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EDITORIAL

Confiscation.

You may burden the industrious all you please without exciting the wrath of the privileged, but if you touch Privilege except with tenderness and a fostering hand, the privileged are as ready with verbal darts as a frightened porcupine with its arrowy quills. And the dartiest of all the darts in their vocable quiver is "Confiscation!" The use of this word as quoted in another column from the London Standard, an organ of the privileged classes of Great Britain, would hardly be understood in the United States. The Standard thinks it "confiscation" to levy taxes on "capital value" and not on "revenue"; but as we are more accustomed in this country to levying taxes on capital values than on revenues, no excitement could be caused here by calling that policy "confiscation." Our privileged classes apply the word differently. But wherever the cry of "confiscation" goes from the lips or the pens of touters for Privilege, the wide-world over, examination will show that "confiscation" means some novelty prejudicial to legalized graft.

The Great Issue in British Politics.

Our News Narrative reports of last week from British papers, together with Press Opinion extracts from the same sources, and the like material which we produce this week supplemented by Mr. Garrison's letter, make it very clear that recent byelections have forced the Liberal party farther on toward the crucial industrial question of Great Britain, and indeed of all other countries—the question of land monopoly.



Not that all Liberals needed this pressure. All did not. But the survival of whigism within the party, like bourbonism in our own Democratic party, had been obstructive, and the loss of byelections had weakened the radical element. With the victory, however, at North-West Norfolk, which Hemmerde achieved by pushing the land question boldly to the front, the radicals in the Liberal party were given an advantage; and Arnold's victory at Holmfirth on the same question, following closely upon Hemmerde's and supplemented by Outhwaite's at Hanley, has so strengthened radical influence within the Liberal party as to make the early adoption of the land question by the Liberals the issue before the country.



One feature of Arnold's victory, and also of Outhwaite's, is of collateral importance and significance. In each constituency there was a threecornered contest, caused by the naming of a candidate by the Labor leaders. This action of Labor partisans was due to a partisan spirit strictly. The Liberals had not nominated a candidate hostile to Labor in either constituency. Mr. Outhwaite, to whose candidacy Labor leaders were especially opposed, stands for every substantial demand of the Labor interest. But as he is not a member of the Labor party, the officials of the Labor party opposed him. Their explanation is that the member of Parliament whose death had made the vacancy was a Labor member and that therefore the Liberals should have left the vacancy to the Labor In fact, however, Hanley was only in name, and this through the past courtesv of the Liberal Party, a Labor Party constituency. The late Labor member who represented it, elected years ago by Liberal voters, had been continued in office by them at every election since. But for them to acquiesce in the nomination of a new man by the Labor Party would have been quite another matter. That the Labor Party had no substantial party claims to the seat is evident from the enormous plurality that Mr. Outhwaite polled over the Labor candidate. It was not at all a question of Labor Party or Liberal Party at the recent election at Hanley. It was a question, so far as concerned those parties, of Labor partisanship or the land monopoly issue.

As the general situation now appears, the Lloyd George Budget of 1909 was but an entering wedge. The land taxes it imposed are perhaps too light to accomplish much for the abolition of land monopoly; but it has given to the British democracy something the importance of which can be but barely understood by Americans. It has given them what in this country we have always had—a systematic valuation of the land. This achievement will serve as the great broad basis for the now developing campaign against land monopoly. That the Lloyd George Budget was not Lloyd George's Budget—not as Lloyd George wanted it -is an open secret, he having intended a more drastic application of land value taxes. But whiggery in the Cabinet and in the House of Commons was then influential, and he had to yield or make no headway at all. Now, however, come Hemmerde and Arnold and Outhwaite-anti-land monopolists and pro-land-value taxationists all-with their significant victories, and Lloyd George's hands are strengthened for the next campaign.



Woman Suffrage in Great Britain.

The inevitable reaction against suffragette violence in Great Britain seems to have set in, and with the result unhappily of further postponing the extension of voting rights to British women. That this postponement is due to the organized lawlessness of one great branch of the British suffrage movement is a reasonable inference from all the circumstances. Not that men who believed in woman suffrage have been driven by these outbreaks to change their minds on the subject, but that men whose inclinations were favorable to the reform were repelled by the indefensible behavior of its conspicuous advocates. Public opinion is moved in mass, not in detail. The influence upon a civic cause of organized violence as wantonly conceived and criminally executed as that of the British organization that still directs it, could not reasonably be expected to produce any other result upon the public mind than reaction against the cause thus entangled in crime.



The principal excuse made in the United States for those campaigns of wanton violence, that in Great Britain, differently from the United States, democracy can advance only through violence, is an unreasonable contention. Considered psychologically, the springs of public opinion are not so different in either country from the other. (It will be observed that through editorials and tracts and