selling land, in almost every industrial and public capacity which the working community can assume, to fine his tenants, to escape his fair share of rates and taxes, because there has existed no authoritative valuation of his land whereby he might be convicted of his deprecations. This will be no longer possible with full and frequently revised valuations set on public record. Square dealing will be compulsory. Only those who have made research into the early history of our railroads, or whose professional duties have brought them into close contact with public arbitrations for the sale of land, adequately realize the magnitude of these gains in the past, and the damage to the land owning classes which their stoppage in the future will entail.

But the formal register of land values is felt instinctively to be the enemy, not only because it checks these public wrongs, but because it ranks as the first step in a democratic finance which will gradually undermine the remnants of rural feudalism and the economic roots of the luxurious life of our great modern plutocracy.

What they think themselves to be fighting is not merely this budget, but democracy beginning to seek definite realization in economic and social equality. Dives had not hitherto realized it possible that he might be called upon to make his reckoning with Lazarus in this world: the other he was always prepared to risk.

Nor is it merely the wild envy of the disinherited he is called upon to meet. The social conscience of the community is being stirred to a new realization of the facts of riches and poverty and the related degradation of the luxury and deprivation they involve. Never has this nation presented such a riot of sensuous extravagance as is seen everywhere today in our pleasure cities and our countryside, though in the dens and huts of industry millions of our workers are still short of

the opportunity to toil for a reasonable subsistence.

Growing numbers of sane, honest citizens are beginning to understand the nature and origin of this contrast, and to urge a determined course of political remedy.

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ANOTHER GREAT CHURCHILL SPEECH.

Principal Portions of a Speech by the Right Honorable Winston Churchill of the British Cabinet at
Palace Theater, Leicester, England, Sept.

4th, Before an Audience of 4,000.

From the Manchester (Eng.)

Guardian of Sept.

6th, 1909.

Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen: You have very rightly said that the Budget League has very successful meetings. We have a great many of them, and, as you have said, there are a good many meetings of the Budget Protest League which are, in fact, little less than demonstrations in favor of the Budget. (Laughter and "Hear, hear.") But there is one great difficulty which confronts a speaker at Budget League meetings—he has nobody to reply to. (Laughter.)

It is quite true that the small fry of the Tory party have been splashing actively about in their proper puddles. It is true that Mr. Balfour, however, the great leader who means to lead (laughter)—he has been meaning to lead for the last six years if he could only find out where on earth to lead to;—it is quite true that Mr. Balfour from time to time emits four or five columns of insipid equivocation which the newspapers whose proprietors he has taken the precaution to make into barons hasten to claim as "another epoch-making pronouncement." (Laughter.)

What I want to draw your attention to is the appalling lack of anything like a leader or a spokesman on the Tory side who is capable of commanding public attention, of conducting adequately this great controversy and debate upon which we are now engaged. The millionaire newspapers—do not forget that, although they are sold very cheap and sometimes play rather low, nevertheless they are the organs of rich gentlemen and are used in the interests of wealth as such,—the millionaire newspapers are painfully conscious of the absence of any popular and effective figure on their side. (A voice: "No, no.") The "Times" for some time made an effort to bring out Lord Rothschild as a "great" Tory democratic leader (laughter), but he retired hurt (laughter and cheers) after one round with Mr. Lloyd George. (Laughter and cheers.) The "Daily Mail" ("Oh, oh") was rather inclined to take up Lord Rosebery (a voice: "They can have him") if they only knew what he was going to say. (Laughter.) The

"Daily Telegraph" holds up its hands in pious lamentation and says, "Oh, if we only had Mr. Chamberlain in his prime, how he would have answered that wicked Limehouse speech." (Laughter.)

I am sure that we are all very sorry that Mr. Chamberlain cannot take part in this controversy, and we all deplore the perverse misfortune which keeps him at once so near and so far from the fighting line. When the "Daily Telegraph" talks about Mr. Chamberlain in his prime, we are forced to remember that that would be the Mr. Chamberlain of 1885. (Cheers.) If we had the Mr. Chamberlain of 1885 with us today he would not have answered the Limehouse speech. He would have made it. (Cheers.)

And so in the absence of anything popular and effective, in the absence of any commanding voice, the Tory party have had to fall back upon the dukes. (Laughter.)

Do not let us be too hard upon them. It is poor sport, almost like catching goldfish. These ornamental creatures blunder on every hook they see, and there is no sport whatever in trying to catch them. (Laughter.) It would be barbarous to leave them gasping on the bank of public ridicule upon which they have landed themselves. Let us put them back gently and tenderly into their fountains, and if a few bright golden scales have been rubbed off in what the Prime Minister calls the variegated handling they have received, they will soon get over it. They have got plenty more.

But although there is very little to answer at the present time, and only the well-known arguments put in the well-known forms to refute, we must not forget the stubborn forces and heavy labors and serious hazards that confront us, and will do so, before the people's budget has become the law of the land. Do not let us underrate them. Let us survey the situation.

For good or for ill, we have the power today to choose our future, and I believe there is no nation in the world, perhaps there never has been in history any nation which at one and the same moment was confronted with such opposite possibilities. We are threatened on the one hand by more melancholy disaster, and cheered on the other by more bright, yet not unreasonable, hopes. The two roads are open. We stand at the crossways. If we stand on in the old happy-go-lucky way—the richer classes ever growing in wealth and in number, and the very poor remaining plunged or plunging ever deeper in helpless, hopeless misery—then I think there is nothing before us but savage strife between class and class, with its increasing disorganization, with increasing waste of human strength and human virtue; nothing but that dual degeneration which comes from the simultaneous waste of extreme wealth and of extreme want. (Hear, hear.)

We have over here lately Colonial editors