

tem, and this would make an excellent subject for original research. The student might compare foreign and domestic tips, and tell us how much more burdensome the custom is in this country than abroad. One might guess that tips are about five times heavier over here than in Europe, but a scientific investigation would be necessary to establish the exact facts, and such an investigation would be valuable. Perhaps the Pullman company, or the Association of New York Restaurant Keepers, or the recently discovered contractors for tipping privileges, might be induced to offer a prize for the best monograph on the subject.

Some of the restaurants in London have a system which I have not seen in this country. You may not see the individual waiter, but at the cashier's stand there is a little box, like the boxes one sees in some places for the Salvation Army or the Children's Hospital, and over this little box is the invitation to contribute to the waiters. From one point of view this is a decided improvement. It emphasizes the ultimate effect, and the invitation should be made to read very plainly, "Help us to pay our help." All such departures as this from the usual custom, and there may be others, should form a part of the sociological student's scientific investigation.

Furthermore, the investigation should establish the facts as to the grades of tips, according to cities and location in cities, according to length of time on Pullmans, and according to wealth and station of tippers. There is a tradition that Mr. J. P. Morgan never tips with less than a five-dollar note and that Mr. J. D. Rockefeller never tips at all. These facts should be known. And who knows what differences may prevail between New York and Chicago, or between Sherry's and the Hotel Astor? In fact there is no subject on which people are more in the dark, and it is strange that it has so long escaped the ubiquitous search for new subjects of research in our graduate schools.

One evening on an ocean steamer, at one of the customary entertainments, a Philadelphia school-teacher was called on to give advice and information on the subject of tips to his fellow-tourists. It is hard to say why a school-teacher should have been called on, but he did himself great credit by saying that he knew nothing to say. Here then is a subject of interest to the thousands of travelers in all countries, and yet as to definite information all of us are as much in the dark as that Philadelphia teacher. Surely in this age of scientific investigation a subject of such general interest should not be longer neglected.

If the investigator is of a democratic turn of mind

he might be induced to carry his investigation into a consideration of the effect of tips on the character of the recipients, with some discussion of the degrading and undemocratic tendency of the custom. But this is more than can be reasonably expected of the University investigator, and all we ask at present is a study of the facts.

J. H. DILLARD.

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PUBLIC SANITATION AND ITS REVENUES.

The following editorial appeared in a recent issue of "American Medicine":

"The unearned increment does not seem to have the slightest relation to medical matters, but as it is a subject of intense interest to publicists, sanitarians must learn the arguments now being worked out to justify society in taking what is said to belong to it and not to the individual. It has always been accepted as an axiom that no rapidly growing community can possibly tax itself sufficiently to provide those sanitary necessities which cities of slower growth obtain only after decades of effort. It is now claimed that increased real estate values really belong to the people who created them and not to the man who was lucky enough to own the property and who did absolutely nothing to add to those values. It is therefore said that the unearned increments of valuation should yearly be taken to construct water and sewer systems, to pave streets, and to use in removing wastes and combatting disease. The idea is so revolutionary and borders so closely on the propositions of certain radical socialists, that there has been a great outcry against it, particularly from the English bankers who represent the people possessing this unearned wealth. Nevertheless the proposition is being seriously discussed by statesmen and has been taken up in America by conservative men who cannot possibly be accused of ill considered radicalism. The subject is thus brought into the sphere of practical sanitation and the medical profession must study the arguments, pro and con, to determine whether they are not justified in joining in the movement to put an end to preventable disease by methods never tried because money was never available.

"The ownership of increased valuation is the question in dispute. It is now openly claimed that if New York City should tax itself fifty millions to build subways which would add fifty millions to the property value of the regions served, the increase belongs to the community, who can take it

ethically by special taxation. A few noblemen, whose ancestors happened to own a part of London, are now drawing millions in yearly rentals from the very people who made the land valuable, and the Government has announced the policy of partial confiscation to use in preserving the health and lives of these people. The men whose ownership has never before been questioned are saying that this is a revolution, and the statesmen are calmly replying that it is only one of the long series of revolutions which the progress of civilization has forced upon the nation peacefully or forcefully, and are proceeding with the plans. Owners of New York are squandering millions in Europe, and owners of London, millions in all parts of the world, while in each city disease and death are present for the want of just such money for sanitation. These are the facts which are directing the serious attention of statesmen to the practical problem of shaping legislation which will enable them to use this property value in defense of the people who created it. Public health is bound to be enhanced if these ideas are spread to a practical application, and the medical profession is more vitally interested than any other.

"The congestion of population of the last few decades has caused enormous changes in medical practice and there is no reason to doubt that the ideas of a few dreamers are bound to make still further revolutions. . . ."

"The tremendous modern concentration of populations is responsible for those remarkable unearned increases of wealth, and it is not at all unlikely that the proposed new taxation, if it is ever levied, will be used to pay physicians for curing the diseases the sanitarians fail to prevent. It all depends upon whether or not it is decided that society owns what it creates."

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The sound ethical and fiscal common sense shown in that editorial makes one wonder if the writer is quite ignorant of the genesis and development of the proposed system of taxation. Probably it is needless to point out to him that "radical socialists" are not responsible for it, and that it is not the idea "of a few dreamers" alone. But it is worth while to emphasize the justice of his view, that for the medical profession in particular this scheme of taxation is vitally important. Not merely in furnishing the means to enable the physicians of a great city to cope more successfully with disease and death among a crowded population, but to do away with this very crowd-

ing, with the greater depths of poverty which breed disease in all great centers.*

It will not be so necessary to furnish money for fighting disease under a just system of taxation. For an economic system which gives more equality of opportunity to every one has no place for conditions which above all are now the chief reasons for preventable disease and death. It must indeed be discouraging to a band of men who give of their mental and physical strength, of all their powers and even their very lives, as do our physicians in the effort to stem the tide of disease, and then to see it daily and hourly grow afresh in our tenement districts. Like the dwellers in the slums, our brave doctors themselves are often the actual victims of wrong conditions, and many a life the country can ill spare has been sacrificed, among the medical profession, to an economic system which permits the few to take what is earned by the many and should be used for the benefit of the many.

The medical profession, first of all, are interested in just taxation, and if the physicians of our country could see this and join the ranks of those who are fighting openly for economic justice, they would prove of inestimable assistance. Many of them are now spending their lives and their strength in a splendid effort to stamp out the White Plague, a splendid fight indeed but one sadly futile, for tuberculosis is not to be eradicated while slums exist, while hundreds of thousands of men, women and children live and work amid unsanitary conditions, ill-nourished, ill-clothed. And such conditions must exist while there exists the blatant economic injustice that puts a double burden on the earning power of the individual, to pour into the pockets of a few riches that the thrift of all has produced.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

*It is for the purpose of coping with this question in this way that the Fels Fund has been organized. Endowed by Joseph Fels, it is managed by a Commission consisting of Daniel Kiefer, chairman (530 Walnut St., Cincinnati), Lincoln Steffens, Frederic C. Howe, Jackson H. Ralston and Geo. A. Briggs.—Editors of The Public.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE TACOMA SITUATION.*

Seattle, May 22.

In saying in my previous letter that only one public utility function was reserved by the people of Tacoma, I overlooked the fact that the city owns also its own water system, a circumstance so universal in this State that we have almost ceased to classify

*See The Public, current volume, page 488.