

THE MAKING OF PUBLIC OPINION

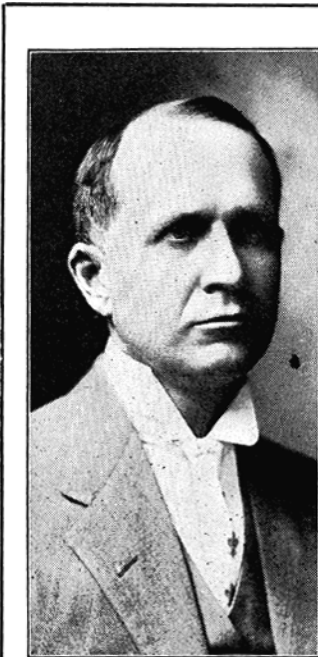
Magazines, Libraries, Theaters and Lecturers are Powerful Forces in Shaping Public Thought
Are They Serving Special Interests or the Common Good?

III. MAGAZINES---1903-1908

By WILLIAM KITTLE

THE following are the foremost public-opinion-forming magazines in the United States:

1. THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE.—John S. Phillips, President of Publishing Co.
2. THE ARENA.—B. O. Flower, Editor.
3. EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE.—The Ridgeway Co., Publishers.
4. THE FORUM.—The Forum Publishing Company.
5. GUNTON'S MAGAZINE.—George Gunton (Publication ceased in December, 1904).
6. MCCLURE'S MAGAZINE.—Samuel S. McClure, President of Publishing Company.
7. NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.—George Harvey, Editor.
8. THE OUTLOOK.—Lyman Abbott, Editor.
9. THE REVIEW OF REVIEWS.—Albert Shaw, Editor.
10. THE WORLD'S WORK.—Walter H. Page, Editor.



WILLIAM KITTLE

The combined circulation of these ten leading periodicals is more than 2,000,000 copies each month. It is probably a conservative estimate that each issue is read by five persons when the public libraries are taken into account. It must also be considered that these ten million or more of readers are those who take a distinct interest in public affairs and more than any other class, express and represent public opinion.

The issues of these ten magazines for the five years from 1903 to 1908, have been carefully examined to determine the side taken by each in the contest between Special Privilege and the interests of the public. Each periodical has been judged by its output of public-opinion-forming material over a sufficiently long period. This material consists of a very

few editorials and a very large number of carefully written articles in the nature of monographs, most of them involving research, travel or experience. The one test applied to each article or editorial was:—Does it take the side of any special interest, when that interest has been known by all to be in conflict with the interests of the general public? Or does it take the side of the public against the encroachment of any special privilege? The record made by these ten magazines for the period of five years shows that about 60, more or less elaborate articles, favored some special privilege; and a little more than 200 were in favor of the public interests.

The titles of a few progressive articles will indicate in some part the range and vigor of this new civic literature which has so profoundly stirred the public conscience:

- "Who Owns the United States".....Serenio S. Pratt
 "Great Fortunes And Their Making".....Burton J. Hendrick
 "Where Did You Get It, Gentlemen?".....Charles E. Russell
 "The Madness of Much Power".....David Graham Phillips
 "Frenzied Finance".....Thomas W. Lawson
 "Industrialized Politics".....Student of N. Y. Politics
 "Senate of Special Interests".....Henry Beach Needham
 "The Senate Plot Against Pure Food".....Edward Lowry

- "The Greatest Trust in the World".....Charles E. Russell
 "The History of the Standard Oil Company".....Ida Tarbell
 "Kansas and the Standard Oil Company".....Ida Tarbell
 "The Railway Empire".....Frank Parsons
 "The Heart of the Railroad Problem".....Frank Parsons
 "How the Railroad Makes the Trust".....George W. Alger
 "The Railroad Rebate".....Ray Stannard Baker
 "The Railroad Rate".....Ray Stannard Baker
 "The Initiative and Referendum in Oregon".....W. S. U'Ren
 "Oregon as a Political Experiment Station".....Joseph Schaffer
 "The Story of Montana".....C. P. Connolly
 "The Fight of the Copper Kings".....C. P. Connolly
 "Rhode Island, a State for Sale".....Lincoln Steffens
 "New Jersey, a Traitor State".....Lincoln Steffens
 "Pittsburg, a City Ashamed".....Lincoln Steffens
 "Philadelphia, Corrupt and Contented".....Lincoln Steffens
 "The Subway Deal".....Ray Stannard Baker
 "A Colossal Fabric on Franchises".....
 "The Story of Life Insurance".....Burton J. Hendrick
 "Governor La Follette".....Lincoln Steffens
 "Governor Folk".....William Allen White
 "Tom Johnson".....Edward Bemis
 "Golden Rule Jones".....Brand Whitlock

EACH MAGAZINE, CONSERVATIVE OR PROGRESSIVE

THE *North American Review* is the most conservative of the ten magazines. The editor, Mr. George Harvey, is also editor of *Harper's Weekly*. The New York Directory of Directors for 1905 shows that he was then the second vice-president of the Broadway Safe Deposit Co., a director of the City of New York Insurance Co., a director of two ferry companies and a director of the Mechanics and Traders Bank. Both the *North American Review* and the *Harper's Weekly* have been distinctly hostile to the movement led by President Roosevelt. The editor constantly, systematically, and almost viciously assailed the policies and personality of the President. During the past five years, three times as many reactionary or conservative articles appeared in the *North American Review* as the number which might be considered to be mildly progressive. It would perhaps be too strong, and yet not far from the truth, to call both the magazine and the weekly the "organs" of the special interests.

Gunton's Magazine was quite frankly the "organ" of special privilege. Mr. Hearst in 1908, disclosed the fact that the Standard Oil Company paid Gunton, "\$5,000 as an additional contribution to that agreed upon." It must have been after some such subsidy that Gunton wrote his editorials: "Are Millionaires a Menace," "Roosevelt Sane," "The Crusade vs. Property," and others displaying marked subserviency to special interests. From January, 1899, to 1904, after which its publication ceased, more than twenty articles and editorials defended various special interests and only one,—on the ice-trust of New York City,—took the side of the public. From the number of editorials on the subject, Gunton seems to have held a brief for the group of public utility companies, and to have shown a proper amount of gratitude toward millionaires in general.

The *Forum* has been more or less colorless and can have had but little effect in forming public opinion during the last half decade. This is true of both the leading articles and the editorials on "American Politics" by H. L. West. During 1904-1906, Mr. West was fairly progressive in his brief editorials, but later, he became quite conservative, and in 1908 advocated the nomination of Fairbanks for President and seemed to regret, as he stated it, that, "the wave of reform still sweeps over the country." Certainly *The Forum* has not contributed much to that wave and it must be regarded as conservative.

The New York Directory of Directors for 1905, shows that Isaac L. Rice was the president and director of The Forum Publishing Co. He was also an officer or director of the Chicago Electric Traction Co., and of thirteen other industrial concerns. Joseph and Samuel Rice were also directors of the Forum Publishing Co. Another director of this company was Maurice Barnett who was an officer in twelve other business establishments.

The *Review of Reviews* has been a factor in forming public opinion; but it has been a two-edged sword, cutting both sides, but with one edge much sharper than the other. The number of conservative articles has exceeded those which are progressive and there is evidence that a careful selection has been made in the list of progressive articles. The record for the five years would rather suggest that the columns had been quite freely opened to explain or defend several great special interests. But it should be stated that other leading articles were admitted which were squarely for the public interests. The New York Directory of Directors for 1905, shows that Francis L. Hine was vice-president and director of the Review of Reviews Co., and that he was also director in four railroad companies and ten other firms or corporations.

The *Outlook* has been very cautiously progressive. It has steadily supported the policies of President Roosevelt and has briefly and guardedly advocated public interests against the

since Judge Landis fined the Standard Oil Company more than 29 million dollars for violating the Elkins law has won public sympathy for the Company." Another editorial in April, 1908, relates an incident showing the generosity of this company towards a rival. The New York Directory of Directors for 1905, shows that the editor, Mr. Walter H. Page was a director of the Aberdeen and Ashboro Railway Company. Moody's Manual for 1908 shows that six other members of the Page family were the chief officers in this railway company.

Whatever the explanation may be, the fact is that here a progressive magazine has been quietly and suddenly changed to one highly favorable to the "interests."

The Four Most Progressive Magazines

JUDGED solely by the number and kind of leading articles which have been published during the last five years, the following are the most progressive periodicals:

The American Magazine.

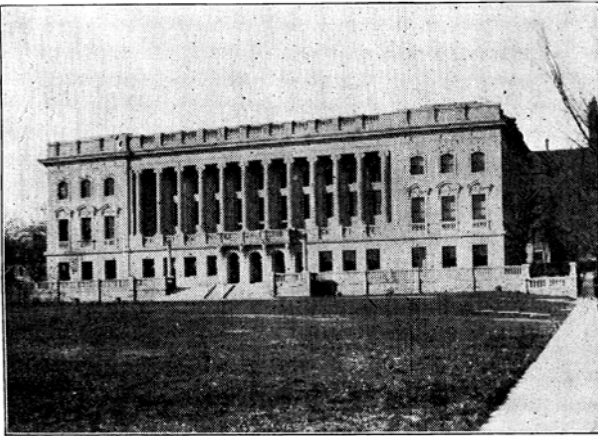
The Arena.

Everybody's Magazine.

McClure's Magazine.

Out of a total circulation of 2,000,000 copies each month, these four magazines have one and a third million and they have published a little more than five times the

number of progressive articles published by the other six magazines combined. If each issue is read by five persons, these four magazines with their searching articles on every phase of public affairs, are forming the opinions of more than 6,000,000 readers. For it must be considered that a single article may have more weight than the reading of a daily paper for a year, with its scrappy news. These four periodicals, more than all others combined, from the standpoint of public affairs, carry on their pages the indignant protest against all forms of special privilege; and they record the courage and ideals of the best citizens.



LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

"During the past few years, many important volumes have appeared which have influenced directly the leaders of public opinion."

encroachments of special privilege. But it has had few or no leading articles showing strongly the necessity of constructive legislation. It seems to have aimed at a brief review of current events, rather than the publication of articles to make progressive public opinion. The unquestioned character of its editor accounts for its progressive attitude. In November, 1908, the treasurer of the Outlook Co. stated that James Stillman, the multi-millionaire and "silent man of the Standard Oil Company," owned less than 10 per cent. of the stock of the Outlook Co.

The *World's Work*, from March, 1903, to April, 1908, has not had a consistent attitude toward special interests. From the first date to April, 1906, by actual count, three times as many progressive articles appeared in this magazine as those which can be called conservative. But in the early months of 1906, a marked change took place. An editorial on the first page of the May, 1906, number, shows that a new policy had been adopted. A single sentence indicates exactly the course of this magazine for the next two years: "And reform by shrieking exposure does at last become tiresome. It is another evidence of sanity that the people are showing some weariness with the literature of corruption." For the next two years, more than four times as many articles in explanation or defense of special privilege appeared as those in favor of the public. Three-fourths of these conservative articles were in favor of the railway companies. In October, 1907, an editorial, entitled, "The Mobbing of Corporations," stated: "The time that has passed

IV. MAKING PUBLIC OPINION IN THE LIBRARY AND THEATER

It would be difficult to overrate the influence of "The Jungle" by Upton Sinclair. It led to immediate investigation and legislation by the national government. By its influence on public opinion, it is comparable to *Les Miserables*. "The Octopus" by Frank Norris is a graphic picture of the control of Cali-



Courtesy, Milwaukee Photo Materials Co.

MAKING PUBLIC OPINION FROM THE PLATFORM

fornia by the railroad corporations; and "Coniston" by Winston Churchill is a still finer delineation of railway corruption in New Hampshire.

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table result of economic conditions." He also asserted that such a law is the logical result of the Taft measure for the taxing of the net income of corporations.

Mandamus proceedings are threatened by the Illinois Tax Reform Association against the International Harvester Company to put on the tax list of Cook County property, now untaxed, of the value of \$100,000,000. The company is assessed this year at \$8,925,000. It is asserted that the company's own statement shows it to have assets to the amount of \$157,608,000, of which \$25,000,000 is in farmers' and agents' notes, \$34,000,000 in factories and warehouses, and \$16,500,000 in surplus.

John D. Rockefeller has given \$10,000,000 more to the general education board, making \$52,000,000 in all. He has also taken such action so that the trustees may by two-thirds vote distribute the principal of the funds. This action is for the purpose of providing for unseen contingencies in the future which may make the whole scheme obsolete, and to guard against the keeping up of the fund after the need for it shall have ceased to exist.

At Cincinnati, on the 2nd, the Western Union Telegraph Company was indicted for aiding and abetting the criminal operations of a bucket-shop keeper.

Aldrich Jams His Bill Through

On the 8th, by a vote of 45 to 34 Aldrich passed the tariff bill. At the last moment he made an attempt to read out of the party all Republican Senators who should dare vote against it, but nevertheless, ten Republicans did so—Beveridge of Indiana, Bristow of Kansas, Brown and Burkett of Nebraska, Clapp and Nelson of Minnesota, Crawford of South Dakota, Cummins and Dolliver of Iowa, and La Follette of Wisconsin. McEnery of Louisiana voted with Aldrich, though a nominal Democrat. On the eve of the vote, Mr. La Follette presented the case of the National Association of Clothiers against the bill—the protest of 97 per cent. of the clothing manufacturers of the country with an output of \$600,000,000 per annum. They asserted that the passage of the bill will mean an increase in price or a lowering in quality of from 20 to 25 per cent. to the consumers of wool. On the 5th, Senator Rayner attacked the customs court provisions of the bill, declaring them unconstitutional. Although even Senator Root declared that he had not favored this court, Aldrich conceded nothing save the exemption of criminal cases from the jurisdiction of the court. Senator Culberson asserted that the Standard Oil Company has its cans made abroad and gets a drawback when it re-exports them filled with oil, thus getting free cans for its exported oil. Senator Beveridge agreed with this. Aldrich refused any concession, however, in the interests of the American manufacturers of tin-plate. As has been the case throughout the debate, the Aldrich forces had the votes when they needed them.

The House Receives Aldrich's Work

On the 9th, the Senate bill went to the House, where after a spirited debate, it was sent to conference. It was plain from the debate that insurgency has increased rather than diminished in the Cannon wing of the Capitol since the Payne bill went over to be converted into the Aldrich bill. Eighteen Republicans voted with the Democrats against the special rule sending the bill to conference. The conference committee of the Senate was appointed contrary to custom before the House had refused to concur, and consists of Aldrich of Rhode Island, Hale of Maine, Burrows of Michigan, Penrose of Pennsylvania, and Culom of Illinois, Republicans, and Daniel of Virginia, Bailey of Texas, and Money of Mississippi, Democrats. The Republicans appointed by Cannon as members of the Conference Committee are Payne of New York, Dalzell of Pennsylvania, McCall of Massachusetts, Boutel of Illinois, Calderhead of Kansas and Fordney of Michigan; Messrs. Clark of Missouri, Griggs of Georgia, and Underwood of Alabama are the Democratic members. It is asserted on standpat authority that the conference committee is made up to put the bill through quickly along Aldrich lines. If such be really the case, and the personnel of the committee adds color of probability to the statement—the bill will soon go to the President, and the country will then know what he meant last fall, by "revision downward."

A New Development in the Corporation Tax

A startling development in the matter of the Taft-Aldrich amendment to the Payne bill for the taxing of the net income of corporations has transpired within the last day or so, ac-

cording to the well-known correspondent "Sumner." It will be remembered that when this amendment came into the Senate after White House conferences, it provided that holding companies may deduct from their gross income all dividends on stock of subsidiary corporations which they may possess, in computing the "net" income. For instance, the Standard Oil Company consists of one great corporation and some seventy-odd subsid-



—The Indianapolis News

SOMEWHAT DAMAGED

ary corporations. So of the Steel Trust and all the great railway corporations. The amendment as brought in would tax the "net" in the hands of the subsidiary company, but exempt the sum after payment to the holding company. Under the assaults of Clapp of Minnesota and the other Progressives, Aldrich yielded and allowed the amendment to be amended so as to tax the net income of corporations whether derived from merged and "held" corporations or not. This was regarded as a distinct victory for the anti-trust forces. On the 9th "Sumner" in writing from Washington to the *Record-Herald* says: "President Taft has served notice on Senate Leader Aldrich that he will not sanction the amendment (the Clapp amendment) to the corporation tax feature of the tariff measure which was pressed by insurgents and accepted by the Finance committee in his (Taft's) absence. This amendment removed the exemption which was to apply to holding companies, and imposes the tax on such companies as well as upon the earnings of the subsidiary companies." It will be recalled that the exemption was claimed by Aldrich to have been made for the purpose of avoiding "double taxation," and that Senator Dolliver pointed out the fact that the tax is not an income tax but an excise due for the privilege of doing business in corporate form, and that that privilege is as important to the holding as to the subsidiary corporation. Just what the President's real position is on this matter has not at this time been made public by him. His statement will be awaited with intense interest by the whole country.

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The Making of Public Opinion

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The drama, in a very limited way, has aided in forming public opinion. The best examples are, "The Man of the Hour" and "The Lion and the Mouse." But they have vividly presented to many thousands the greed and power of special interests.

During the past few years, many important volumes have appeared which have influenced directly the leaders of public opinion. These are the works of specialists,—usually university or college trained men. Their influence extends far beyond their circle of readers. They instruct the esoteric, to inform the far larger exoteric class. B. H. Meyer, in "Railway Legislation in

the United States," Frank Parsons, in "The Heart of the Railway Problem" and John Moody in "The Truth About Trusts," are types of men who have made constructive and intelligent public opinion.

V. MAKING PUBLIC OPINION FROM THE PLATFORM

MR. BRYAN has probably given public addresses to more people than any other American. He has formed public opinion, not only in his own party but he has influenced men of all parties toward fundamental democracy and the highest ideals in citizenship. On concrete issues, he has clearly and elegantly stated and formed the opinions of millions. He has been and is a decided factor in making opinion on every important public question.

Senator La Follette has addressed hundreds of thousands of voters from New York to California. He is, "a man with a message" and an orator of rare power. His intense earnestness, his sincerity, courage and perfect mastery of his subject, carry his conviction into the very conscience of his audiences. He is the implacable foe of every form of unjust special privilege and his constructive ability to guard the public interests has been amply demonstrated in his career as governor of Wisconsin. The "interests" dread him. He is a force of unusual power in forming public opinion.

President Roosevelt has not addressed as many audiences as Senator La Follette; but his words have gone out to the remotest parts of the entire country. He is not a great orator and he has little constructive ability. But he has expressed the hopes and aspirations, the protests and ideals of the American people. Though few have seen him, he is the best known man in public life. He so formed public opinion that he set in motion a thousand influences which forced a hostile national convention to nominate for President the man whom he had endorsed. This was not all due, nor mainly due to the personality of Mr. Roosevelt, nor to the respect of the people for the high office of President. Had he been a governor or senator from a great commonwealth, he could not have done this. As ex-President, he cannot do it. But every time the President speaks, more than twenty thousand newspapers and millions of voices repeat his words. The Associated Press can pass over in silence a governor's message which may result in legislation of the very highest importance; but the public utterances of the President cannot be ignored. When he speaks, he has the nation for an audience. He has formed the opinions of millions because he has been heard and believed by them. The Presidency has given to Mr. Roosevelt a far-reaching, megaphone-like voice, raucous and strident indeed, but of high purpose like that of the prophets of old.

THE REFORM MOVEMENT

IT is not difficult to account for the wave of reform during the past few years. La Follette was the pioneer and is the leader in this movement. He began it away back in 1890 when he was defeated for Congress by the railroad companies. For ten years he constantly advocated direct nominations by the people but was beaten by an entrenched political machine. For five years as governor, he secured the enactment of law after law against special privileges. At the present time in a "Senate of Special Interests," he stands as the foremost representative of popular economic rights.

During the past five years, U'Ren in Oregon, Churchill in New Hampshire, Colby in New Jersey and others have been earnestly in the contest against the control of government by the special interests. During the same period, five or six magazines have published several hundred articles showing the encroachments and corruption by special privileged classes and these have been read by millions of progressive citizens. Fiction and the drama came to the aid of the public. But in the fullness of time, while all these scattered movements were in full progress, a new and unexpected force came to their aid and unified them into one common movement against the control of government by predatory wealth. This new force was the energy, honesty and courage of the President who at once made the contest heard and made it national. If La Follette could have been permanently defeated, if five or six magazines could have been silenced, and if the Presidency could have been made the voice of special privi-

lege, no reform movement would have taken place. But with this inspiring contest successful in one state, with great, free magazines, forming and expressing progressive public opinion, and with the far-reaching voice of the presidency to unify and make it national, it has triumphed over the organized agencies for forming conservative public opinion.

But the reactionary and conservative forces are in possession of unlimited resources,—financial, political, and social. They have regular bureaus to form public opinion. They are the natural allies of the Associated Press and of every leading daily newspaper. The purchase of every progressive magazine would be but an item in their expenses. It is easily conceivable that they may organize a system of bureaus over the entire country to furnish articles to every local paper in defense of the three allied special interests,—the railroads, the city utility companies and certain industrial combinations, like the Steel Trust and the Standard Oil Co. If these interests are to obtain or even hold special privileges, such a system of bureaus is necessary, and as Sibley said, "might be made self-supporting." The public can be deceived, can be made to pay the costs of the deception and induced to grant further aids.

The public is continually played upon by adroit, skillful and powerful forces. The average reader of the daily paper is in a hurry. He reads headlines. He does not read critically. He does not know that two or three items in a brief "news" article presented as undoubted facts, lead him to but one conclusion. He does not note the careful coloring, the skillful arrangements of parts, the appeal to prejudice, the half-truth or the shrewd misstatement. He is easily caught by the sophistry that a private monopoly enjoying extortionate profits is exactly like any other private business. He is told that a rebate is like the discount given to any large buyer and his mind does not penetrate to the distinction. The economic interests of one class and the exploitation of another, nationality, partisanship and even patriotism itself are all appealed to in forming public opinion for special privileged classes. But for a long term of years, Lincoln's statement is probably true: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

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Lincoln's Smile on New Penny



THIS is a photograph of the Lincoln face that will appear on the new pennies now being coined in the government mints. Notice that it is a smiling face. When it was decided to substitute a portrait of the Great Emancipator for the familiar Indian head, on one-cent coins, this photograph was chosen rather than one showing Lincoln's face in sad repose.

Victor D. Brenner, the sculptor who designed the new penny, after a long search, found this picture in the collection of Eliot Norton of New York. In modeling the face from it, he tried to

imagine something that would bring a smile to Lincoln's face; and finally pictured Lincoln as he would appear when talking to a little child. The kindly, sympathetic smile that lights up so wonderfully this "one of the world's old, legendary faces" will be carried on the new penny into millions of homes, even to the humblest, as a daily inspiration and a reminder of the "sacred lesson of Lincoln's life."

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¶Nobody seems to have thought to ask whether or not the victorious Pennsylvania Sugar Refining Company will now proceed to refine sugar. Rather an interesting question, too.