

seeking, most of them brutal—believe that the schools are about to be rescued from the clutches of a tax-dodging plutocracy.

In Chicago, as in many other places, the school question is at bottom an issue between taxation and pedagogy. On the one side are the financial interests which insist upon favoring tax dodgers at the expense of teachers and consequently to the detriment of pupils, and call it business management; on the other are the educationists who stand for sound methods of pedagogy. A parallel issue is that which arises between the factory method and the school method of education. The factory method regards the relation of teacher and pupil as analogous to that of the mechanic and his product, and consequently makes low-salaried teachers mere cogs in a vast mechanism which high-salaried superintendents control from a distance with metaphorical bell pushes. The intensely human relation of pupil and teacher is sacrificed to the mere mechanical relation of workman and product. The latter issue adapts itself to the former; for the factory method, being of the business type, fits harmoniously into the grooves of the tax-dodging interests. It is essentially business, business, business, as opposed to humanity and what humanity implies. It is, moreover, essentially autocracy as opposed to democracy.

From the pedagogical point of view the school question is editorially stated with great clearness and fairness by the Elementary School Teacher for March, 1905. The article is too long for reproduction here, but we reproduce in another column so much of it as is explanatory of the present situation. It will be observed that this excellent school periodical, in no way connected with the Teachers' Federation, explains the nature of the present controversy in Chicago in a manner that fully accounts for the otherwise unaccountable assaults which the

plutocracy of this city, through their press and through certain members of the Board of Education, are making upon the Teachers' Federation and its efficient leaders.

One of the hopeful signs of the times is the revolt of so many clergymen and religious periodicals against the plutocratic influences that have so long strangled them. It takes time to awaken people to the subtle evils that beset them, and much patience is necessary; but as sure as there is a just God in the Heavens is all this devilry in swallow-tailed coats destined to come to grief. History is full of parallels. The times call not for despair nor pessimism, but for righteous purpose, a little courage, and reasonable patience.

ASSESSMENTS.

It goes without saying that in steady and persistent disregard of law and justice the processes and results of assessments take the lead. Other departments of government may vary in righteousness. The iniquity of assessments is constant. In every community the inequality is outrageous. Everyone knows it who thinks of it. Occasionally some one blabs out the fact. And yet the same old shameless condition continues.

You may hear a community pleading its poverty—not enough money for schools, or for roads, or for any public function; whereas any approach to a fair assessment would yield abundance of revenue for every purpose. It is absurd, when you come to think of it, that any community should talk of being too poor to support its legitimate community functions. What such a community is poor in, is not sources of revenue, but the essentials of citizenship and public spirit.

But apart from the question of revenue obtained and its uses, the worst feature of assessments is the heinous injustice of the inequality. Whether this be due to the hit-and-miss incapacity of the assessors, or to their partiality, or to pulls, or to bribes direct or in-

direct, the fact of inequality exists.

It exists in a remarkable regularity in one respect, which makes the inequality all the more execrable. What is this feature, occurring regularly everywhere, that constitutes the overtopping iniquity of assessments? The history of taxation in all countries shows it, and every man who has looked into the matter to-day knows it. But it is worth while to say it again, and it ought, to our shame, to be said over and over. It is this: that small holdings are assessed, and therefore taxed, relatively higher than large holdings.

There may be exceptions, but this is the general truth. As a rule the larger the value the smaller is the relative assessment. The small holder has not the pull or the influence which the large holder, whether individual or corporation, possesses, and accordingly he suffers injustice.

What is the remedy? First, a practical remedial measure consists in adopting a more definite method. For example, we should compel a separate assessment of the land from improvements—by actual acreage in the country, and by actual front-footage in the towns. This would at least avoid the loose manner, prevalent in most places, of assessing in the mass.

But secondly, the remedy lies in creating and concentrating a public sentiment, through publicity and education, which will compel assessors to do their duty. In this way the press of the country can perform a great economic service.

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WHY DID THEY LAUGH?

A thousand members of the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association recently listened to an address by William J. Bryan. They laughed incredulously when he told them that he would rather talk about religion than politics. Again they expressed their incredulity in laughter, when he said that he could talk better when he was receiving no compensation. They were still unconvinced when he insisted that he was sincere. And those young men were not hoodlums. They were members of the young Men's Christian As-