
PRESS OPINIONS

The Liberal Voice in the Parliamentary Campaign.

The (London) Nation (Lib.), Dec. 11.—At present, the only articulate voice in the country is that of Liberalism. The party which can in a week produce such speeches as those of Lord Morley, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George and the wonderful Lancashire series of Mr. Churchill has fairly earned its right to interpret the intelligence and good feeling of the British people. On Friday week, at the National Liberal Club, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—who, if the Liberal organizers know the A. B. C. of their business, will at once be set the all-important task of winning London and the home counties—made one of the most powerful orations in the history of political combat. Every stroke told, and some of the phrases, such as the saying that "every grain of freedom is more precious than radium," belonged to a high order of thought and expression. The leading points of Mr. George's speech, which every speaker and writer on the people's side should study, were the impressive contrast between the representative and national quality of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the damning proof that the revolutionary act of the Lords was the work, first, of its least trustworthy members, and, secondly, of featherheaded journalism, the biting dissection of the character and record of the chief wreckers. These made up a strategic attack such as John Bright himself might not have disowned. In Lancashire, Mr. Churchill's campaign, made up partly of massive and convincing argument, partly of brilliant and cogent raillery, is carrying all before it.

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The (London) Daily News (Lib.), Dec. 7.—In a battle between wealthy privilege on the one side and the democracy on the other, wealthy privilege can have as much advertisement as it will pay for; and it will pay for a great deal. At such times it is comforting to remember that everything cannot be bought. The great complaint of the candid Conservatives is their poverty in platform speakers. Why? Because the younger men with conviction, eloquence and political force are nearly all in the Liberal or the Labor camps. It is not by accident that Conservatism has to whistle for them in vain. They turn their backs on it just as naturally and inevitably as Peers born in the purple, even if their fathers were Liberals, turn towards it. They are the living strength on which we must rely to counteract the dead weight of Mammon in politics; and there is every indication that in the coming struggle they will be worthily generaled.

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The (New York) World (Dem.), Dec. 27.—Easily the first figure in the political contest now waging in Great Britain is David Lloyd-George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The rage with which his opponents assail him is their tribute to his talents. . . . Mr. Lloyd-George is of and from the people. By birth and sympathies he is bound to them. Success has not dulled his insight or chilled his ardor as a

reformer of the conditions in which the British masses live. . . . Speaking at the National Liberal Club a few days after the House of Lords threw out the Budget, Mr. Lloyd-George quoted Carlyle's remark, "It is wonderful how long a rotten institution will hang together, so long as it is not roughly handled," and added: "It is time it were handled firmly. You cannot with menacing speeches cast down even the most rickety and gimcrack of idols." As for the favorite Tory argument that the House of Lords was controlled by men of business and achievement, he replied: "You have got just a few in the House of Lords, and the rest of them are of no more use than broken bottles stuck on a park wall to keep off poachers. And that is what they are there for—to keep Radical poachers off their lordly preserves." Lord Lansdowne had been forced into rejecting the Budget against his own better judgment, "but having been forced, seeing no way out of it, being in the trap, he thought he might as well eat the cheese, and not leave it for the consumption of any other mouse or rat."

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The Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury (London Correspondence) (Lib.), Dec. 15.—The Tories are suffering severely from the immense superiority of the Liberals on the platform. They console themselves with the reflection that, though their campaign in December will be less vigorous and less weighty than that of the Liberals, they will make up for lost time in January. I doubt whether this will be the case. The truth is that the Liberal speakers all over the country are possessing the minds of electors with the real issues which are to be decided at the election, and when the Tories take to the platform in greater force in January they will find that most of the electors have decided how they will vote. It is hoped that the leader of the opposition will address five or six meetings in January, but it is not at all certain that he will be sufficiently strong to undergo so great a strain. In any event the leader of the opposition will be quite unable to hold back the great wave of democratic feeling which is running in the country. The prospects of the Tory party become more and more gloomy, and between their championship of the Peers and their advocacy of food taxes it does not seem that they can possibly improve their position.

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New Figures on the Cost of Living.

The Oklahoman (Oklahoma City), December 26.—The cost of living in the United States increased eleven per cent in the year between Dec. 1, 1908, and Dec. 1, 1909. This figure represents the average advance in the price of ninety-six commodities. This is a stupendous increase. It presents a situation so momentous that President Taft felt called upon to discuss it in his message to Congress, although he did not deal in figures. The increase cited may be accepted as authentic, having just been announced by Bradstreet's. One of the most noticeable effects of increased cost of living has been the forced demand of labor for higher wages. Wages, however, have not advanced in proportion to the cost of living. The only conclusion to be reached is that the working men and their families have