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The national conference of Charities and Corrections wants an investigation into the tramp problem. The tramp problem is too easy to need investigation. It is explained by the millionaire microbe. Idle luxury and idle misery always come and go together. They belong together. The millionaire hobo and the ragged hobo are products of the same cause. They are manifestations of the same social disease. They made their appearance at about the same time. Each is a parasite upon productive industry. Each is supported by the labor of the industrious. And the ragged hobo is the less virulent manifestation of the disease: he doesn't cost so much to keep.

There were good strong men in the Virginia constitutional convention, but good as they were they were not strong enough to prevent the majority from causing the convention to commit the grossest kind of breach of trust. It has overridden the limits of its authority, and while professing to be Democratic has cast democratic principles to the winds. Though required by the law that called it into being to submit its proposed constitution to popular vote, it has decided to proclaim it as the fundamental law of the state without submission. That is usurpation of power, and usurpation of power is the most malignant form of anarchy.

When a Federal judge sitting in Chicago enforced a city ordinance recently against cab drivers and in favor of a cab-driving trust based upon the concessions of a railway monopoly,

the city counsel thought it "peculiar that the enforcement of a city ordinance should be sought by injunction in the Federal court." It would have been peculiar before the passage of the Fourteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States for the protection of Negroes in the South. More, it would have been impossible. And why an amendment solely for the local protection of Negroes is ineffective for that purpose, but highly effective for the purpose of giving the Federal courts jurisdiction over pretty much every other local question, we do not pretend to explain. We only note the remarkable fact and hope the corporation counsel of Chicago will keep on wondering.

James J. Hill has made an epigram containing more good meat than epigrams very often do. He was speaking at a meeting of the Illinois Manufacturers' association, held in Chicago on the 3d, and in advocating desert irrigation, he said: "Land without population is a wilderness, and population without land is a mob." It was a keen thrust into the very heart of the social question, much keener and deeper than he suspected. For he thought only of the prairie and the desert, while what he said is quite as true of centers of population, which are even now inhabited and in some degree dominated by great mobs. Mr. Hill gave the reason for this: "Population without land is a mob." The population of our cities is without land, to the extent of 75 and 80 and even 90 per cent. or more. Yet these same cities have within their limits more idle land than any other kind. Here again Mr. Hill strikes true; for this idle land, these vacant city lots, this land without population, though congested populations surge about it, is

indeed a wilderness. "Land without population is a wilderness; population without land is a mob."

The anti-anarchy bill, as it has passed the lower House of Congress, would be a pretty dangerous law if it were enacted. Under one section, for instance, nobody could justify the execution of Louis XVI. or Charles I., without risking the possibilities of a heavy fine and imprisonment for from 1 to 20 years. For if he did so "with intent to cause"—and of this a Federal jury would be the judge—the murder of the president, the vice president, or the head of any foreign government, then he would be guilty of one of the "anarchy" crimes. What such a jury, selected by a marshal appointed from Washington, would do in time of bitter political excitement, it is not hard to guess. The editor of an opposition paper in such times would be wise to write with great respect of Louis XVI. and Charles I. He would better be discreet even about his allusions to Nero and Caesar, for they also were at the head of "a civilized government." It was openly said upon the floor of the House that this law was not intended to be enforced, which speaks well for the sense of humor of those who voted for it; but it is to be hoped that the more serious-minded Senate will conclude that a law which is not to be enforced had better not be enacted.

An astounding proposition, considering its source, was made last week by the Chicago Chronicle. It is astounding because proposed by a professedly Democratic newspaper; but inasmuch as this newspaper is controlled by one of the financial barons of Chicago, who wears the Democratic label but votes the Republican ticket, the matter is after all not so very surprising. It is nothing

less than a suggestion that the city of Chicago sell its waterworks to a private corporation. The suggestion is offered nominally with a view of relieving the finances of the city, which cannot meet its debts nor even its current expenses. Here is the argument:

If a wise man owed more money than he could pay from his cash in sight and had salable property worth twice the amount of his debts he would sell enough property to pay what he owed and start anew with clean books. He would still have valuable assets to sustain his credit. What would be business common sense for an individual would be business common sense for a municipal corporation. The same commercial rules should govern the city that would be best for one of its citizens.

The Chronicle then proposes the sale of the city waterworks to a private corporation, and naively expresses the opinion that private capital could be induced to invest in that city asset.

The suggestion may be on the whole a good one, from the business point of view, but it is certainly open to criticism in one important particular. Though a wise business man in the predicament described, would doubtless turn some of his salable property into cash, he would not sell income-producing property so long as he could find a market for unprofitable holdings. Why should not this example of the wise business man be followed by a municipal corporation if it is to imitate him at all? Of course it should be. Then the property for the city of Chicago to sell is not the waterworks, which yield a net annual revenue of \$3,000,000. It is the public parks, which not only yield no revenue but are the cause of heavy annual expenditures. They would be quite as salable as the waterworks. Purchasers might come forward willing to take and use them as parks, charging a small gate fee; but if not, they would at any rate go off like hot cakes if cut up into building lots. Is it not the part of business sense, then, to sell the parks, which are expensive and yield no in-

come, before parting with the waterworks, which pay for themselves and return a profit? And does not the same reasoning apply to the public schools? Here is an unprofitable asset which a wise man would unload. Why should not the city do the same? If the city is to be governed by business rules, let it apply them unflinchingly.

The absurd notion of selling off the waterworks is another product of the fallacious catch phrase that "municipal government is business not politics." Though municipal administration is properly business and not politics, municipal government is politics and not business. Like all other government, it is politics above everything else—politics in the broad sociological sense, and not in the narrow partisan sense. It is not the part of municipal government to gain a profit in order to make a living. That is a business function, but it is not a municipal function. Municipal government gets its living, as do all other forms of government, not from business enterprise and profit, but from taxation. If it cannot pay its debts and meet current expenses, the reason must be either that its expenses are exceeding its just income from taxation, or that it is neglecting to collect its income. The latter is of course the true reason. In this predicament the first thing for the city of Chicago to do is not to sell off public property; it is to collect its income more sharply. If just taxes were paid in Chicago it could soon rid itself of debt and have an abundant income for current expenditures. Then let it "go for" the tax dodgers. That would be a great note if the tax-dodging plutocrats could first cripple the city's finances, and then use its condition as an excuse for enabling them to buy up the waterworks, and possibly—why not?—the parks, the public schools and the city hall.

No political observer can have failed to see the gradual but strenu-

ous drawing apart in Republican politics of President Roosevelt and Mr. Hanna. The former wishes, naturally enough, to be elected to the office he now holds by accident, and the latter has no notion of abandoning those presidential ambitions of his which were fostered almost to the budding point under the McKinley regime. Both have been discreet, however, and not until within the past few days have the inspired friends of either ventured to disclose with any candor the exasperating situation.

The Republican convention of Ohio was so lavishly unreserved in its devotion to Hanna, that Roosevelt's friends have thought it best to suffer in silence no longer. So Congressman Burton, of Cleveland, has gone into training against Hanna for the senatorship, and has interested President Roosevelt in breaking into Hanna's civil service reserves. These reserves were early set aside for Mr. Hanna by the late President McKinley, and so scandalous were the subsequent appointments to Federal office in Cleveland that the Federal building has acquired the nickname of "Hanna's retreat." Whenever a Hanna politician has lost his job in the city or county Hanna has promptly landed him at a Federal desk, no other qualification being required than fidelity to Hanna. Yet no account was taken of this civil service scandal by the truly good Republicans like Mr. Burton, until Mr. Hanna's disgraceful appointees were detected in "stacking the cards" against the administration.

That was indeed scandalous, and Mr. Burton complained directly to President Roosevelt, who is reported to have decided to investigate, in the very face of Hanna's protests. "The affair may be smoothed over," says the inspired report; but smoothing over is really out of the question. Though this particular squabble over "Hanna's retreat" may be quieted down, and though in itself it is a small affair,