

polished selfishness with which democracy struggles now. The death of this man at his age calls for no tears of grief. He passes out of life normally, after doing a life's work so well that it will be a wholesome influence with many a generation yet to come.

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The democracy of Mark Twain was of the kind for which *The Public* stands. Like his sister who went before him, and like her distinguished son, the late Samuel E. Moffett (both of whom were devoted to the truth that Henry George taught), Mr. Clemens found for his democracy a lodgment in that gospel. One of the testimonials to its work which *The Public* cherishes is a letter from him in which he declares his faith. "The Ethics of Democracy," a unified collection of Public editorials, had been sent to Mr. Clemens because it contained quotations from his pen, and in acknowledgment he wrote from Florence:

Villa di Quarto, Firenze, Jan. 7, 1904.

Dear Mr. Post:

I thank you very much for this book, which I prize for its lucidity, its sanity & its moderation, & because I believe its gospel.

Very truly yours,

S. L. CLEMENS.

"Because I believe its gospel." To all others who believe the same gospel we are confident that this assurance of Mark Twain's sympathy will add to their appreciation of the democratic strain that runs through nearly all his writings.

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### Land Monopoly in California.

An extraordinary disclosure of land monopoly in California was made by the Los Angeles Examiner in its issue of March 27th last. Only thirty-five owners, it appears, hold one-seventh of all the area of that great State. Their holdings range from 20,000 acres to 14,500,000 each. Holdings of 100,000, 200,000 and 400,000 acres appear in the list between those extremes. This disclosure is only a sample of the land monopoly that prevails, not only in California but throughout the West and also in the East. Will the contented apologist for things as they are, kindly reflect upon this condition? Let him ask himself what his disinterested posterity will think of him for silently permitting their inheritance to slip away from them before they are born. Let him ask himself, too, what they ought to think of him for this.

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### Migration of British Trespassers.

Migration of workingmen from England to America is accounted for by the Tory papers over

there as an exodus from free trade conditions, and by radical papers as an effort to escape the blight of landlordism. To the emigrants it won't make any difference which, as they will soon discover. If by "free trade" conditions hard times for workers is meant, they will find that American protection is worse on that score than British free trade. As to landlordism—well, we don't know it here by that name, but we've got the thing itself. With one-seventh of the land of California having only 35 owners and eight families owning one-twentieth of the total assessed land values of Manhattan Island, we of this country could brag of landlordism if we liked.

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### Socialistic Reform in Milwaukee.

When the Socialists came into power in Milwaukee (p. 362) they were importuned to retain in office the health commissioner of the old regime, a doctor who seems to have been "solid with the good people." If they removed this man, then woe unto them! But the new mayor investigated. What had this health commissioner done to give him his "goo-goo" popularity? It turned out that he simply "hadn't done." "While making a great show of activity in some directions," as the Socialist investigators reported, "he had done almost nothing for the working people"—hadn't "given any attention to sanitary conditions in the factories and workshops," and "had allowed frightful conditions to continue in the slums." He was therefore summarily dismissed, as, upon this report, he ought to have been.

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### A Useless Third Party.

An unsophisticated Republican of Georgia advises the corporations of the United States to organize a political party of their own. What's the matter with the political party they occupy now? Is their lease running out?

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### Improvement in Rooseveltocracy.

Roosevelt's lecture on "Citizenship in a Republic," at the Sorbonne, Paris, last week showed signs of improvement in "Rooseveltocracy." He seems to have learned, for instance, that all socialism is not bad. As there are good trusts and bad trusts, so there is, as he now discovers, good as well as bad socialism. The good socialism is, to be sure, *his* socialism; but so are the good trusts *his* trusts. He has learned also that the way in which wealth is earned is at least as important in estimating its character as the way in which it is spent. But Rooseveltocracy is as

bloody-minded as ever. The scarlet trail of war meanders through this lecture. War, however, is no longer a good thing in itself. It is the justice of it that makes it good. Which would indicate that Mr. Roosevelt's bellicose temperament has become somewhat morally modified, were it not that he evidently still considers it a crime to doubt the justice of his own side in any war. Although Mr. Roosevelt mentioned no names, he clearly does not yet approve that "other cheek" doctrine of the One they called the Nazarene. Let us not forget, either, that in this lecture Mr. Roosevelt has now placed Abraham Lincoln so as to admit of worshipping at his shrine while flying in the face of his teachings. Lincoln's teachings usually it seems were a "mixture of idealism and sound common sense." Insofar as they were Rooseveltian they are "sound common sense;" otherwise they belong in the category of idealism, which being interpreted is molly-coddle.

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In his dogmatic utterances about the sacredness of property, Mr. Roosevelt still neglects to discriminate between property rights that may be one man's without automatically and perennially robbing other men, and those that have that peculiarity. To him all property looks alike. In Abraham Lincoln's day this indiscriminating vision might well have led him to say to the Negro, "Property, obey your owners!" And yet one may really discern in that Paris lecture a sign of clearing vision regarding the sacredness of property. We refer to this: "Ordinarily and in the great majority of cases, human rights and property rights are fundamentally and in the long run identical; but *when it clearly appears that there is a real conflict between them, human rights must have the upper hand.*" That is sound doctrine, no matter what tanglewood logic Mr. Roosevelt went through to find it out.

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#### Is It Aldrich & Taft, or Aldrich & Co.?

Senator Aldrich is reported from Washington to have gone into political partnership with President Taft, to put Mr. Taft's policies safely through Congress. Mr. Taft furnishes policies as capital for the firm, and Mr. Aldrich furnishes the experience, etc., necessary to put them through. Among the live assets of the firm is a railway bill of which Senator Dolliver (Republican) said on the floor of the Senate on the 25th that it would "put the transportation systems of the country into the hands of two managers of great industrial organizations." Senator Root replied with plausi-

bility that he had seen no evidence of any eagerness of the railroads for the proposed law, but this may be because their interests are in such safe hands.

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#### An Echo of the Des Moines Election.

In describing the recent municipal election in Des Moines (p. 318), the second under the "Des Moines plan," one of The Public's trusted and valued editorial advisers and contributors, a citizen of Des Moines who was efficient in bringing about the adoption of the Commission plan in that city, made this comment upon a re-elected commissioner, a man of national reputation:

John MacVickar, a former municipal ownership Mayor, of whom much was expected two years ago, but who completely reversed himself after he was elected commissioner, with Schramm, his co-adjutor or "me too," was re-elected by a large majority.

To that comment Mr. MacVickar promptly made this response:

Having learned to accept with more than ordinary consideration what is published in your journal, I am anxious to correct a statement made by your talented Des Moines correspondent. She does me the honor to mention my name and the injustice to charge that I have completely reversed myself on my former position which favored municipal ownership. I favor municipal ownership of public utilities today as earnestly as I have ever favored it, but experience has taught me that a municipality must first have the powers and second the ways and means.

Your correspondent also does injustice to the other members of the Des Moines Council, for there is no member who is justly entitled to the charge made, that of being a "corporation candidate."

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The final paragraph of Mr. MacVickar's letter alludes to a mention by our correspondent of two Councilmen, Mr. Ash and Mr. Roe, of whom she says that they "were also believed to be corporation candidates." That this belief did and does prevail among advocates of municipal ownership in Des Moines, we know from supplementary information. Whether it is well founded will be evident, one way or the other, when the public utility corporations of Des Moines come into collision with the municipal ownership mayor, Mr. Hanna. Should it then appear that the belief regarding them which our Des Moines correspondent reports is unjust, both she and The Public will be swift to set them right.

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So also as to Mr. MacVickar, who opposes municipal ownership efforts in Des Moines upon the plea that "a municipality must first have the powers, and second the ways and means." This is not necessarily a false plea. It may be a per-