

assessed the same for taxation at 60 per cent., or \$1,074,000. This was by unanimous vote of the board, the minority which at first objected to the mayor's policy having now joined the majority in supporting it. Unless prevented by the courts, Mayor Johnson expects the increase in the valuations of the properties of the two street car companies and the lighting companies to amount to \$22,000,000, which would produce a decrease in the tax rate of the city from \$3 per \$100 to \$2.55. Should the valuations of the steam roads be fairly increased the rate would fall to \$2.00.

As will be remembered, the county auditors refused to assess the steam railroads on more than 12 or 15 per cent. of true value, though farms and homes are assessed at 60 per cent.; but the state board of equalization is yet to pass upon that matter, and two of the four state officers composing this board are candidates for reelection at the coming election, which may make them less deferential to railroad sentiment than to public sentiment. The board has agreed to give Mayor Johnson a hearing. He will be accompanied by Prof. Bemis, as an expert; and the mayors of several other cities have agreed to appear and support him. This question is now attracting more attention in Ohio than any other, and is almost certain to be the only live issue in the campaign—the question, that is, of whether steam railroads shall be taxed on only 10 or 12 per cent. of the true value of their property, or on 60 per cent., the same as farmers and home owners.

The new chief of police of Chicago, Mr. O'Neill, has given, since his accession to that office, several indications of his special fitness for the place. He seems to realize that Chicago is not Moscow and that he is not a censor, something which chiefs of police are usually slow to learn. Some of them never learn it. Mr. O'Neill's most notable act is his refusal to suppress a socialist street meeting near Newberry library. These meet-

ings are orderly gatherings to which no objection had been raised except by habitues of the library, who complained that the talking upon the street disturbed their thoughts. It is suspected, however, that they were less concerned about their own continuity of thought than with a desire to interfere with free speech. At any rate the chief of police decided in favor of free speech, and for that he should be applauded, not only by the socialists whose rights he has respected, but by every one who believes in protecting the rights of citizens regardless of diversity of opinion. Every city ought to maintain at convenient points open air forums for public meetings such as the socialists are holding in Chicago. But so long as this is not done, street meetings which do not interfere with traffic should be encouraged, not suppressed. What is said at these meetings makes no difference, with respect to the right to hold them. Public security is always conserved and public opinion kept wholesome by free speech. Even dangerous sentiments are less dangerous when they may be freely expressed.

A new term has been contributed by Dr. Lyman Abbot to the discussion of social and industrial subjects. It is "medicine-man"—not a new term absolutely, but new in this application. In explaining the term, which he introduces in his serial essays in the Outlook on the rights of man, Mr. Abbot says:

The fourth leader who adds to our perils I call the "medicine-man." I will not call him "quack," because this would involve too great obloquy; nor "professional reformer," because this pays to him too great deference. I call him medicine-man because he thinks there is one medicine which will cure all the ills to which humanity is subject. He is generally morally honest, but intellectually narrow; he is not a hypocrite, but he is apt to be a pharisee, with a strong sense of "I am holier than thou" pervading his dogmatic utterances. He imagines that universal suffrage will cure all political evils; or free silver all commercial and financial evils; or a single tax on land all industrial evils; or woman suffrage or

prohibition, or the two combined, all moral evils. I do not here consider the value of prohibition, or woman suffrage, or the single tax on land, or free silver, or universal suffrage; but he who imagines that all evils are due to one social or political cause, and can be cured by one social or political reform, has studied human nature and human history to little purpose. And, unfortunately, there are many good men in America who cannot be influenced by the demagogue—their moral sense resents his appeals to popular prejudices; nor led by the boss—they are too independent; nor purchased by the plutocrat—they are too honest—who are swayed by the medicine-man because he appeals to their conscience, and their conscience is not very intelligent.

If an unintelligent conscience were especially susceptible to hypnotism of the sort Dr. Abbot describes, he himself must long ago have fallen a victim to some "medicine-man." No one with a very intelligent conscience could have written what we quote from him above. A more absurdly unintelligent interpretation of the idea of so-called panaceas for social ills it would be hard to find elsewhere than in the comic papers. Writing on a philosophical subject, not as a penny-a-line paragrapher but as a philosopher, Dr. Abbot seizes upon a colloquialism and treats it as if it were the complete statement of a philosophical proposition! No social reformer ever claimed for his reform a cure-all quality in the sense in which Dr. Abbot interprets this colloquial expression. What such reformers do claim in that particular is that their respective reforms are fundamental. Universal suffragists have never meant to assert that universal suffrage would cure all political evils, but that political evils cannot be cured without universal suffrage. Prohibitionists do not maintain that prohibition will cure all moral evils, but that drunkenness is a root of moral evil. Woman suffragists make no such absurd contention as Dr. Abbot, with childish literalness, attributes to their colloquial phrases; their contention in that regard is that woman suffrage is indispensable to wholesome political development. Free sil-

ver men have never held up free silver as the cure for all financial and commercial evils; their point is that silver coinage is necessary to prevent scarcity of money, and that scarcity of money is a prime cause of financial and commercial evils. Single taxers have never pretended that a single tax on land will cure all industrial evils. What they claim is that land monopoly is the fundamental cause of industrial evils, the cause that would produce them though all other causes were removed; and that an ad valorem tax on land exclusively is the easiest method of undermining and finally destroying land monopoly. It happens that there is a recognized exponent of the single tax idea, to whose writings reference may be made for authoritative interpretation. In the eighteenth chapter of his "Social Problems," doubtless intending to anticipate just such superficial criticism as Dr. Abbot's, Henry George says:

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that in the recognition of the equal and unalienable right of each human being to the natural elements from which life must be supported and wants satisfied, lies the solution of all social problems. I fully recognize the fact that even after we do this, much will remain to do. We might recognize the equal right to land, and yet tyranny and spoliation be continued. But whatever else we do, so long as we fail to recognize the equal right to the elements of nature, nothing will avail to remedy that unnatural inequality in the distribution of wealth which is fraught with so much evil and danger. Reform as we may, until we make this fundamental reform our material progress can but tend to differentiate our people into the monstrously rich and the frightfully poor.

If Dr. Abbot does not see the truth of that, it is he, and not the "medicine-man," as he would classify George, who "has studied human nature and human history to little purpose."

There is in this country a society known as the "Daughters of the Revolution." The membership consists of female descendants of revolutionary patriots. It is a caddish sort of so-

ciety. Instead of seeking to perpetuate the principles and to intensify the love for human liberty and equality for which their "ragamuffin" ancestors suffered and died, instead of trying to make toryism as odious to this generation as it was to that, the highest ambition of these frivolous "daughters" of a serious ancestry seems to be to perpetuate the fact that they are "descendants." How worthy of such descent they are is indicated by the tuft hunting spirit in which they publish a message from the private secretary of King Edward—the great man's great man—in reply to their message of condolence on the occasion of the death of Queen Victoria. In publishing it in the March number of the Patriotic Review—a sort of organ of similar societies—they describe it as "a gracious acknowledgment from King Edward." Here it is:

The private secretary is commanded by the king to express his majesty's thanks to you for your loyal letter of sympathy from the Daughters of the Revolution.

The king's private secretary, unconsciously no doubt, was cuttingly sarcastic when he described the sympathetic letter of the "Daughters of the Revolution" as "loyal."

What a lot of caddishness some of our American women are breeding, to be sure. Here is another entertaining specimen: Mrs. Sherwood, the American authority on social frippery, compares American with English society by telling how—

We Americans, without exception, spring from more or less rusticity. Most of our mothers baked their own beans and made their own apple pies. My father was a man of wealth and leisure and my mother a very beautiful and elegant woman; but when a person like Hon. Mrs. Wellesley comes to lunch we cannot escape the consciousness of her superiority. Such women never speak or act amiss. Whether they eat or drink or whatever they do, they do all beautifully. Their conduct suggests a strain of music.

For such stuff as that there appears to be enough American demand to pay newspapers for soliciting and cabling it and that is humiliating.

It is not good manners that it holds up to American admiration. Examples in good manners should be welcomed from every source. There is nothing caddish about cultivating good manners. But Mrs. Sherwood's dominant note is elegance bred in idleness. Do the elegant Wellesleys and the admiring Sherwoods realize, we should like to know, that in the path of the elegant idlers of France a century and a quarter ago the guillotine loomed up, and that history sometimes repeats itself? Elegant idleness always derives its sustenance from the plunder of industry; and now and then the plundered, not intelligent enough to protect their earnings in peace, revolt with brutality.

BRITISH TAXATION AND THE LAND QUESTION.

The people of Great Britain, who, like those of the United States, are agitated over questions of inequitable taxation, have received a most suggestive contribution to the discussion in the final report of the royal commission on taxation which has just appeared.*

This commission was appointed by parliament in 1896 to inquire into the present British system of local taxation, and report whether all kinds of real and personal property contribute equitably, and, if not, what alterations in the law are desirable in order to secure that result. It consists of Lord Balfour, of Burleigh, chairman, Earl Cawdor, Lord Blair Balfour, Sir John T. Hibbert, C. B. Stuart-Wortley, C. N. Dalton, C. A. Cripps, Harcourt E. Clare, T. H. Elliot, E. Orford Smith, James Stuart, John L. Wharton, Sir Edward Hamilton, Sir George Murray and Judge Arthur O'Connor.

Twelve members of the commission sign the majority report, but only seven—a minority of the commission

*Final Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Subject of Local Taxation, England and Wales. Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty. London: Printed for his majesty's stationery office, by Eyre and Spottiswoode, printers to the king's most excellent majesty; and to be purchased either directly or through any bookseller, from Eyre and Spottiswoode, East Harding street, Fleet street, E. C., and 32 Abingdon street, Westminster, S. W.; or Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh; or E. Ponsoby, 116 Grafton street, Dublin. 1901. Price, 1s 6d (38 cents).