

What it probably does signify is that if the Democrats nominate a candidate whom the Republican progressives could not accept, the two principal parties will be split into three. And would the Democratic candidate consequently slip in between the fighting Republicans? This is what Mr. Clark's supporters may expect, but it is an expectation in which they are likely to be sadly disappointed if they get to the experiment. Nearly all progressive Republicans regard Mr. Clark as a life-long Democratic-party war-horse, and this makes him repugnant to Republican voters. His Progressivism is not apparent to them. The same feeling prevails largely among Democratic progressives, both of the old-time and of the recent-convert variety. With a large progressive Republican party in the field, therefore, the whole progressive Republican vote and most of the progressive Democratic vote would go to the third party. In those circumstances the chances are great that with Speaker Clark as the Democratic candidate, the election campaign would be a Taft-Roosevelt primary campaign over again before the summer was fairly gone; and that when the votes were counted, there wouldn't be any Democratic party left—at any rate nothing more than a remnant like that of the Whigs in the early fifties. If Governor Wilson were nominated, the situation might be different. In that event the contest would more likely be dual instead of triangular. It is inconceivable that the progressive Republicans would nominate any one against Wilson; for the progressive Republican vote would be almost united for Wilson, if he were the Democratic nominee. He would probably get all of this vote that either Roosevelt or La Follette could, and he would get a large proportion of the Democratic vote besides. But Governor Wilson might be deserted by Democrats, both progressives and those of the neutral or facing-both-ways variety, in sufficient numbers to turn the scale in favor of Taft. If, however, the Democrats nominate Bryan, not only can there be no formidable third party, but there would be no formidable Democratic defection. Political lines would then be sharply drawn between the reactionary Republican party on one side and the progressive Democratic party on the other, and every voter would go to his own place at the election—Reactionaries of both parties to Taft, Progressives of both parties to Bryan. The Democratic party, thus redeemed from the thralldom of the Interests, would thereupon become the party of progress.



Whoever has had opportunity to consider recent

tendencies of public opinion in both parties regarding Presidential candidates, must have been impressed with the current that has set in toward Bryan since the primary campaigning of Roosevelt and Taft. Not only has it become increasingly evident that none of the other Democratic candidates is in all respects equipped as he for titular as well as actual leadership at the present political crisis, but there are overwhelming manifestations on all hands among the rank and file, of a disposition to rally to his unsought, uncoveted and unattempted candidacy.



Charities and Taxation.

One of the proposals of the Charities and Correction Conference on "standards of living and labor," is somewhat wonderfully, not to say fearfully, made. Recognizing, though apparently in a dim and narrow way, that private monopoly of land values is injurious to the poor, this proposal is for the transfer of a greater share of taxes "from dwellings to land held for speculative purposes." The minority proposal, submitted by Benjamin C. Marsh and Dr. Alice Hamilton, which was defeated, went to the vital point more directly and clearly. It recommended "the gradual untaxing of building and the laying of the tax burden upon the land values." Since the latter form of assault upon the same fundamental wrong was rejected in favor of the other, the proponents of the other ought to explain their *modus operandi* of distinguishing land "held for speculative purposes." If there is any effective way except the taxation of all land *ad valorem*, regardless of the purposes for which it is held, we should like to know it. The only other one we can think of is the confession of the party in interest as to his intentions! But the statement of the majority report is good enough for an abstraction; and for practical purposes with reference to the supporters of charities it may be better than if it were more specific. When you are dealing with the type of privileged person that Tolstoy alluded to in his remark that "the rich are willing to do anything for the poor except get off their backs," to be over-specific is to be under-prudent.



Tax Reform in Missouri.

A report by the committee on municipal finance and taxation of the Civic League of St. Louis, is of general interest and no little value, as indicative of an awakening tendency in professional and business circles with reference to public revenues.