

vastate our forests by wasteful methods of logging and deplete our resources, are allowed to escape with taxes on half the valuation of the rancher. A piece of logged off land is, until slashed and cleared, almost worthless for any purpose—even for grazing, in a few years after logging operations have ceased. With these things before a man's eyes, it is little wonder if when "blowing in" money, "a blowing out" stumps, and digging, chopping, pulling and sometimes swearing in grubbing out roots, a man's gall will flow and he feels very much like a rebel.

Not only this, but the ranchers here have practical illustrations of the law of rents. As the price of shingles goes to the sky, we find men able to work poorer and poorer lands, until they are now, even while good available cedar is going into the market, sawing down cedar stumps and making them into shingle bolts—these often or usually for small mills whose owners cannot get hold of the good timber held for speculation, or by big milling companies who "have beaten them to it."

Still I feel no bitterness toward the lumbermen. Let the people be as alert, energetic, vigorous, determined, practical and business-like in defending and advancing their interests as the mill men are in caring for their concerns, and they will have no cause for complaint and will need no sympathy; and until they do show some disposition to adopt this character, sympathy is misplaced and absolutely of no avail. We want more of the old revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, and less whining, blubbering and looking for outside help.

G. W. CHENEY.

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## PUBLIC OWNERSHIP IN SAN FRANCISCO.

San Francisco, January 4, 1910.

Thursday, December 30, the voters of San Francisco went to the ballot-box in a pouring rain and decided to issue bonds for \$2,020,000 to take over, rebuild and operate under public ownership what is known as the Geary Street Railway line, and to extend it from its present terminus at Market and Kearney streets, down Market street to the ferry. That's the way the voters rang out the old year, and they did it by a vote of 31,185 for public ownership and operation, to 11,694 against. The total vote was the largest ever cast at a special election in the city, being 43,081, of which 70 per cent was for the bonds.\*

Thus, after fourteen years of discussion and three previous special elections on the question of municipalizing the Geary street line, the matter has been decided by a clear two-thirds majority of those voting on the question.

Fourteen years ago, or seven years before the franchise of the Geary Street company expired, an attempt was made to have the Supervisors extend the term of the franchise. It would have succeeded but for that "troublemaker," James H. Barry, as members of the San Francisco Plunderbund delight to call him. He not only protested in the Star, but organized a mass meeting, paid for the hall and produced a small riot; but one large enough to stop the proposed action of the Supervisors.

\*See last week's Public, page 12.

In 1902, soon after the company's franchise expired, the question of issuing bonds for a municipal road was submitted, but was lost on account of the provision requiring a two-thirds majority. The question was submitted again in 1903, again received a majority, but did not get the required two-thirds majority. Last June it was submitted the third time, and came within less than 500 votes of receiving the necessary two-thirds majority.

It seems to be poetic justice, if not a "dispensation of Providence," that the present terminus of the line to be operated by the city is within fifteen feet of the front of the Chronicle building, for if there is one thing that gives M. H. de Young a pain it is the proposal to pry private monopoly loose from public property. In the Chronicle he seriously and almost tearfully advised the voters not to load themselves up with a huge debt for an experiment that was bound to fail. The Chronicle and the Evening Post, which is said to be the property of the United Railroads company that monopolizes street railway transportation in San Francisco, were the only daily papers that opposed the bond issue.

The United Railroads made an active and expensive campaign against the bonds. The billboards blazed with huge posters, paid for by the United Railroads, advising the dear people not to issue bonds for "a white elephant," but it was well known that the United Railroads wanted that white elephant for its own profitable menagerie. Its property is worth about \$20,000,000, but the monopoly is "capitalized" at \$80,000,000. It wanted a \$2,000,000 Geary Street Road to capitalize at \$3,000,000, which it could do without getting the consent of two-thirds of the voters. The handful of directors of the corporation bonded the people of San Francisco for \$80,000,000, but the people can't bond themselves for \$2,000,000 except by consent of a two-thirds majority.

The municipally owned and operated Geary Street Line will be the entering wedge to split the street railway monopoly in this city. The franchises of other lines will expire at intervals, and the last franchise will expire in 1929. There is scarcely a doubt that the city will take the different lines as the franchises expire.

The really noticeable feature of the bond election was the fact that most of the votes against the bonds were cast in the "smart set" and slum districts. Glorious larceny and petty larceny got together on the C. D. Q. message of the United Railroads monopoly. The labor unions were for the bonds; the Merchants' Association was against them.

W. G. EGGLESTON.

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## NO DUKES IN HEAVEN!

The following satirical epigram was written by Dr. Samuel Clarke, who had just seen the inscription, "Domus Ultima" (the Final Home), on the vault belonging to the Dukes of Richmond in the Cathedral of Chichester.

Did he who thus inscribed the wall  
Not read, or not believe, St. Paul,  
Who says there is, where'er it stands,  
Another house, not made with hands?  
Or may we gather from these words  
That house is not a House of Lords.