

Although he was not altogether pleased with the progress in Great Britain Mr. Felsexpressed himself as pleased with the grip that the common people had got of just principles. He thought they were better informed than those in higher places. The propaganda was influencing the agricultural laborer as well as the town mechanic and it was the people as a whole who had the power to decide such matters both in Great Britain and America.

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## LAND VALUES GROUP IN PARLIAMENT.

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**ALDERMAN PETER WILSON RAFFAN, M.P.**—Alderman Raffan is the Hon. Secretary of the Land Values Group in Parliament and President of the Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values. He was elected to the House of Commons in January, 1910, after a whirlwind campaign of three weeks' duration. Late in coming into the field he managed to secure a notable victory in a three-cornered contest. Like many more leaders in the movement Mr. Raffan was born in Scotland, being a native of Aberdeen. He helped to organize a meeting for Henry George in Forfar when the author of *Progress and Poverty* first visited Scotland. Later he was an active member of a South of Scotland Land Restoration League in Dumfries, where he sought to popularize the teaching of Henry George. For the last twenty years he has carried on similar work in South Wales, having been resident in Monmouthshire during that period. In business he is managing director of Messrs. P. Wilson Raffan and Co., Ltd., Printers and Publishers, and he is Editor of the *South Wales Gazette*. His public work has attracted the attention of such men as Lloyd George who described him as one of the best fighters in South Wales.

For fifteen years he was continuously elected without opposition to the Abercarn District Council. He was elected to the Monmouthshire County Council as representative of the Abercarn district, and became an Alderman three years later. In 1901-2 he occupied the chair of the Abercarn Council, and the chairmanship was memorable because during his term of office the Council obtained powers from Parliament to purchase the local Gas Works. The burden of the negotiations fell to Alderman Raffan and the Clerk of the Council, and local opinion was sharply divided on the matter. It is now, however, conceded that the step was a wise one. When the Monmouthshire Water Bill was before the House of Lords in 1908 Mr. Raffan had to bear the burden and heat of the fight, his examination and cross examination lasting a whole day of Parliamentary time. Sir Henry Mather Jackson, Bart, subsequently told the members of the Council that he had never known evidence given with greater ability before any Parliamentary Committee. On the passing of the Tory Education Act, Alderman Raffan became a foremost exponent of what was known as "the Welsh Revolt Party." On the formation of the Education Committee to carry out the Act he was elected Chairman of the Finance Committee. This was a difficult position especially in Wales.

The Tory instinct is to strengthen sectarianism at the expense of the general community, and while sectarianism in the shape of an "established" creed is present both in England and Scotland the position of Wales is the worst of all. To it the established creed is that of an alien church. Out of this proceeds the difficulty of providing sectarian schools without injuring the interests of the general ratepayer. Educational problems have absorbed much of Mr. Raffan's time. He is a member of the Council of the South Wales and Monmouthshire University College, Cardiff, and of the Court of Governors of the University of Wales. He also serves on the Education Committee of the County Councils Association, and has been Chairman of the South Wales district of the Workers Educational Association since its formation.

In the work of the Land Values movement Mr. Raffan has been in it, first, last and all the time. At one time he is presiding over a Conference in Wales, at another he is lecturing in Scotland or speaking at a demonstration in London, or some other important English town. Mrs. Raffan co-operates with him in his social work, and is a member of various Educational and philanthropic committees. She is one of two lady members adopted as one of the Board by the Monmouthshire Education Committee and she is a member of the Abercarn Old Age Pension Committee. Much more could be written regarding the work of both, but sufficient has been said to indicate the activities of the man who does the machine work for Land Values inside the gates of Parliament itself.

**FRANCIS NEILSON, M.P.**—He is at present the President of the English League. He was born in Birkenhead, Cheshire, in 1867. Living for a time in Shropshire he got his early education there. Returning to Birkenhead, he was able to attend the Liverpool Institute where he finished his school life. In 1886 he went to New York, and after a somewhat rough experience found congenial employment. Eventually he became associated with theatrical affairs, first in New York and later in London. He has had a share in the production of plays and operas, both as author and manager. Details of his career in this field would require much space, and there would be still much to relate as to his activities in other directions. He has written two novels, "Madame Bohemia" and the "Folly of the Wise." Besides he has read for publishers, written articles, lectured on Ibsen, Shaw, Whitman and Wagner, while he has not failed in the prime duty of a man. It is in connection with this duty that this sketch is concerned. Knowing that everything is not for the best in this world, he has set himself the task of discovering the real wrong and the remedy.

Reared amongst relatives with Radical views this may have helped him to find the right side, but experience of life and independent inquiry have assuredly played their part also. In America he had the opportunity of hearing several leading Continental Socialists, and ultimately he came into contact with the philosophy of Henry George. As a lecturer he has been a great asset to the Land Values movement. Along with Mr. E. G. Hemmerde