

rect in his statement. Cannon was not "iron," nor was he a duke, but a mere chauffeur for the automobile of Privilege. His power as Speaker was due primarily to the private ownership of governmental functions by the possessors of privilege. Give the people direct legislation and all the Cannons would shrink like a toy balloon in a furnace. They have the power to obstruct legislation, but that power would vanish if the people had the power to initiate legislation and vote on it at the ballot box. They have the power to cause the enactment of vicious legislation, but what would become of that power if the voters had the initiative and referendum?

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Outlook for the Democratic Party.

It does indeed seem as if the Democrats might have a good chance to win at the Congressional elections next fall; but we can think of few things that might be more unhappy for democracy, whether you consider democracy as the Democratic party or the democratic impulse. A Democratic victory at the Congressional elections next fall, would for obvious reasons be prophetic of a plutocratic victory at the Presidential and Congressional elections two years later. But let no one infer, therefore, that he should not work for Democratic victory this year. It were better to work for victory, though he might wisely pray for defeat.

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Are They Talking Too Much?

Suggestions are made in many quarters that the railroad magnates "talk too much;" that they are trying to deceive the people, especially the farmers; and that their object is to bamboozle the people into dissatisfaction with the policy of government control of the railroads. But is the "policy" a success up to date? And, instead of deceiving the people, are not the railroad magnates really teaching the people that government ownership of transportation involves a principle, while government "control" of private monopoly is a mere "policy" that has in it all the elements of failure? So, the more the railroad magnates talk, the better. They are teaching the people. True, the people are paying for their tuition; but it is often true that the more we pay for a thing the more we think of and prize it.

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Why Society Is Savage.

Jacob Riis' statement before the City Club of Chicago, that "when a city's police force costs ten times as much as its health department it is an

indication of the generally savage condition in which modern society lives," brings the thought that Mr. Riis should use a rake and scrape away the muck that prevents his seeing what is just beneath the surface. Modern society is called "civilized." But why is modern civilized society savage? Because it fears the hell of poverty; and society itself has invented that hell by permitting monopoly to levy tribute upon industry, as Mr. Riis might see if he were to look beneath the surface. But for looking beneath the surface a man needs eyes inside his head.

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Judicial View of Boycotts.

Judge Ogden, of Oakland, Cal., recently denounced boycotts by labor unions. A few days before he delivered his denunciation, Judge Waste, also of the Oakland bench, refused to listen to an attorney from Nevada because he had not been admitted to practice in the courts of California—that is, he had not joined the California lawyers' union. So the attorney was judicially boycotted by Judge Waste, showing that the justice of the boycott depends on the kind of union that does the boycotting.

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Prosperity.

All through the year 1909 we were told by the newspapers of the prosperity in which the American people were enveloped. To most of us the telling seemed necessary, lest we fail to discover it by other means. It is not easy to discover a non-existent fact unless some one does tell of it. But here and there evidence of the falsity of those prosperity reports has appeared. For instance, the American Credit Indemnity Company of New York, a member of the Bankers' Association and an insurer of credit alone, made this confidential communication to its customers, under date of Oct. 18, 1909:

You have had the protection of our bond the past year, and are fortunate if you have escaped the inordinate losses that have come to many and caused the payment by us of over \$1,200,000 to bondholders to reimburse them for panic losses during the past year, which proved to them the collateral value of our bond.

"Inordinate losses that have come to many" is not suggestive of a first rate report upon the prosperity of the year.

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A City as a Landlord.

Among the observations in out of the way places which Dr. George A. Dorsey recently contributed to the Chicago Tribune, was an account

of a land owning city of Hungary. The name of the city is Szeged. In its immediate neighborhood, wrote Dr. Dorsey—

the city itself is the greatest landlord; it owns 92,000 acres of land, of which about 16,000 acres is pasture and 9,000 acres is forest. The city as landlord rents its land from time to time to the highest bidder, some of the land in small plots on short term leases to gardeners, larger plots to farmers for longer periods, some of it for twenty-five years. Much of the garden truck land is leased to Servians or Bulgarians; for this \$20 or more a year is paid. For land which is best suited for the growing of peppers for paprika \$30 a year is paid; this is the highest priced land. Land about here varies in price from \$150 for sandy soil, and from \$300 to \$400 for vineyard land. Land suitable for truck farming near the city is worth as much as \$1,500 an acre. The property of the city of Szeged is worth about \$10,000,000; of this \$2,000,000 is in agricultural land, which is available for outright sale to the peasants; this, it is hoped, will help to prevent emigration. The income of the city from rent on lands, etc., is about \$1,000,000 a year; of this a certain sum is expended each year on the poor; these pensioners number about 13,000, and receive from \$1 to \$2 a month.

This is not the best way, surely, of realizing for the people the wealth that belongs to them; but how much better it is than our way of selling public lands, and thereby frittering away the values of the future which social growth develops. In this case the city is, as Dr. Dorsey describes it, a landlord, and his brief account shows how much better it is for all the people of a city to be a landlord than for some of them to be landlords and most of them to be tenants. Better than either would it be, however, if the city as a whole were, not the landlord of a piece of outlying land, however valuable, but the almoner for all its inhabitants of the growing values of its own site.

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Postal Subsidies and Postal Favors.

It is to be presumed that the postal department of the United States deals fairly with publications in the distribution of what our servants there are pleased to call a "subsidy," meaning the right of any periodical to pass through the mails on the same terms as other periodicals. But the fact remains that whereas the Twentieth Century had its "subsidy" withheld without explanation for five or six months after first publication, being required meanwhile to deposit large sums of money, the American City got its "subsidy" promptly. It is possibly "irrelevant, immaterial and impertinent," but one might beg to state that whereas B. O. Flower, the editor of the Twentieth Century, is a well known advocate of public ownership of public utilities, the editor of the American City,

Arthur H. Grant, won his distinction as editor of a publication which by its principal title implied that it stood for municipal ownership, but which actually stood for private monopoly, and was probably an organ of the monopoly interests.

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Progress Among Farmers.

A fact of much concern to the farming interests of the United States—the farmers who farm farmers as well as those who farm farms, but in different ways—is the adoption by the State Grange of Washington, at its session in Ellensburg last summer, and by unanimous vote, of a memorial to the voters of the State on the subject of taxation. Nothing yet done by any other farmers' organization has been so hopefully significant. This memorial advocates the adoption of a Constitutional amendment providing for—

1. An assessment, once in five years, of the "community-made" value of all lands within the State.
2. An assessment of all other "community-made" values in private ownership.
3. The collection of an annual rental or tax of 6 per cent on all future increases of "community-made" value.

Not the least significant feature of this farmers' memorial is its recognition of the essential difference between incomes due to what it happily names "community-made" values, and what may in contradistinction be appropriately called "individual-made" values. If this proposed amendment is adopted, and improvements are exempted from taxation, as seems to be contemplated, Washington will prosper as no State has ever prospered yet. Not only will the State grow in wealth, but so also will her people. The day will then have passed when a State's prosperity means inordinate wealth for a few at the top, a struggle for bare existence by the many at the bottom, and a banded and battered middle class between.

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Personal Property Taxation and Homes.

The Hearst papers have editorially announced their opposition to the New York movement for abolishing personal property taxation. Several objections are raised. For one thing, Mr. Hearst's editorial asserts that the abolition of personal property taxation "means that the city's taxes are all to be paid upon real estate," which "means that the expense of running the city is to be paid by those that pay rent or buy homes." But this is not what the abolition of personal property taxation does mean. The increased taxes that would fall upon valuable sites, occupied or vacant—vastly