

The Public

is over 1,100 miles north of Bluff, but the charge for 12 words was six-pence—12 cents—although a part of this line is a cable running under Cook strait, from 50 to 75 miles, of course involving a large additional amount for construction. Besides this, the line is for much of the distance through a very thinly populated country, and, New Zealand being some 1,200 miles from the nearest Australia port, there is no amount of through business to compare with all American lines. Moreover, New Zealand's population is quite sparse. But even at this low price and with these disadvantages, the profits on the lines are so large that at the next session a bill will be brought in to reduce the rates, it being contrary to the general policy of the New Zealand and Australian governments to make any considerable profit from public utilities.

Now for the contrast with our privately owned lines. When Senator Bucklin landed at San Francisco he telegraphed to his wife at Colorado. The distance was the same that the telegram was sent in New Zealand, about 1,100 miles. The charge was more than six times the price charged in New Zealand, or 75 cents, as against 12 cents. The line here, for the most part, runs through a well-populated country, is all by land except the cable under San Francisco bay and has a large amount of through business. All who know anything of telegraph business are aware that the cost of service is very much lessened by a large business, as it costs less to keep lines in repair in a densely settled than in a sparsely settled country, and of course an operator must be kept at every station, whether the business is much or little. Nothing could more strongly set forth the disadvantage which the private ownership of telegraph lines of this country lays upon the business of the country.—Joseph Leggett, writing of Hon. J. W. Bucklin's recent visit to Australasia.

ANTI-MONOPOLY WORK IN MINNESOTA.

For The Public.

1. For nearly 30 years all unused railway lands were absolutely exempt from all state and local taxes. For eight years the railway companies were able to defeat every attempt at change. Finally the people amended the constitution so that all such lands are now listed for state and local taxation, the same as farm land around them. The railroads are hustling to

sell their lands and offering them at half the former price.

2. For over 18 years all mineral lands so long as unused, were also wholly exempt from all taxes. A statute law (probably unconstitutional) secured the exemption. Through the efforts of a few active single taxers and others the law was repealed and mineral lands are now taxed—not as they ought to be, but more justly than before.

3. Through the efforts of Alderman Joseph L. Kiuchi and Hon Frank C. Brooks (since elected judge of the district court) a decree of the court was secured, in mandamus proceedings, declaring that the Minneapolis Street Railway company has no franchise or privilege in the streets greater than the usual or ordinary rights of any hack or drayman, and that the company is at all times subject to all reasonable regulations of the city council.

4. The supreme court in the case of Stunerson vs. Great Northern Railway company (reported in 72 N. W., page 713) has rendered the most advanced decision that has ever come from any court in the civilized world.

The court held that:

Reasonable rates are to be determined "by ascertaining what, under all the circumstances, is a reasonable income on the cost of reproducing the road at the present time."

"The burden is on the railway company to show that the rates fixed by the commission are unreasonable."

A reasonable net income on the cost of terminals is 2½ per cent. per annum.

A reasonable net income on the cost of other property is five per cent. per annum.

Unprofitable business on portions of the road outside of Minnesota cannot be used to increase rates in Minnesota.

Cost of operating unprofitable feeders and extensions is no part of reasonable rates.

With these two decisions as a basis, any railway or other service corporation, can be brought to reasonable rates just as soon as the people determine that they will have such rates.

C. J. BUELL.

Land, which nature has destined to man's sustenance, is the only source from which everything comes, and to which everything flows back, and the existence of which constantly remains in spite of all changes. From this unmistakable truth it results that land alone can furnish the wants of the state, and that in natural fairness no distinctions can be made in this.—Emperor Joseph II., in Oestreichische Geschichte fur das Volk, Vol. XIV. (Vienna, 1867).

THE MISSOURI.

I.

Between low brinks of ragged clay
The rapid river takes its way.

Its heavy, tawny waters flow
As if their road they did not know;

Swirl off in loops, spread out in lakes,
Whose sandy shoals trall sluggish wakes.

They gnaw away the tumbling banks,
Mow down their leafy willow ranks;

They dwindle, till the dust blows round
Where fishes swam and men were drowned;

Then flood the bottoms miles away,
Fence, barn and house their scattered prey;

But yet, far back, the hills remain,
Which all their wanderings restrain.

II.

O mighty river, we may see
Our new democracy in thee.

No Rhine art thou, by cliffs beset,
With castles on each parapet;

No Thames, of placid, even tide,
With glass lawns edging either side;

But strong, and turbid, and perplexed,
By frequent whirls and eddies vexed—

At times an overwhelming fall
Of brute destruction—yet through all

Large wealth bestowing—grain and woods
Upspringing where once swept thy floods.

And so we know, whate'er thy force,
God's hills will hold thee to his course.

—Cameron Mann, in Century.

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

How would it do to have a new style of platform to get a little heart in it, and say: "The democratic party pledges itself to the cause of human freedom, freedom from all oppressions at home and to render justice and the right of self-government to all people; to defend the constitution and suppress monopolies." Stop right there. ("Every drop of water after that spoils the punch.")

Then go to the people; ask them if they want a large standing army that can be used by the president as he likes, and sent to the other side of the world by his order. Ask them if they will have a republic, under the constitution, or an executive officer who, of his own will, brings on war, invades foreign lands, appoints commissions to do his bidding in governing conquered people; regulates by his order the customs and revenues of such people, and orders the violation of the mails and the suppression of information for his personal political advantage. Ask them if they believe it accords with honor, justice, Christianity, to kill, burn the houses and devastate the country of a people because they claim only the right to govern themselves. Ask them if they approve of the expenditure of two or three hundred millions of their mon-