

State. This prophecy will be interesting to remember as the time for judicial nominations in Ohio approaches.

* *

Street Improvements.

The city of Meriden, Conn., has a sensible superintendent of streets. His name is W. H. Burke. Mr. Burke proposes to pave streets at the expense of the people who are enriched by the improvement. His plan is simple and feasible. According to the Meriden Morning Record, he is a firm believer in equal rights to all and special privileges to none. "Superintendent Burke says," continues the Record, that "the building of streets is a public-serving function of the government and it is a part of the government's business to do equally for each man in proportion to the benefits that man receives from the government. . . . Land values are higher in the centers of population, where the most people are, and gradually grow lower as the outskirts of the city are reached. Taking the total land value of the city at \$6,000,000 as a basis for calculation, and taxing it 5 per cent., \$300,000 is raised, the amount suggested as necessary to bond the city for the proposed project. Superintendent Burke states, and with reason, that if the city were bonded for that amount the chief streets would be permanently paved, but the money would not hold out long enough to warrant the side streets and more remote residential portions of the city being paved. By this system all taxpayers would be obliged to help certain sections and would derive no immediate benefits in their own. But according to Superintendent Burke's scheme each street in the city would be paved with such material as its land value permitted. The appraisal of North Colony is \$996,119. If that were taxed at 5 per cent. that street could be paved with asphalt. Pratt street probably could not afford to pay for asphalt. Its land value is \$323,888. This would guarantee perhaps brick or block paving, the property warranting such. If bonding were adopted Pratt street or a portion of it might be asphalted, and taxpayers in all parts of the city would be obliged to help pay for it, though perhaps not ever having occasion to go on the thoroughfare. If bonding were adopted a street like South Fourth, for illustration, would undoubtedly be given the go-by. This street is listed with land values at but \$12,-314. Being a short street, the money derived here would probably pay for macadam. Take an outside street, such as Bartlett street, where there are no sidewalks, as a still further illustra-

tion. Under the bonding system nobody presumes any attention would be given this street, but under Superintendent Burke's plan refuse crushed stone from Lane's quarry could at least be used, and the residents there would have all they were entitled to for the tax levied upon them. The street is listed at \$6,914 in land values, and the people living there would have a first-class highway for little money. According to the superintendent's plan, when a majority of the property owners got together and asked for their particular street to be attended to the work would be done. If the owners wanted better pavement than the land assessment would call for it would be up to them to lay a larger assessment. As the land values depreciated on a long street, such as North Colony, two styles of paving could be employed, asphalt to Britannia and another kind to the town line. If it was decided to pay for the work in less than ten years, a larger tax would be the result. By laying a 1 per cent. tax the entire city could have its streets in apple-pie order and paid for in five years' time. If one-fourth of 1 per cent. additional were decided upon, the taxpayers would have twenty years in which to settle." We have quoted at length and used local street names, because the situation is typical. Change the names, and the Record's description for Meriden will fit any other town or city in the country. Mr. Burke's plan is indeed the true plan for street improvement. To bond or levy general taxes is to benefit the real estate owner at the expense of the real taxpayer; to lay special assessments regardless of relative values, or practically so, as is usually done, is to burden the small home owner for the benefit of the rich real estate owner. But to tax abutting owners in proportion to the value of their holdings is to give value for value.

* * *

THE SCHOOL-LAND LEASES OF CHICAGO.

The public school system of Chicago would be the best endowed in the world (p. 874) if its magnificent estate had not been wasted in the past by the trustees. For, Congress having given to the State of Illinois in the '30's, for educational purposes, every sixteenth section of public land, Illinois gave to the city of Chicago, for the same purposes, section No. 16 in the town of Chicago. This section is now worth an almost fabulous sum. It is in area one mile square, extending from State street on the east to Halsted on the west and from Madison on the north to Twelfth