

dollar and costs for "disorderly conduct." They all paid this fine, showing that they were not "vagrants" nor "without means of support." Nor were they charged with being so—but with "disorderly conduct." They did not appear to have been guilty of disorderly conduct or of anything else criminal, but a threat by the Italian consul of proceedings for false imprisonment would seem to have been sufficient to induce an unwarranted conviction in order to avert the danger of the recovery of heavy damages.

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The police captain who was responsible for this outrage, is reported in the daily press as saying that its object was "to impress the new immigrants with respect for the law." Truly, a fine way to do it! It is hardly surprising that "anarchists" are bred by such proceedings. We wonder what would be done if a member of the Union League Club should be murdered, and the police, in default of getting any clue to the murderer, should send out a "dragnet" and bring all the members found in the club at the lunch hour to the police station and lock them up, on the ground that they were concealing what they must know about the murder! Would it impress those members with "respect for the law" as interpreted by the Chicago Police Department?

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#### **Henry George, Jr., on the British Battle.**

Letters from Henry George, Jr., may be looked for about the 17th in the papers of the New York World syndicate, written from England, where Mr. George is now watching the parliamentary campaign over the political question of the House of Lords' right of veto, and the economic question of whether public revenues shall be derived from protective duties or from taxing land values.

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#### **"Patrician, Aristocrat, Tory."**

Could you call up the shade of Alexander Hamilton what would you expect him to say about that English Hereditary Chamber whose fate at this moment trembles in the balance? In these days we regard our own Upper House as too far removed from the people, and already two-thirds of the States have given approval to measures looking to a Senate elected by popular vote. But a chamber resting upon a double election—two votes removed from the people—was too popular for Hamilton. See how he praised the English Upper House to the Constitutional Convention in

1787, as recorded by James Madison, in his Journal (page 182):

Their House of Lords is a most noble institution. Having nothing to hope by a change, and a sufficient interest, by means of their property, in being faithful to the national interest, they form a permanent barrier against every pernicious innovation, whether attempted on the part of the Crown or of the Commons. No temporary Senate will have firmness enough to answer this purpose.

Again sing in the memory John Boyle O'Reilly's noble lines from "Crispus Attucks:"

Patrician, aristocrat, tory—whatever his age or name,  
To the people's rights and liberties, a traitor ever the same.

The natural crowd is a mob to him, their prayer a vulgar rhyme;

The freeman's speech is sedition, and the patriot's deed a crime.

Wherever the race, the law, the land,—whatever the time, or throne,

The tory is always a traitor to every class but his own.

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#### **THE BALTIMORE SYSTEM.**

In the city of Baltimore they have a curious system of landholding and renting, sanctioned and enforceable by law, which well illustrates the evils of private land monopoly, and how it injures both the workingman and the community at large, how it retards the city's growth and deprives its inhabitants of the comforts which they should have under an enlightened civilization.

When in that city not long ago I visited at the home of a workingman, a printer, who informed me he was working at his trade for \$15 a week. He had worked for many years and saved enough to buy a home, of which fact he spoke with pardonable pride. It was a house in the outlying part of the city, built on a lot 16x100. On further inquiry I found he owned the building but not the land. For that small strip of earth's surface he has to pay \$45 a year rent.

A builder erected a row of houses along the street, with consent of the land owner as a matter of course. It was part of a large estate which formerly had little value, but has now become very valuable owing to the necessities of human beings who must have homes. Before putting up the buildings the building speculator, a useful citizen, had the land appraised. If the owner and builder cannot agree, the law provides for an official appraisal. In this case the value was fixed at \$750, and the owner of the house has to pay a rental of six per cent on that value, for a fixed period. He is also protected by law in the right to buy the land at \$750 at any time before the lease runs out. The owner has not the privilege

of the New York landholder to raise the price whenever he finds the tenant may want to purchase. The owner of the building also has to pay all the taxes, which in this case amount to nearly \$30 a year.

Any student of human affairs can see that the owner of this land did not create its value, as he did not create the land. He did nothing to improve it; he put up no buildings, and doesn't even pay the taxes. This growth of the city and the increase of population give to the land its value. He has a large area with a great many buildings on it, and his vast income is wrung from the toil and sweat of industry. The \$45 a year which this workman pays him should somehow or other be diverted into the city treasury, where in natural justice it belongs.

If the city took these site value rents, no taxes would be necessary. These rents would furnish the city with funds to give the workman's family better schools than there are now. In front of the row of houses is a nasty cobblestone pavement; the city should take these funds and make a good street, or else compel the man who owns the land to pave it. The city sewerage runs in the open gutter along by the sidewalk; with the ground rents in hand the city could give these home-dwellers a good sewerage system. It could supply their children with good parks and playgrounds, and do many other things for the comfort and welfare of the people. All of this could be done without levying one dollar in taxation.

Better yet, land being free from private monopoly, the working people would save the many millions which they now contribute to support land owners. These would also have to work for a livelihood, thus adding their quota to the general prosperity. Thus the general wealth would be greatly increased, for it is labor that produces all the wealth of any nation. And the rich idlers would be much better and happier if engaged in honest, useful work.

"What fools we mortals be." God gave us the land to benefit all, but we refuse to use it for this purpose. We permit a few to have it, consigning the others to varying degrees of poverty.

GEORGE WALLACE.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### LAND VALUE TAXATION IN THE PARLIAMENTARY CAMPAIGN.

"Land Values" Press Bureau.

20 Tothill Street, Westminster, December 26, 1909.

I see from *The Public* that you are following the political situation here closely, and that you appre-

ciate it accurately. I have reproduced your "British Revolution" article\* in the January issue of "Land Values." It deals very happily with that view of the situation, and we shall look with interest to your further treatment of it.

We are fully occupied in turning out campaign literature wholly on the land question, endeavoring to make it the outstanding issue. There is a tendency on the part of some leaders to deal with the constitutional issue apart from the question which has raised it. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill counteract this tendency brilliantly in their attack on landlordism specifically. They are the recognized leaders of the radicals, just as they are particularly hated by the Tories. I think we shall win handsomely again, and the amount of educational work that is being done will make a great step in our direction possible within a few years.

JOHN ORR.

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On Board R. M. S. "Adriatic," January 6, 1910.

I have for more than a month been visiting the important cities of Great Britain and have to a considerable extent been in touch with the political situation there. I tell you, it made one's soul stir within him to hear "The Land Song" sung as I heard it at one of the Trafalgar square demonstrations.† At last the people, at least in one great country, are awake, to a great measure, to the vital importance of taxing the land values. Just the outcome of it all at the coming election is hard to determine; but that the Liberals will go back with at least a small majority the most arrogant Conservatives are inclined to believe.

JOHN H. ALLEN.

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### TIMBER LAND TAXATION.

Bow, Washington, December 21, 1909.

In this county and State the question of taxation is acute. Not only have taxes risen greatly in the past year but there is such glaring inequality that were it not so serious it would be ridiculous. There are not only absurd inequalities in the taxation of men of the same business and occupation, but also in the taxation of different classes of property.

To illustrate, there is a timber company owning thousands of acres of choice timber lands in this county, and also some first class land for agricultural purposes which they have logged off and are holding for speculation. Of this latter class, there is a piece of some thirty acres near here, which is now covered with second growth timber and older, and for which they have been offered \$5,500 cash. They are taxed on \$10.00 per acre, while a rancher across the road who has spent hundreds of dollars clearing and improving his place is assessed on \$25.00 per acre. The logged off lands require an expenditure of from \$75 to \$150, and even \$200 per acre, to put them in shape for the plow. The man who does this and spends many a weary year among the stumps and logs is taxed to the last hair of the dog's tail, while the timber barons who impropriate the wealth created by Nature, and in so doing de-

\*In *Public* of December 10, page 1181.

†See *Public* of December 3, page 1161, and this *Public*, page 45.