

or canal," and "freight from the east reaching Chicago water-borne must be brought to Buffalo by rail or canal. The railroad makes with its own boat lines a through route and a joint rate from Chicago to the eastern destination, or vice versa," and "the local rail rate between Buffalo and the eastern destination is so high that little would be left the independent boat for its lake haul after paying the local rate for the rail haul." Nor is that all. "The railroad would not give the independent boat the benefit of its dock facilities in Buffalo, either for discharging or taking on cargo." So "the independent boat would be required to unload at some other dock and team the goods to the receiving station of the railroad." And then, "to make matters still worse," adds the Sikes report, "the railroads own nearly all the water front property in Buffalo available for dock purposes," and "much of it lies idle and unimproved." What about the Erie canal? Why "the railroads dominate that too, so far as possibilities of through traffic are concerned." As a result, "while all rail rates from New York to Chicago have remained normally constant for the past twenty years, lake and rail, and canal and lake rates, under railroad control, have advanced markedly."

+

It is in ways akin to those described above that railroad rings monopolize transportation and by favoritism foster monopolizations of what would otherwise be competitive business. They do it, not through monopolizing rails, or cars or vessels or docks, but through monopolizing water fronts, rights of way, and other landed privileges, of which in the nature of things the whole community ought to be in control and to be the beneficiaries.

+ + +

### SHIBBOLETHS.

A prominent reactionary explains to me his hostility to the single tax movement. He says that the movement was useful in its time, but is now past that period, and if persisted in, harm will result.

"All such movements call attention," he advises me, "to certain abnormalities of social custom, and in order to do so they have to be themselves abnormalities in the opposite direction."

The people, in other words, have to be taught by exaggerated pictures—cartoons, caricatures. Such were all the great battle cries and shibboleths of history, he tells me; from Egyptian times onward: exaggerated swings of the pendulum to

correct exaggerated opposite pendulation. "They are not to be taken literally, nor pursued too long."

+

My reactionary friend was talking so steadily that it seemed a pity to interrupt him, but it set me to musing.

One of the first cartoons of the kind which I could remember was written on a stone tablet, to cure the Jews of certain exaggerated tendencies, among which was the worship of a golden calf. "Thou shalt not steal" was among its provisions—of course not to be taken literally, but conveniently and in diluted form. While of temporary benefit, the shibboleth should not be mentioned nowadays with any seriousness.

Then there was the instance of a certain Nazarene, who gave out a phrase which survived too long, and unluckily became rather a motto in later centuries, when really worn out: "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." The later modification—do others or they will do you—is altogether preferable for moderns.

The misconceived shibboleth of the French revolution—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"—was practical for a few effective moments in cutting off the heads of a king and his executioners, but of course has no permanent truth. It was long ago altered by sensible men and economists to *Limberness, Apology, Saturninity*.

Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence are cases in point. The idea of men being created equal, when everyone knows that their condition is modified at birth by race, sex, and previous condition of servitude, to say nothing of height, weight and oratorical ability!

As to John Brown and his overwrought phrases, they could only have resulted as they did, in his own death and the embroilment of the country in a fratricidal war. Had they remained phrases, and been discontinued in time, all this might have been saved. John Brown's body, indeed, has long been moldering in the ground, and it really is too bad that his soul will not desist from marching on.

Lincoln's great slogan, "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people," should in these days of wisdom only be mentioned historically. Let us be sensible and scientific, even though government by the people and for the people perish from the earth. The people themselves will always be with us, all the more admirable as subjects of philanthropy and study.

+

If there was any merit in the campaign of the

leader of Democracy for the Presidency last fall, it lay in his restraint from utterance of slogan or shibboleth, and his modest substitution of an unobtrusive question: "Shall the people rule?" The immediate decision of the people that they would not, must of course be gratifying evidence of popular complaisance, when free from the influence of subversive assertion and deceptive declarations.

ETHELBERT W. GRABILL.

---

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

---

### THE SINGLE TAX MAYOR OF BELLEVILLE.

For several days I have been in Belleville, Illinois, where Fred J. Kern, a disciple of Henry George, is Mayor. While serving his first term, in 1904, Mr. Kern was a delegate to the national Democratic convention at St. Louis. On this occasion he said to some single tax friends that every disciple of Henry George owed it to the cause to take an active part in politics and to stand for public office, particularly municipal office, whenever opportunity offered, and if elected to apply as much of his principles at once as present laws permit. "No other field," said he, "offers such great opportunities for the application of our ideas as the municipality." As he has now been Mayor six years, an account of some of the achievements of his administration may be of general interest.

+

Belleville is the seat of St. Clair county, which in the fertility of its soil and the immense deposit of its coal beds, is one of the richest counties in Illinois. With the exception of East St. Louis, the people of the county are nearly all German or of German extraction. A large number of the German students who participated in the revolution of 1848-49 came to this place and neighborhood. Those who took to the cultivation of the soil, were referred to as the "Latin farmers" because they could carry on their controversies in Latin quite as well as in German.

It was here that Colonel Frederick Hecker came, he whose eloquence in 1848 set the hearts of his fellow countrymen afire with democratic ideals. He went to the Civil War from here, and here he died. And so of Governor Koerner. Descendants of both are still living in Belleville. The same element of German democracy settled in near-by St. Louis, where they organized Turner societies, supported the cause of William Lloyd Garrison, were the friends of Lincoln, and when the Civil War broke out kept the slave State of Missouri in the Union.

Germans had been coming to America for more than two hundred years. They cleared the forests, cultivated the soil, planted orchards, worked as mechanics, entered business, reared churches and school houses, and in all the higher fields of the arts and sciences contributed to the greatness of our country. But at no time in our country's history, did this people rise to such heights of devotion to the cause of freedom, or exercise so potent an influence

in the shaping of our future, as under the leadership of those German students of 1848, who, having fought for the liberty of their fatherland and failed, found asylum in America, where they supported the cause of anti-slavery and the Union.

So thoroughly German is Belleville, that twenty years ago it was the general custom to address strangers in German. If the stranger could not understand, which was indeed seldom, it was considered not improper to speak to him in English. The only Negro I ever knew to speak a perfect German was born and raised in Belleville.

It was while living here, that the noted jurist and statesman, Lyman Trumbull, was elected to the United States Senate. This is also the native place of Judge Barnum of Chicago. Ex-Congressman "Horizontal Bill" Morrison, now 84 years old, still lives in a nearby-village, where he finds the time and energy to visit the sick, attend funerals, and otherwise comfort unfortunate neighbors.

The people are industrious and frugal, and while beer drinking is general among them, German like, they do not as a rule drink to excess.

Springing from such a people and developing amidst such surroundings, Fred J. Kern has been truly representative. He was elected Mayor in 1903, has been successively re-elected twice, and is now nominated for a fourth term. His triumph in April is considered a foregone conclusion. When he was first elected, the population of Belleville was 17,000. It is now 27,000.

+

The first thing Mayor Kern did was to call the police force together and request them to show him their guns. He found that they were all antiquated and of different make. "You must have regulation revolvers," he said, "and of the best make; and above all you must learn to shoot straight, so that when you are obliged to shoot you shall hit the man you are aiming at instead of a by-stander. And don't use your guns at all, except as a last alternative."

He had three medals struck—one of gold, one of silver and one of bronze,—and told the policemen that they must have target practice at stated times, when the most successful marksman should receive the gold medal, the next the silver, and the third the bronze. These medals were to be the property of the municipality, the possessors to wear them only so long as they were able to hold them by superior marksmanship. Mayor Kern says that this had not only the effect of making good marksmen of the police force, but it was soon discovered that those who won the medals were men of steady nerve, from temperate habits.

The Mayor found a volunteer fire-department inadequate to the demands and needs of the growing city; so he supplanted it with a modern department which has all the skill and efficiency of any of the fire departments of our larger cities.

He found the city with about one mile of street paving. He has paved twenty miles of street with vitrified brick, which in a city like this ought to give service for thirty years.

He found the sewer system extending very little beyond the paved zone. He has constructed thirty