

idly and lamentably ending the day of small merchants, small manufacturers, and independent mechanics.

The sole issue of the campaign in New York is succinctly summed up by a leading Bryan man of that city, Henry George, Jr., who in a letter of the 18th to George Foster Peabody, says:

Permit me to commend the position taken in your published letter from Lake George dissenting from the belief that there can be no salvation for the New York city government except by and with the support of the party still controlled by Senator Platt. That, it seems to me, embodies the real issue in this municipal campaign—whether the democratic party or the republican party shall control New York. By all the standards of his opponents, Edward M. Shepard is in character and ability worthy of the mayoralty; and they do not any more pretend that he has made discreditable bargains or that he can be used by bad elements than that Mr. Low has made such bargains or can be so used. Yet they do deny that Senator Platt effected the anti-Democratic nomination, and that that nomination has a bearing on national politics; whereas, it is well known that the senator and his able adjutant, Lieut. Gov. Woodruff, were from the start, openly or covertly, the champions of Mr. Low, and that the senator made the fusion nomination possible only on national Republican lines by repeatedly declaring that he would oppose for such nomination any man who had voted for the late Democratic candidate for the presidency—Mr. Bryan. The municipal situation is, therefore, unlike that of 1897, inasmuch as there are no independent mayoralty candidates. The choice for the voter lies between the Democratic and the Republican nominees. For myself, I shall make the choice that most nearly expresses my views, and shall vote, as I am certain my father would likewise have done, for the Democrat.

During the past week the Democratic campaign opened vigorously in northern Ohio. It began with a large meeting in Cleveland, presided over by John H. Clark and including Mayor Johnson among the speakers. Republicans as well as Democrats were invited to this meeting, both as auditors and speakers. Republican candidates for the legislature were offered the platform, turn about with Democratic candidates, and guaran-

teed fair play and a respectful hearing, the subject being taxation. But the republican candidates did not respond. They were sturdily trying to stand by the policy of their party, which insists that national and not state issues are at stake this year in Ohio.

This policy was somewhat petulantly maintained by the speakers at the opening meeting of the Republicans at Delaware on the 19th. They referred to the issue of taxation in state and municipality as a sort of foreign substance which Johnson is trying to inject into the state campaign. Whether or not this policy of evading the question of taxation succeeds in the rest of the state, it has proved a dismal failure in the Western Reserve. Dismayed by the hold the question of taxation has taken upon the people in Cuyahoga county in consequence of the disclosures of Mayor Johnson in Cleveland, the Republican candidates for the legislature have been forced to break the silence imposed by the state managers of their party and formally to address the people upon the taxation subject. It would seem that the state managers were right. Silence upon this subject could not have been worse for them, and might have been better, than this weakly defensive address. They say, for example, that "substantially everything that has been done in Ohio to lighten the burden of taxation upon real estate has been done by the Republican legislature." To lighten the burden upon real estate! But what galls the people is not the burden as a whole, but its inequality. It is this inequality that Mayor Johnson is endeavoring to correct, and in that the Republican party has opposed and obstructed him.

When he sought to raise the assessment of railroads to 60 per cent. of market value, so as to bring it within the rule as to farm and residence property, Republican auditors overruled him. When he went before the state board, that body, all Republic-

ans, also overruled him. It did so upon the basis of an opinion furnished by the attorney general whom Mr. Hanna's party had nominated in place of the Republican attorney general, Monett, by way of punishing Monett for prosecuting trusts. When Johnson asked the decennial board of appraisers to equalize real estate valuations in Cleveland, and offered to demonstrate its feasibility, they refused to consider the matter, contenting themselves with raising the appraisal generally, so that real estate owners already overassessed were overassessed still further. In spite, however, of these obstacles, thrown in his way by Republican officeholders, Mayor Johnson has reduced the tax rate of Cleveland from 3 per cent. to 2.67 per cent. He did this through the local equalization board, a majority being appointees of his own, which added \$20,000,000 to the tax duplicate, by increasing the values of street car and other public franchise companies.

But he has done still more important work in fiscal lines. Through the tax bureau which he organized under the management of Peter Witt, he has made public the gross inequalities of real estate taxation which the Republican decennial board refused to correct. Mayor Johnson's explanation of this work is of universal interest. He has addressed the people of Cleveland in a letter in which he not only makes that explanation, but couples with it other explanations of equal value regarding points referred to above. He says:

The work in the so-called tax school, though not finished, has progressed far enough to show what the final result will be. Small shops and homes, including the rented homes of the poorer people, are assessed relatively higher than any other real estate in the city. A great majority of these small properties, valued at less than \$2,000, are assessed at more than 60 per cent. of their true value, some being actually assessed at more than the owners offer to sell the property for. If all of this property were reduced to a 60 per cent. basis it would, in my opinion, reduce the tax duplicate at least \$10,000,000. The more