

they seek, the specific demands of the Commons are trifles; but tested by the manifest laws of social progress, those demands are as a thoroughfare to a journey's end. Unwisdom and impatience by radicals at this crisis, might not only frustrate their own immediate purposes but indefinitely delay the fruition of their dearest hopes.

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Consider the specific issues before the British voters at the approaching election.

Superficial as they seem to be, and trifling as they in their concreteness would appear in this country, yet when reduced to their essentials as both sides in Great Britain regard them, they involve (1) the abolition of the House of Lords as hereditary law makers, and (2) the restoration of the land to the people.

If Liberal and Labor and Irish members of Parliament are elected in large number at the approaching elections, the plenary veto of the House of Lords will doubtless be abolished. How this will be done it would not be safe to predict too definitely; but the probabilities are that the House of Lords would be allowed hereafter only a suspensory veto—the power, that is, to return bills to the Commons without approval, thereby requiring the Commons to readopt or abandon them, but the bills to become law in case of re-adoption. The method of forcing this limitation of legislative power upon the Lords is “another story,” and we reserve it for another article upon this general subject.

It is easy to see, however, that if a suspensory veto were substituted for the present plenary one, the House of Lords would cease to be a legislative body altogether. What that would mean to democracy in Great Britain, is written almost as it were in an open book. It is written so plainly that the Lords who are to lose by it understand it well, whether the people who are to gain by it do or not.

It means home rule for Ireland in home affairs; and so for Scotland and Wales, and for England and her municipalities as well; for it is the plenary veto of the House of Lords alone that stands in the way of those advances. It means adult suffrage regardless of sex, just as in Australasia; for it is the plenary veto of the House of Lords alone that stands in the way of that reform in Great Britain. And it means abrogation of the privilege of a few Englishmen to make all the rest “trespassers in the land of their birth;” for it is the plenary veto of the House of Lords alone that maintains the enormous landed privileges in the British Isles.

And as with the power of the House of Lords in legislation if a suspensory veto is substituted for their plenary veto, so with British landed interests—whether landlord or capitalistic—if the land clauses of the Lloyd George Budget are injected into the British fiscal system under the circumstances that surround it.

Two radical factors enter into the budget controversy. For one, it rests upon the principle, not of *equal* taxation as American land taxes do, but of *equitable* taxation. It would tax land values, not because they are values, but because they measure the earnings of the community as distinguished from the earnings of individuals. It distinguishes earnings from privileges. Let this idea take root anywhere, and it will soon grow into a flourishing tree. The second radical factor in the George Budget is supplementary to the other. It is the valuation machinery provided for in the Budget for all the land of Great Britain, and for its revaluations as community growth and general improvement augment its value.

With that basis for land value taxation, secured in an election campaign so distinctly demanding that Britons shall no longer be “trespassers in the land of their birth,” the goal of the land for the people may soon be attained.

Should this measure up to all the just demands of radical democracy, the fighting will soon be over and peaceable developments be under way; should there still be capitalistic privileges to assail, those privileges would be at enormous disadvantage and the fighting ground for democracy be vastly improved.

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To Americans familiar with written constitutions, judicial usurpations, irresponsible political parties, and legislative anarchy so far as obedience of representatives to public opinion is concerned, the British revolution now on may be neither so clear nor so hopeful as the circumstances really warrant. But this also is “another story.”

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HENRY H. HARDINGE.*

Whoever has read any of our signed editorials bearing the name of Henry H. Hardinge as their writer (vol. ix, pp. 1084, 1133, 1229; x, pp. 125, 174, 267, 436, 918, 943, 1228; xi, p. 152; xii, p. 821) will have no difficulty in recalling them. They are distinguished by an individuality of style that leaves a lasting impression. From the earliest days of *The Public*, Mr. Hardinge

*A portrait of Mr. Hardinge goes with this issue of *The Public* as a supplement.

has been not only an occasional contributor to its columns, but a constant friend of its work. We are glad, therefore, to say something of his life and personality.

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The whole character of this man could not be better described in a single word, perhaps, than by calling him an inventor.

This word suggests a mind in which cold and calculating reason works in harmony with a rampant imagination. You can't conceive of Nature as your helper unless you dream, and you can't make her your servant unless you conform logically to natural laws.

Having dreamed without restraint, and reasoned rigidly, Mr. Hardinge has been a successful inventor.

And the qualities which have enabled him in his mechanical vocation to make conquests over physical nature, dominate his thought in his favorite avocation of solving social and political problems.

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Born on a farm in Canada about the time that some of us in Yankeeland were reading current newspaper reports of the battle of Gettysburg, Mr. Hardinge lived a Canadian country life until 1880. He began his education at a Canadian country school, and he confesses that he hasn't finished it yet. While still living in Canada he learned the machinists' trade, coming in 1888, at the age of 25, to Chicago, where he now carries on a profitable business, and, as he says, "talks single tax whenever the weather permits."

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Mr. Hardinge's specialty is tool making, that branch of mechanics in which special implements, requiring special ingenuity and skill of the maker, are produced for less skilled men to use by repetitional processes.

He is a tool maker in the highest sense. Tool making is a constructive science and a progressive art, to which there are no thinkable boundaries, and it is in this sense that Mr. Hardinge is a tool maker.

He has built practicable engines so small that you could weigh them on a letter scale, and others so large that a side-show giant could walk through the cylinder without bending his body or touching his head. He has bored a tiny hole lengthwise through a bar of steel of a diameter of only 75-ten thousandths of an inch, has then split the bar into three sections and having ground the hole with diamond dust so as to make it central,

round and true, has finally put the sections together again, thereby making a commercially perfect tube of a diameter equal to about three hairs of the human head. It may well be believed that work like this, for commercial purposes, requires extreme patience, exquisite precision, marvelous skill, and the ability incidentally to dream out and to work out both fairy-like and gigantic mechanical implements.

Only long experience as well as the temperament of scientist and artist combined could qualify for such work, and this experience Mr. Hardinge had. His mechanical career began thirty years ago, with the building of threshing machines for farmers; and during that thirty years he has run the gamut of mechanical training up to the production of implements, such as are alluded to above, for performing the most delicate of all known mechanical operations.

For ten years, in partnership with his brother, Mr. Hardinge conducted a watch-tool industry at Chicago, known still as Hardinge Brothers, whose products are familiar to watchmakers all over the world.

He has for the past 10 years been engaged, in collaboration with Robert Wiebking, an engraver, upon inventions calculated to revolutionize the manufacture of printers' types. This art, underlying what old printers liked to call "the art preservative of all arts," is peculiarly exacting. Of all the implements of the printer, types rank first for indispensability, perishability, and cost; and their production, delicate and difficult even in its secondary processes, demands microscopic accuracy in the primary work of matrix-making. Almost any one acquainted with printing may guess the difficulties of revolutionizing this industry by radical invention, but only a type founder thoroughly familiar with the art can have an adequate idea of the magnitude of the task, now accomplished by Mr. Hardinge and his collaborator, so many and varied were the nice technical problems involved and so intricate their relations to one another.

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Not long after coming to Chicago Mr. Hardinge made his debut as a debater.

It was at one of the famous dinners of the old Sunset Club. Edward Osgood Brown had given an exposition of the Henry George idea, which had then come under general discussion through the contest George had made in 1886 for Mayor of New York and in 1887 for Secretary of State. So many of the banquetters were try-

ing to be heard in answer to Mr. Brown (now ex-Judge Brown) that the rule requiring applicants for the floor to give their names upon being recognized by the chair, was strictly enforced. For a time the discussion ran against Judge Brown's position, and then a voice rang out clear and sharp: "Mr. Chairman!" The proprietor of the voice was duly recognized by the chair, whereupon he secured undivided attention by his unique compliance with the rule:

"H. H. Hardinge—single taxer—on deck!"

With this spell-binding introduction, Mr. Hardinge went on for the allotted time, replying to Judge Brown's critics in a concise, penetrating, forceful argument, marked with bursts of eloquence and unique in presentation, which made the occasion one to be remembered. He had brought to bear upon this social question the feeling and the reasoning which have made him not only a mechanic but a master mechanic—not only an artisan but a master of his art.

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The injustice of private monopoly of land was thrust upon Mr. Hardinge's attention when as a boy he was warned off the hillside above the whirlpool rapids at Niagara Falls, upon the occasion of a visit to the Falls while he lived in Canada. This was done by a policeman whose sole duty seemed to be to direct visitors to a gate in the fence, through which they could go down to the rapids free but must pay half a dollar to get back again. As Hardinge's only asset then was a return ticket to Toronto, he did not see the whirlpool rapids until thirty years after, and a sense of the unfairness of private monopoly of this natural wonder rankled him.

His resentment found logical expression in 1893, when a copy of Henry George's "Irish Land Question" fell into his hands. This systematized his protest for him, on broad principles, which his logical mind instantly recognized, adopted and comprehensively applied.

Describing his temperament himself with an allusion to his adoption of Henry George's views, Mr. Hardinge has recently said: "I have been a rebel for about twenty-five years—a methodical one for seventeen."

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One of the first to help organize the People's party in Illinois, Mr. Hardinge won second place at the election of 1894 as its candidate for State Senator in a four-sided contest. He was with the Independence League in 1908 on local issues, but against it and for Bryan on national issues.

Otherwise Mr. Hardinge has never been in politics, nor is he at all interested in party conflicts except as a necessary means to a larger end.

He is now varying his work at his business with lecturing under the auspices of the Henry George Lecture Association, of which Frederick H. Monroe of Palos Park, Illinois, is the manager. Mr. Hardinge is an extemporaneous speaker who sometimes does not catch his best swing, especially if he has no opposition to face, but who, when the occasion inspires him, seldom fails to carry conviction and arouse enthusiasm.

There is nothing of the conventional speaker about him. He thinks out loud and argues as he goes along. Always logical, mercilessly so, always good natured, frequently witty and eloquent, he is prolific also of illustrative ideas and has a happy faculty of lightly turning arguments one way and another and inside and out, so as to exhibit them thoroughly and subject them to one of the decisive tests of all argument—the saving sense of humor.

In economics Mr. Hardinge is a single taxer, and while neither a politician nor a religionist he is a fundamental democrat both in politics and in religion.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

"THE RETURN FROM ELBA."

Sioux City, Iowa, Dec. 6, 1909.

A newspaper correspondent of repute, who accompanied President Taft on his cross-country trip, informs the readers of a prominent weekly publication—I allude to Samuel G. Blythe and the Saturday Evening Post—that the Western country, personally friendly and well-disposed toward the President, has suspended judgment as to his administration, and is hoping against hope that it will prove satisfactory. Mr. Blythe admits that grave questions have arisen as to Mr. Taft's freedom from domination by selfish influences, but declares that the West still trusts in his ability to work out the problem of administering the nation's affairs in the interest of the entire people, as opposed to the interest of the predatory few.

What this distinguished correspondent says may be true of the far West; but it is not true of the middle West. Particularly is it untrue of Iowa. This storm center of insurgency is not in a state of suspended judgment touching Mr. Taft. It has made up its mind, and the conclusion reached is adverse to the President. The average Iowa farmer who voted for Taft has become convinced, in sorrow and regret, that Mr. Taft is the President of the old machine crowd of his party. In due season, when nominations for 1912 are to be made, the voice of Iowa and of other mid-Western States will be lifted in behalf of some other aspirant.