

winter, all right, and we're the people who'll conduct it."

Mr. Price knows what Hanna and Foraker want on the subject, and so do most of the Republican members of the house and senate, but what they don't know is what Johnson wants. If they could introduce some sort of a proposition that, on its face, looked like a good thing for the people, and it were defeated by Democratic votes, the effect would be bad for Johnson, politically. Unquestionably some such dodge as this would be tried in a minute, if it were known that Johnson would oppose the bill.

It's that uncertainty, however, that will make the Republicans chary of offering any sort of a remedy for the tax evil that is really a remedy. If they should, by chance, it goes without saying that Mayor Johnson will jump right in and support it. The credit for any real good tax legislation that may be enacted this winter is bound to go to Mayor Johnson, whether it is inspired by Republicans or Democrats. That's what the Republicans are afraid of, and that is why the name Johnson has the same effect on some of them that a match has on a powder magazine.

Two years ago the Republicans introduced an anti-trust bill. Of course it was never intended that it should be passed, and those back of it relied on the Democrats to vote against it and defeat it. They figured that the Democrats were short-sighted enough to do that for fear the Republicans would get a lot of credit out of it. But the Democrats stood ready to vote for it to a man, and the Republicans didn't dare bring the measure up for passage.—Staff Correspondence from Columbus, O., to Plain Dealer of December 8.

A THREE-CENT FARE ORDINANCE.

An ordinance opening the way for a three-cent street car system in Cleveland was introduced into the city council last night by Frederick Howe. It is an innocent-looking measure and on its face doesn't seem to mean much. Mr. Howe is not the author of it.

It is a stupendous scheme and there are men with all kinds of money and practical brains back of it, according to mysterious hints thrown out. The ordinance came as a complete surprise to all the members of the council, except the one who introduced it, and it immediately set them talking. They all jumped to the conclusion that Mayor Johnson had inspired it.

"Are you back of this?" the mayor was asked.

"I read the ordinance a few minutes before it was introduced," he answered, innocently.

"You don't answer the question."

"What's the question?"

It was repeated.

"I know what the ordinance says," he said, in an absent-minded way.

"How long have you known about it?"

"Say, that was funny about that measure to add those 21 men to the police force, wasn't it? And, do you know—" began the mayor. Efforts to get him to talk about the ordinance were in vain, but some information was secured from other sources which go to indicate that the mayor's guiding hand is back of the scheme.

The ordinance directs the city clerk to advertise for bids for the construction and maintenance of a street railway system in Cleveland. The specifications are to provide that no bid be considered that does not provide for a three-cent cash fare and universal transfers. No franchise is to be given for more than 20 years, and at any time the city is to have the right to purchase the system at whatever price may be agreed upon by the city and the owners of the road, or by arbitrators in case they fail to agree.

It can be authoritatively stated in connection with this plan that it does not contemplate anything short of a system that will cover the entire city. The old companies may come in and bid for the contract. That 20-years franchise may be a sufficient bait when it is remembered that some of their important franchises expire in 1905 or thereabouts. Unless these franchises were renewed they would be demoralized.

It has been intimated that straw bids would be thrown at the city to dash the scheme. That will be provided against in the specifications. The ordinance introduced last night left a blank where it came to fixing the amounts of the certified checks that must accompany the bids. That amount will be made very large and the specifications will be so drafted that anyone making a spurious bid may lose his check.

Those who are back of the matter expect that a desperate fight will be made by the local street railway interests to prevent the passage of the ordinance in the city council. They would not be surprised if they did not get it passed until next spring after the 11 new councilmen were elected. Mr. Howe believes that any member of the present council who votes against it will waste his time asking the people

to return him to that legislative body. If the ordinance does not pass before next spring every new man who is a candidate may be called upon to pledge himself for it.—Plain Dealer of Dec. 10.

A new three-cent fare ordinance will be presented Monday afternoon when the council committees to which Howe's ordinance was referred, and the board of control, meet in joint session to consider that measure. The new ordinance will come from Mayor Johnson. It will be radically different from the one now pending in the council as to details, though it may not present any striking change as to the main features of Mr. Howe's measure. At this meeting there will be 12 councilmen and all the members of the board of control. It is not unlikely that some railroad attorneys will be on hand to listen if not to talk.

Mayor Johnson is familiar with all the possible routes that could be given to a new company and he may tell the council committees what they are. Two crosstown lines are involved, a line to Glenville, a line to Wade park and one farther south, a line to Brooklyn, one to Newburg and one to Lakewood. One of the West Side lines crosses the viaduct and the other does not, being elevated, however, so as to admit of a passage across the flats in a great deal less time than by the way of the viaduct. Every councilmanic district, if not every ward in the city, will be traversed by these proposed lines.

Another point of considerable moment is that the tracks of the old companies will not be used to any appreciable extent, except in the down-town and other free territory. It is a fact known to few people, perhaps, that all the track on Wade Park avenue is free territory.—Plain Dealer of Dec. 15.

A righteous minority has in it the promise and the potency of a victorious majority.—Selected.

Optimist—So you have nothing to be thankful for?

Pessimist—Not a deuced thing!

Optimist—Well, such an habitual kicker as you ought to be thankful for that.—Puck.

"Child," said the businesslike matron acting as leader of the visiting committee, turning to the dirty-faced little girl chewing gum in one corner of the room in the tenement house, "wouldn't you like to live in a better part of town than this?"

"No, ma'am," said the dirty-faced little girl, "but when I get bigger I'm goin' slummin' through your part o' town some day."—Chicago Tribune.