

is used for business purposes and homes is made to bear enormous burdens of taxation, which increase rents and so bear heavily upon industry and upon the people, especially the rent payer. That which most retards the development of New York, city and causes crowding and congestion is the holding of unimproved property for increases in market value, and it is the system of valuation for purposes of taxation that enables owners to keep their valuable city lots cumbered with little dilapidated buildings, while the enterprise of others is augmenting the value of these holdings. There would be plenty of room for business houses and homes if one-tenth of the comparatively unimproved property of the city was built up; but it is more profitable in the long run to let property remain occupied only by shanties until demand for the space gives it value that the owners have not earned. And the system of taxation encourages this, for property is comparatively free from the burdens of taxation so long as it is not improved—the present basis of assessment being the money expended upon a property, and not what it could earn if improved and put to the uses for which its location fits it. If the vacant lot or the dilapidated old dwelling had to pay the same tax as the adjoining apartment house, the owner would lose no time in putting up an apartment house, and there would be more room for the people and lower rents. New York has miles of streets that are filled with little time-worn and disease-breeding tenements and small stores, when the space is sorely needed for modern buildings; but the owners are waiting to get a bigger unearned profit, knowing that the demand for their property increases every day, and the only way to force them to build or to sell is to tax them for the unearned increment—the increase in value which the development of the city is giving the property.

That this is true of New York everyone familiar with that city knows. But in varying degree it is also true of every other city and every town in the land.

It is true also of the open country. Both mining rights and farming land in this country are held out of use, to the obstruction of business and the injury of workingmen, to an extent that few people dream of. Take for instance this one case which we quote from the San Francisco Star:

The firm of Miller & Lux own 14,530,000 acres of land, nearly all of it unimproved and used for grazing. This fact accounts for the power they

have shown in the local labor disputes. They own the land on which the cattle for this city's use must be raised. They are thus in a position to say who shall and who shall not be allowed to buy meat in the market. The vast area held by this firm is not conceivable to one who has not traveled through the interior of the state. It is equal to the area of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut together. It is half the size of New York, and three times the size of New Jersey. It is about the size of West Virginia and an eighth the entire area of California. It is as large as Greece, four times the size of Alsace and Lorraine, but little smaller than Ireland, and one-third the size of England and Wales together.

A tax on land values, accompanied by exemption of improvements and commodities, would soon put an end to monopolies like that, as well as to the vacant lot industry of our cities and towns.

Looking back now at the fast subsiding hysteria of the middle of last month, it is difficult to realize its dynamic force. A great tidal wave of insane feeling, it engulfed for the time almost all rational thought. Even the sober and thoughtful Springfield Republican was swept off its feet. But it is gratifying to recall that now and then a clergyman, and here and there a newspaper, stood morally erect while the wave surged against them and finally spent its force. We have already named the Chicago Evening Post, the Chicago Record-Herald and the Chicago Chronicle in this connection. With the Post in the lead, they made an editorial record of which their managers may well be proud. In New York, the Evening Post of that city was almost if not quite the only paper to maintain a dignified balance. Of course the Johnstown Democrat was among the sturdy ones. We say "of course," because that paper has acquired a deserved reputation for measuring all questions by invariable moral standards. Philadelphia was well represented on the sober side by the North American daily and the City and State weekly. It would be impossible, however, to give credit

in all cases where credit is due in this matter.

But the G. A. R. must not be overlooked. This organization was as a rule as crazy as the slaughter house preachers whose pulpits resounded with cries for lynching; but there was at least one splendid exception—Watson post, No. 420, G. A. R., department of Illinois. The resolutions adopted unanimously by that body were drafted by the man who commanded the guard at the scaffold when Surratt, Atzerodt, Harold and Payne were hanged for Lincoln's murder. Instead of proposing to put down anarchy with anarchy, these resolutions, urged upon everybody—that thoughtfulness and calm dignity that ought, always and under all circumstances, to characterize the citizens of a republic that proudly boasts of setting an example of good government to all the world;

and condemned—

as anarchical, the conduct of policemen, who should be the guardians of law, in making domiciliary visits, and in depriving persons of their liberty, without due process of law;

as well as—

the mob spirit that has been exhibited against persons who have been intemperate in their expressions, and who are rather objects of pity than subjects for lawless violence.

These resolutions then proceed with this most excellent civic advice:

Men judge governments more by their fruits, their results, than by their forms; hence we earnestly urge upon every man, comrade or citizen, who truly loves his country, the full performance of his public duty in comprehending and in advocating all measures calculated to promote the welfare, not of a class, not of a few, but of the majority. No possible legislation can prevent the sword of Damocles from hanging over the head of any man who represents a state wherein a considerable number of citizens feel themselves wronged by law, or in its execution, no matter whether that person be called a czar, an emperor, a king or a president. There is more danger in our indifference to public duty than there is in the most rabid rantings of the anarchists of even the Kropotkin school.

Probably no one ever heard Kropotkin rant, but the deference to public prejudice shown in this characterization of the great scientist may be