

The Public

A National Journal of Fundamental Democracy &
A Weekly Narrative of History in the Making

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EDITORIAL

British Politics.

From the gossip in the cable reports from London, one might infer that the Tories are on top in Parliament and that the movement for land values taxation has come to a disastrous end. But it is only the gossip that warrants any such inference; and for this, with its Tory coloring, we are probably indebted to that habit among American newspaper correspondents at London which Mr. Bryce once described as "taking afternoon tea at Tory clubs." Sweep away the gossip in those cable reports, and you find a residuum of fact which tells a different story. What that story is we try to state with fullness and fairness in our News Narrative of this week.

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As we now view the British situation, a clear though tacit understanding has come about between the progressive members of Parliament of all parties. This may, indeed, lead on to an early dissolution; but if it does, the issue between Commons and Peers will be too sharply drawn for any introduction of confusing questions into the campaign. An early dissolution, however, is not probable. Several reasons support this judgment. For one thing the King is too acute a man to hazard the stability of his throne in a political fight, as the Lords have done with their privilege of hereditary legislation; and that is precisely what the King would do if he refused to co-operate with the Commons against the Lords. For

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a second consideration, the Lords themselves are not likely to take the serious risk of forcing the King to decide whether or not to cheapen the peerage by appointing Peers by wholesale. And underlying every other consideration, and giving it added force, is the reluctance of all parties to entering upon another campaign. The Liberal, the Labor, and the Irish parties must overcome their reluctance, if the King and the Tory party unite with the Lords to force them to it; but fears of a second defeat, as well as visions of a "war chest" which the recent elections well nigh emptied, and the nightmare of responsibility for promises of "tariff reform" (protection) legislation, admonish the Tory party to let matters take their course for the present.

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Legalizing Government by Injunction.

The Moon injunction measure, now pending in Congress (p. 180) and approved by President Taft, could have no other purpose than the one that Samuel Gompers attributes to it. It would embody in formal legislation the revolutionary practice which corporation lawyers, raised to the judicial bench, have been busily engaged for a dozen years in embodying in judge-made law. The injunction itself, in its application to labor disputes, is indefensible; but heretofore men like Mr. Taft who have ventured to defend it have conceded that injunctions should not issue without notice to the persons to be enjoined. Yet the Moon-Taft law, while nominally requiring this notice, nullifies the requirement with its provisos.

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Building Contracts and Public School Architects.

We shall be happily surprised if it makes any difference to Dwight H. Perkins, the architect of the Chicago Board of Education, or to the public interests he has faithfully and efficiently served, whether his trial for "insubordination," etc., is held in public or in secret, or conducted fairly or not. That the fiat has gone forth for his deposition is one of the most obvious of inferences. Mr. Perkins has not been a tool of the building contractors' ring. Therein has he offended, offended grievously and unpardonably; and when you have a Busse "business" school board to deal with such cases, you may depend upon its possessing the full courage of the "hunch" it gets. There are upon this board some sensible and honest members, to whom the contracting interests with all their power are of no more importance than the coal ring was. Through the influence and votes of these members, the attack upon Mr. Per-

kins may fail; but also, a man who has never before handled a rifle *may* hit a bull's eye at the first shot.

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Another Sensible Tax Official.

A queer objection to enforcing tax laws has been raised by owners of valuable land in Cleveland. Because their land is in a "boom" region they ask the appraisers to value it at less than it will bring. To some tax appraisers such a request would be impressive. But John A. Zangerle, the secretary of the new Cleveland board of appraisers (vol. xii, p. 1162), makes this common sense reply through the Cleveland Plain Dealer: "We are not responsible for a boom in real estate in any particular part of the city. We are following the rule that property is worth just what it will sell or lease for. The shoe may pinch a little, but we are not responsible for fancy values, or prices that are being paid perhaps on a speculative basis. If people wish to speculate in future values it is none of our business. We must tax them just as we do other sections of the city."

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The useful work this Cleveland board is doing may be inferred from these items in the Plain Dealer of the 22d:

The Cleveland Trust Co., at Euclid and E. 9th, is to be hardest hit. Ten years ago its location was assessed at \$111,700. This time it will be put on the duplicate at \$619,000; an increase of 554 per cent. This does not include the value of the building.

The Guardian Savings & Trust Co., 30 feet on Euclid avenue, valuation in 1910 \$186,500, in 1909 \$74,600; increase \$111,900, or 150 per cent.

The First National bank, 72 feet on Euclid avenue, valuation in 1910 \$330,000, in 1909 \$182,000; increase \$148,000, or 81 per cent.

The Citizens' Savings & Trust Co., 104 feet on Euclid avenue, valuation in 1910 \$696,500, in 1909 \$198,900; increase \$497,600, or 250 per cent.

The Society for Savings, 132 feet on Public Square, valuation in 1910 \$396,000, in 1909 \$143,400; increase \$252,000, or 176 per cent.

The Union National bank, 45 feet on Euclid avenue, valuation in 1910 \$306,500, in 1909 \$121,160; increase \$185,340, or 156 per cent.

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Real Estate Up and Wages Down.

In a little handbook issued by Richard Bacon Cadwalader to boom Cincinnati as "conservative," "solid" and "picturesque," we find an interesting juxtaposition. On page 9 it is boasted that "real estate investments in Cincinnati yield higher returns than similar holdings in other cities," and on page 10 appears the confession, though in the form of a boast, that "average daily wages are