

tion will find it increasingly difficult to support Roosevelt without opposing the principle of regulated *competition* and yielding to the principle of regulated *monopoly*.



Political Tendencies in Great Britain.

Signs of a political break-up in Great Britain have been growing recently, apparently over the land question; and as usual always and everywhere under such circumstances, there are divided councils and activities among those who stand for the principle of "the land for the people." On one hand, are such as favor the land-value-tax method, commonly known as the Singletax, which aims at securing the mutually-desired result without government-ownership of land. On the other hand are those who urge purchase of the land for government ownership.



The essential thing, and that which both factions presumably desire in common, is (1) to secure for all the people the full annual value of land annually, as an approximation of course, and (2) to make land of all kinds accessible to industry upon equal terms relatively to differential advantages of location. The second would evidently result from the first; for there can be no effectual private monopoly of land if the monopolist has to pay its annual value annually into public treasuries. It would seem, too, that this ultimate might be most rapidly approached and certainly secured by means of exempting industry from taxation and shifting tax burdens to the owners of land in proportion to its value. That may not be the best method in Great Britain. We profess no special knowledge on the point. But if it does happen to be the best method there, as it plainly is in the United States and Canada, and especially if it is the method which the British people are now forcing into politics, then the proposal to turn from that method to a method of compulsory purchase may easily play into the hands of land monopolists at a critical moment.



The Parliamentary "Council" of land reformers who have at this late date begun a movement for compulsory purchase in opposition to the Parliamentary "Group" of land value taxers who have popularized the taxation method in Great Britain, stand in a slippery place. They do not make out a case for their own method with reference to the line of least resistance; and the line of least resistance is the true test for Parliamentary purposes. What they do is to say in behalf of their

members that they "*believe* that it is only when the public is its own landlord that full advantage can be gained from land from the point of view of public revenue," and to imply that they *believe* that only this will yield the desired economic advantage to the public. Even if they are right in those beliefs, they appear to be proposing a greater instead of the least difficult method. Isn't it a little as if they were to say that they *believe* it is only when the butt of a wedge is driven into a log that the "full advantage" in splitting it can be gained, and therefore that the wedge should be driven in butt end first?



All of us who would make the future ours, may profit by bearing well in mind that the future is not yet here. And few of us could profit better by it at this juncture in Great Britain than the Parliamentary "Council" for nationalizing land by buying out its monopolists. Land nationalization is of the future, if at all. Land purchase for nationalization is also of the future, if at all. But taxation is of the present. There is no avoiding it. It is insistent year by year. The only question regarding it, and this is a question of the present, is where the burden shall fall and with what tendency with reference to the future. Shall the tax burden favor land monopoly, thereby making land nationalization in the future more difficult and if by purchase more expensive? Or shall it discriminate against land monopoly, thereby making land nationalization easier if the economic opinions of the land nationalizers are sustained, and less expensive if their theories as to purchase be found necessary or desirable? The land nationalizing "Council" in Parliament stand distinctly (if they know where they do stand) for the former policy; the land-value-taxation "Group" for the latter.



Joseph Martin, M. P.

Considerable surprise has been expressed over the attitude of Joseph Martin, M. P., in connection with Singletax developments in British politics. Mr. Martin is a Canadian. He was at one time a radical-Liberal leader in the politics of British Columbia, from which he graduated into the Liberal politics of Great Britain, supposedly as a radical, and gained a seat in the British House of Commons. Yet he recently campaigned against Singletax men—notably Mr. Outhwaite—who were contesting constituencies on Singletax grounds as Liberal candidates. Having been questioned upon the subject, we have learned from

inquiries in Canada that Mr. Martin's attitude in British politics is not strange. Mr. Martin owns a big chunk of land in Vancouver. Until the Singletax got in its work at Vancouver, he held this land for a rise in price without the bother of having to improve it. But the Singletax, which has abolished taxation of improvements in Vancouver and shifted the burden over to land monopoly, has compelled Mr. Martin to "get a move on him." He has had to clear his land, to make streets through it, to put down sewers, to lay water mains, and otherwise to make that land a serviceable part of the planet. If he didn't make these improvements, the value of his land would eat itself up in land value taxes. Mr. Martin's prejudice against the Singletax is therefore easily accounted for.



Flying Red Flags.

A New Jersey judge—Francis J. Swayze of the Supreme Court of that State—has probably put a quietus, in New Jersey at least, on the police nonsense about Socialist red flags. He decides that the Socialist Party is a party in American politics, that its official emblem under the law is a red flag, and that its members have the same right to make public displays of this emblem that the Democratic or the Republican or the Progressive or the Prohibition parties have to make public displays of their official emblems. None but fools and fire-eaters have thought otherwise.



HIGH WAGES AND THE TARIFF.

That people believe what they wish to believe was never better illustrated than in the case of the protective tariff. The very word "protection" insinuates itself into one's consciousness without challenge from the understanding. Life at best is a struggle; and to maintain one's self in the commercial world requires vigilance, self-denial, and arduous toil. To be protected from the forces that bear down so hard upon humanity means an easier lot. And so ardent is the wish for this immunity that many do not stop to inquire whether the schemes devised for the purpose really do afford protection. Analysis is waived, the facts accepted, and the conclusion swallowed. The name itself is sufficient to disarm criticism.

But it sometimes happens that the interval between the promise and the fulfillment is so long drawn out, or the result is so meager, that it attracts attention. Skeptically minded persons may ask, Wherefore? They may go so far as to in-

quire into the theory. And now and then one has actually been known to question the results.



When it was proposed to reduce the high tariff enacted to finance the Civil War, action was stayed by the plea that a high tariff was necessary in order to protect the infant industries that had sprung up while foreign goods were so heavily taxed. When this excuse had served until the "infant industries" had reached such colossal proportions that even hardened Protectionists no longer dared use it, the plea was changed to a tariff to maintain high wages and the American standard of living.

Here again is a plausible charge designed to pass unchallenged. Who that is dependent upon the labor of his hands, or of his brain, wishes wages reduced? Who would have the standard of living lowered? No, no, no, let no unhallowed hand touch the Ark of Prosperity!



But are the higher wages of this country really due to the protective tariff? Is the standard of living dependent upon keeping out foreign goods?

If the protective tariff is the cause of high wages in this country, one might well ask why a high tariff does not cause high wages in Spain, in Italy, in France, or in any other European country that enjoys a high tariff. But lest Europe be too far away for a Protectionist's imagination, let the question be asked, What made American wages high before the tariff?

Not only did this country begin without a protective tariff, but it began in spite of tariffs levied against it. In the Colonial times the mother country passed onerous shipping laws, and laid burdensome taxes upon the struggling Colonists. And these oppressive measures of King and Parliament were enacted with the expressed and avowed purpose of preventing the Colonists from competing with like industries in England. Those were the days of real infant industries, and of an unnatural mother that tried to strangle them in their cradle.

Yet what was the condition as to wages and the standard of living in this country as compared with England?

For answer, it is not necessary to lean upon illusive statistics, nor to depend upon "royal commissions of inquiry into the condition of labor." We have a certain and infallible answer in the movement of population. Labor never knowingly goes from a place of high wages to a place of low wages. The fact that men of all races, creeds, and sects continued to emigrate from Europe to this country shows where wages were highest.