

is over 1,100 miles north of Bluff, but the charge for 12 words was sixpence—12 cents—although a part of this line is a cable running under Cook strait, from 50 to 75 miles, of course involving a large additional amount for construction. Besides this, the line is for much of the distance through a very thinly populated country, and, New Zealand being some 1,200 miles from the nearest Australia port, there is no amount of through business to compare with all American lines. Moreover, New Zealand's population is quite sparse. But even at this low price and with these disadvantages, the profits on the lines are so large that at the next session a bill will be brought in to reduce the rates, it being contrary to the general policy of the New Zealand and Australian governments to make any considerable profit from public utilities.

Now for the contrast with our privately owned lines. When Senator Bucklin landed at San Francisco he telegraphed to his wife at Colorado. The distance was the same that the telegram was sent in New Zealand, about 1,100 miles. The charge was more than six times the price charged in New Zealand, or 75 cents, as against 12 cents. The line here, for the most part, runs through a well-populated country, is all by land except the cable under San Francisco bay and has a large amount of through business. All who know anything of telegraph business are aware that the cost of service is very much lessened by a large business, as it costs less to keep lines in repair in a densely settled than in a sparsely settled country, and of course an operator must be kept at every station, whether the business is much or little. Nothing could more strongly set forth the disadvantage which the private ownership of telegraph lines of this country lays upon the business of the country.—Joseph Leggett, writing of Hon. J. W. Bucklin's recent visit to Australasia.

ANTI-MONOPOLY WORK IN MINNESOTA.

For The Public.

1. For nearly 30 years all unused railway lands were absolutely exempt from all state and local taxes. For eight years the railway companies were able to defeat every attempt at change. Finally the people amended the constitution so that all such lands are now listed for state and local taxation, the same as farm land around them. The railroads are hustling to

sell their lands and offering them at half the former price.

2. For over 18 years all mineral lands so long as unused, were also wholly exempt from all taxes. A statute law (probably unconstitutional) secured the exemption. Through the efforts of a few active single taxers and others the law was repealed and mineral lands are now taxed—not as they ought to be, but more justly than before.

3. Through the efforts of Alderman Joseph L. Kiichli and Hon Frank C. Brooks (since elected judge of the district court) a decree of the court was secured, in mandamus proceedings, declaring that the Minneapolis Street Railway company has no franchise or privilege in the streets greater than the usual or ordinary rights of any hack or drayman, and that the company is at all times subject to all reasonable regulations of the city council.

4. The supreme court in the case of Stunerson vs. Great Northern Railway company (reported in 72 N. W., page 713) has rendered the most advanced decision that has ever come from any court in the civilized world. The court held that:

Reasonable rates are to be determined "by ascertaining what, under all the circumstances, is a reasonable income on the cost of reproducing the road at the present time."

"The burden is on the railway company to show that the rates fixed by the commission are unreasonable."

A reasonable net income on the cost of terminals is 2½ per cent. per annum.

A reasonable net income on the cost of other property is five per cent. per annum.

Unprofitable business on portions of the road outside of Minnesota cannot be used to increase rates in Minnesota.

Cost of operating unprofitable feeders and extensions is no part of reasonable rates.

With these two decisions as a basis, any railway or other service corporation, can be brought to reasonable rates just as soon as the people determine that they will have such rates.

C. J. BUELI.

Land, which nature has destined to man's sustenance, is the only source from which everything comes, and to which everything flows back, and the existence of which constantly remains in spite of all changes. From this unmistakable truth it results that land alone can furnish the wants of the state, and that in natural fairness no distinctions can be made in this.—Emperor Joseph II., in *Oestreichische Geschichte fur das Volk*, Vol. XIV. (Vienna, 1867).

THE MISSOURI.

I.

Between low brinks of ragged clay
The rapid river takes its way.

Its heavy, tawny waters flow
As if their road they did not know;

Swirl off in loops, spread out in lakes,
Whose sandy shoals trail sluggish wakes.

They gnaw away the tumbling banks,
Mow down their leafy willow ranks;

They dwindle, till the dust blows round
Where fishes swam and men were drowned;

Then flood the bottoms miles away,
Fence, barn and house their scattered prey;

But yet, far back, the hills remain,
Which all their wanderings restrain.

II.

O mighty river, we may see
Our new democracy in thee.

No Rhine art thou, by cliffs beset,
With castles on each parapet;

No Thames, of placid, even tide,
With glass lawns edging either side;

But strong, and turbid, and perplexed,
By frequent whirls and eddies vexed—

At times an overwhelming fall
Of brute destruction—yet through all

Large wealth bestowing—grain and woods
Upspringing where once swept thy floods.

And so we know, whate'er thy force,
God's hills will hold thee to his course.
—Cameron Mann, in *Century*.

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

How would it do to have a new style of platform to get a little heart in it, and say: "The democratic party pledges itself to the cause of human freedom, freedom from all oppressions at home and to render justice and the right of self-government to all people; to defend the constitution and suppress monopolies." Stop right there. ("Every drop of water after that spoils the punch.")

Then go to the people; ask them if they want a large standing army that can be used by the president as he likes, and sent to the other side of the world by his order. Ask them if they will have a republic, under the constitution, or an executive officer who, of his own will, brings on war, invades foreign lands, appoints commissions to do his bidding in governing conquered people; regulates by his order the customs and revenues of such people, and orders the violation of the mails and the suppression of information for his personal political advantage. Ask them if they believe it accords with honor, justice, Christianity, to kill, burn the houses and devastate the country of a people because they claim only the right to govern themselves. Ask them if they approve of the expenditure of two or three hundred millions of their mon-

ey to subjugate the Filipinos, who never did them the least harm in the world. Ask them if they will have war, glory and high taxes and depend on the brute force of a large army and navy; or peace and prosperity and depend on justice and moderation. Ask them if they will have entangling alliances which will embroil them in the affairs of other nations. Ask them if they are willing to be taxed in order that large subsidies may be squandered on a few rich syndicates, for instance, Hanna & Co. (Who is the Co.?) Ask them if they will depend for the suppression of monopolies on the party which has been legislating for 40 years to create them.

Depend upon it, answers to all these questions will surely come. If they come through you, you will march on at the head of a triumphant host, inspired with a sincere love of our country—Independents who place honor and justice above party fealty and party spoils—democrats determined to defend the constitution, and who revere the teachings of the fathers.

If these answers do not come through you, but in spite of you, so much the worse for you, that is all. History will write the epitaph of the party you have led to destruction—"Weighed in the balance and found wanting."—Hon. John V. Le Moynes, in the March Jeffersonian Democrat.

MILITARISM.

For The Public.

The horrors of war have never lacked graphic depiction. Shakespeare has flashed upon them his genius. Vereschagin has flung them on his canvas. Sherman has summed them in three words. But to the absurdities and dangers of the military spirit, the root whence war springs, too little attention has been paid. In compliance with the specious maxim that peace is best maintained in preparing for war this spirit ever finds favor with many who hate its ripened fruit. Hence, partly, the popularity in America of brass buttons and striped seams, the liking for military titles, and the too ready acquiescence in martial absolutism as something that has a right to override and supersede civil law whenever trouble threatens. Befeathered militia officers thus strut prodigious, the very Sunday schools put wooden rifles in their youngsters' hands, and when official murder flames forth at Hazleton or Coeur d'Alene no adequate roar of protest follows and its authors go scot free.

And yet with the evils of militarism as it exists in Europe, turning nations into armed camps, impoverishing their people, and threatening every year to burst into such holocausts as Napoleon kindled, we are perhaps sufficiently familiar. We err in thinking, because so far we have escaped the compulsory service and the huge establishments idle in barracks, that therefore militarism in America is something different in essentials and not merely in degree. On the contrary, our military system is modeled upon that of Europe, with its rigid discipline, its servility enforced upon the rank and file, and its denial to them of the right to their own brain and conscience—so that they are compelled to surrender their reason, their ideas of right and wrong, of prudence and duty, and to become blindly obedient to others, mere automata in their hands, so much raw material for tactics and food for powder.

In Europe the system is synonymous with snobbery, arrogance and tyranny. Our freer institutions may check the growth of this brutal spirit, but there are evidences all too plenty in our military academies, in our regular army, and even in our militia, that they do not prevent it.

When a soldier can be subjected to long imprisonment for addressing by letter his commander in chief without first obtaining permission from his regimental superior; when the marriage of an army lieutenant with the daughter of a sergeant brings upon him social ostracism; when citizen soldiers can be sent to jail for inability to pay fines imposed upon them by their officers, and when a colonel of militia can string up a refractory private by the thumbs and escape punishment—to cite only a few among cases of recent years that come to mind—surely even the conservative will admit that there is room for reform.

The truth is that militarism is the very antithesis and negation of both democracy and freedom. Its existence in America is irrational and absurd in the highest degree. Walt Whitman, democracy's anointed poet, saw this when he declared:

The whole present system of the officering and personnel of the army and navy of these states, and the spirit and letter of their trebly aristocratic rules and regulations, is a monstrous exotic, a nuisance and revolt, and belongs here just as much as orders of nobility or the pope's council of cardinals. I say if the present theory of our army and navy is sensible and true then the rest of America is an unmitigated fraud.

The advocates of military training lay great stress on the discipline it enforces. True, discipline is to every one a salutary experience without which life will be a failure. But to inculcate a craven fear of punishment, a fictitious respect for rank, and a blind obedience to orders regardless of right or reason is not truly to discipline. A martinet is only a bully, and the private who trembles in his presence is not an inspiring object.

Nor is such training necessary in order that there shall be ready for service a force to defend the country from invasion or internal danger should either threaten. Such wars are wars of the people, not of professional killers, and the people can be trusted to wage them and to submit to the control necessary for effective united action without having had it drilled into them in forms subversive of their self-respect for years previously. To this American history bears ample evidence.

F. C. W.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE DECLARATION.

The following extracts from speeches made by Lincoln were quoted by the Hon. R. F. Pettigrew in a speech in the Senate January 15.

In those days our Declaration of Independence was held sacred by all and thought to include all; but now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it is assailed and sneered at, and construed, and hawked at, and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it. All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him, ambition follows, philosophy follows, and the theology of the day is fast joining the cry. . . .

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men; but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it