

and pipes for quick changes of temperature. Above the grated ceilings electric lights are so arranged as to light the rooms instantly or else throw them into complete darkness. The temperature of the rooms can be lowered or increased in a few minutes, which means a real "sweating" or a "freeze out" for the unfortunates made to submit to the process.

Fortunately a Mayor with a reputation for justice, decency and humanity has been installed in the New York City hall since the above paragraph was printed. It is to be hoped that some humanitarian uses will be found for those hellish basement rooms, before mobs rise and subject policemen to their own tortures.

* * *

Faking Stupidities in Regard to Mr. Bryan.

That Daniel Kiefer was right when he asserted to the Cincinnati Times-Star his disbelief in the authenticity of an announcement of Mr. Bryan's candidacy for the Presidency in 1912 (p. 75), purporting to come from Richard L. Metcalfe, associate editor of *The Commoner*, is shown by the unequivocal denial of the announcement which appears in *The Commoner* of January 28. Mr. Metcalfe quotes the candidacy announcement as it appeared in "*The Cincinnati Enquirer* and other newspapers," and says: "There is no truth whatever in this statement. It is a raw, unadulterated fake."

* * *

DEMOCRACY IS NOT ON TRIAL.

There is a current phrase that "democracy is on trial" in this country, but it is a fallacy based upon a misconception. Democracy is not on trial, has not been on trial, and will not be on trial until it is tried.

Democracy has never been tried, but every other form of social organization has been tried, and all have failed.

Monarchy has been tried and has developed but one virtue—efficiency. Its vices neutralize that.

Absolutism has been tried and its crimes and injustices cry to heaven.

Aristocracy has been tried and its intolerable tyrannies have been the cause always of its undoing.

Plutocracy is now being tried in America; its net result in political, commercial and social rotteness is everywhere in evidence.

There is but one form of social organization left to try, and that is democracy. The universal trend is toward it now, and there is nothing so irresistible as a tendency. Fiscal necessity, economic pressure, and the logic of political and social events seem to be among the main factors

in our social regeneration. Add to them the steadily awakening and expanding conscience of mankind, and we have today an aggregate of social forces, superb in their power and unmistakable in their trend toward democracy.

HENRY H. HARDINGE.

* * *

"\$2.25."

Real estate men in San Francisco do not agree as to when the Panama canal will be completed, but they do agree that when it is completed land values on that little wind-swept peninsula will take a mighty jump forwards.

* *

Ask a real estate dealer why improvements being made thousands of miles distant should benefit San Francisco landlords, and he will inform you that he is a Business Man and not a theorist.

Not long ago one of the theorists wished to purchase a lot adjoining his own, with the intention of building on it and generally improving the land. The lot was one of those we all have seen in the suburbs of cities, which is worth more to the person owning the adjoining lot than to anyone else. The theorist made the Business Man a fair offer which was flatly declined, and then the following conversation occurred:

"But you will have to hold this lot several years before it will be worth as much as I am willing to give; and in the meantime you will have to pay taxes on it."

"Well, you know how it is; taxes don't amount to much on unimproved land. Last year we paid only \$2.25; so we can easily hold the lot until the Panama canal is finished, when it will be worth double what you are willing to pay for it now."

* *

"Two dollars and twenty-five cents"!

"Two dollars and twenty-five cents" tells a story of "fenced-up" opportunities.

It explains the hidden power of landlords to prevent carpenters from building houses which people need. It explains why dwellings are built so close together in the suburbs of San Francisco, while well within the city limits are thousands of acres which no one is using and which no one will use for years to come. It explains why farmers are forced to till land a hundred miles from a market, thus making them the prey of express and transportation companies.

"Two dollars and twenty-five cents" also explains why young men say good-bye to their sweet-