

Chicago city council is known to consist for the most part of aldermen who represent the Chicago City Railway company and its coterie of Chicago capitalists, much more faithfully than they represent their constituents. They proclaim their opposition to municipal ownership. Shall they be trusted to promote municipal ownership?

"The committee is pledged to no traction settlement which does not provide for modern service, liberal compensation, a waiver of the 99-year act, and a municipal ownership option," continues the Journal. To whom is the committee so pledged? And what of it? "Compensation" is only another name for secretly taxing street car passengers in the interest of the very capitalistic interests that control the Chicago Street Railway company. "Waiver of the 99-year act"! What would that waiver be worth if the company chose to fight it in the courts at the end of the contract, twenty years hence, and were met with an opposition as timid or complacent as the official opposition that confronts it now? Under threats of litigation the people of twenty years hence could be bilked as easily as the Journal would have them bilked to-day. Is it replied that the company would not be so dishonorable? Any man or company dishonorable enough to claim rights under so corrupt a law as the 99-year act would be dishonorable enough to do anything else that the courts would allow.

"Municipal ownership option"! What kind of municipal ownership option? Look at the "tentative franchise" which the local transportation committee recommends. It does give such an option. But there is a proviso. In order to make the option effective the city council in office 19 years hence must serve notice of acceptance during a specified twelve months. Otherwise the option fails. And thereupon the company would acquire some indeterminate contract rights, stuffed full

of litigious possibilities with which it might pry out another 20-year franchise. Though the people were insistent upon accepting the option, they would be balked if a majority of that particular council in that particular twelvemonth were either honestly or corruptly of opinion then, as the local transportation committee is of opinion now, that "we are not yet ready for municipal ownership."

"An attempt to secure municipal ownership at once would drive the traction companies into falling back on the 99-year act," pursues the ingenuous Journal. But they have fallen back upon that already. Were the 99-year act out of the way, the traction problem in Chicago would cease to be a problem even to that timid official contingent who are fighting it with a feather.

But the Journal goes on: "You would have to pay the traction companies for the value of their unexpired franchises; the Mueller bill so provides." Yes, the Mueller bill so provides. But the Mueller bill also provides for condemnation proceedings, under which these franchises would be valued by juries, whose verdicts would be final. When they were so valued, it would be found that their value is small indeed. The 99-year franchise would be dear at a dollar, and the unexpired odds-and-ends of shorter franchises wouldn't be worth much when the freed streets were taken over.

In connection with the question of labor unionism an analogy is often drawn between "organized labor" and "organized capital," and the labor union is consequently described as a trust. This is either thoughtless or unfair. Whatever else may be said against labor organization it does not monopolize labor, and cannot so long as its admissions to membership are as free as they are now. Herein there is a great difference between labor organizations and employers' organiza-

tions. Mr. Edward A. Moffett, editor of the "Bricklayer and Mason," brought out the point before the Civic Federation last Fall. Referring to the general refusal of trades unions to accept the overtures of employers' associations to work only for associated employers, he said: "Until membership in employers' associations can be attained with the same ease that membership can in the trades union, this amounts to asking the trade unions to help create a monopoly." He proceeded to explain further the difference between employers' associations and labor unions, in this forceful manner:

An exclusive organization of employers aims at monopolizing the entire local business, and an employer from an outside locality finds it very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to be admitted to membership. Even in the case of the trade union that has no "open shops" whatever, a member of the national or international organization is admitted to the local union by merely depositing his traveling card, and a non-member, whose ability has been vouched for, may become a member and go to work upon the payment of a small initiation fee. I submit that there is no practical resemblance between the exclusive employers' association and the union shop.

Dun's Review is pleased to report that "labor organizations are accepting reductions in wages without controversy." They are like the deceased wife of the old German who, when asked if she was "reconciled to die," replied: "Mein Gott, she het to be!"

With the accumulating signs of business collapse is it any wonder that people are beginning to ask, with increasing emphasis, whether Bryan may not after all have been right about that money question?

JOHN Z. WHITE.

To most of our readers we are sure that the portrait of John Z. White, which accompanies this issue as a supplement, will be welcome. He is a man whose name is more familiar than his features to thousands of people whom The



JOHN Z. WHITE

Public reaches in the United States and Canada, and as far as Europe and Australia. For twenty years Mr. White has been a prominent leader in Chicago of the movement which Henry George originated, and echoes of his local reputation have gone abroad.

Until recently he made the propagation of his cause his play rather than his work. He even held aloof from the occupation that would have best enabled him to serve his cause and for which his intellectual qualities and acquirements gave him exceptional fitness. This was not lightly done. At one time he studied law with the intention of practicing. Its theories were in accord with his intellectual bent, and its principles and problems were attractive to his logical and philosophical cast of mind. But his first glimpse of the arena of actual practice repelled him.

It was not from the conflicts of practice that he shrank, for he is a born fighter, but from the pettifoggery and chicanery which, with varying shades of difference as to politeness of method, seemed to him to characterize the whole profession, from crude and vulgar police-court practitioners all the way up to oleaginous leaders in the first rank at the bar. So Mr. White abandoned the law while yet a student, and withdrew to a printing office, where he has ever since made his living as a journeyman compositor.

But he did not let his mind run down in the monotony of his mechanical vocation. His theoretical studies were continued, and the single tax agitation, into which he was willingly drawn, has afforded him ample opportunity for that clash of mind with mind, over practical affairs, which is necessary to prevent such studies from degenerating into idle and impracticable dreams. The qualities so developed in White have been the occasion of no little astonishment to men who know nothing of him except that he is a journeyman printer and a single tax agitator. One of these was Lyman J. Gage, late secretary of the treasury. Upon hearing White in an impromptu debate which called for ready application of the principles of philosophy to practical

problems in economics and politics, Mr. Gage remarked: "While journeymen printers can think as clearly and reason as logically on public questions as that, we need have no fear for the future of our country."

While Mr. White earned his living as a mechanic he spent his leisure in promoting the cause to which he is devoted, both by study and in public exposition and discussion. The resulting prominence to himself, and the political trend of the single tax movement, brought him into practical politics, and he was twice a candidate for Congress. In 1894 he polled 8,484 votes as the People's party candidate in a triangular contest; and in 1896, in the same Congressional district he polled 28,309 as the fusion candidate. Among the speakers in his support in 1894 were Father McGlynn and Henry George.

Mr. White has now abandoned his mechanical work to devote himself exclusively to the promotion of the Henry George movement, not in Chicago alone but throughout the country. He has done so at the instance of the Henry George Association of Chicago. This association is organized upon a peculiar plan. It combines the principle of democratic control with that of administrative responsibility. The president is elected by the members, and the laws are controlled by them. That is the democracy of it. But the president uses his own discretion in the selection and removal of subordinate executive officers and the prosecution of the work—which is the administrative responsibility of it. Frederick H. Monroe has been president since 1900, having been elected four times. He has organized an executive committee in which are leading men of Chicago of both political parties. He has built up a membership which includes nearly all the active single taxers of the city. He has organized and successfully promoted a variety of methods of association and agitation. He has brought the single tax movement into friendly relations with other political and economic movements of radical purposes or tendencies. Included among these are the socialists, with whom he has arranged occasional friendly debates. He has

also put it upon a friendly footing with more conservative movements. But in none of his really effective work has Mr. Monroe's success been more marked than in his utilization of John Z. White's abilities.

Mr. White is a persuasive as well as convincing speaker. He can swing oratorical clubs, when occasion demands it, and logical argument mathematically adjusted is his delight; but he can lead as well as drive, and when his suspicions of bad faith are not aroused he inclines to that course. He is not an orator as Ingersoll was nor as Cockran is. Among single tax orators he is in a different class from Crosby and Bigelow. His is the oratory of colloquial speech, much the same on his feet as in a chair. Yet he is distinctly one of the leading orators of the single tax movement. In this respect he is in a class by himself. If he lacks in the picturesque elements of the orator's art, he more than makes up for it in accuracy and strength. In the art of leading (driving when necessary) his hearers from what they know and believe in to what they do not know or do not believe in, he has few equals. Taking him altogether, his ideals and his powers, Mr. White is the kind of man that one could wish to see on the floor of Congress when minions of plutocracy are pulling at the pillars that support the democracy of our republic.

THE PANAMA FILIBUSTER.

Circumstances are strongly against President Roosevelt when he protests that he had nothing to do with bringing on the Panama revolution. Every fact thus far disclosed points to his complicity.

Why were American war ships ordered to the Isthmus before the revolt occurred?

Why did the American naval commander forbid the use by the Colombian authorities of the railroad for the purpose of putting down the revolt and asserting the acknowledged sovereignty of Colombia?

Why did the American naval commander advise the military representative of the Colombian government to withdraw from Panama?