

history of the Cathedral, which is one of the oldest religious sites in the West Indies, and of the town in which it stands, my friendly guide came to talk of the Island itself and its affairs, economic and political.

He deplored the gradual decline of prosperity, and acknowledged that many intelligent native Jamaicans did not hesitate to express their dissatisfaction with the English government. "We really think we would rather be Americans," he said, with a fine politeness.

I was obliged to tell him that in my opinion Jamaica would not gain much by the change, and that I didn't see why the Jamaicans should be anything but just Jamaicans. This gave him confidence to talk more freely, and he soon got on the subject of taxation. Naturally I asked about taxes on unimproved land, and on improvements.

"There is very little tax on unimproved land, but they tax every improvement, everything a man does to make his land more fertile, or his house more comfortable."

"Do you think this is a good plan?" I asked.

He looked astonished, then said it didn't exactly seem to be good.

"How does it work?"

"Why, I think it makes a man lazy," he replied promptly.

"If a planter has four acres of land, he usually cultivates one acre and lets the rest stay wild. Because when the tax collector comes round, then he only has to pay taxes for the improvements on the one cultivated acre."

"But that keeps him poor," I said. "Wouldn't he do better to cultivate the other acres?"

"What would be the good?" was the immediate answer. "He wouldn't have much more left after he'd paid his taxes on his improved acres. And then he'd be working hard. This way he takes it easy."

And yet they talk of the laziness of Jamaicans as one reason for Jamaica's decline! This was my thought, and I gave utterance to it.

My guide smiled and said that he had a special story to tell to illustrate the point. "My wife, who is a very industrious woman," he said, "went to work and cleaned all the windows in our house the other day. The next day the tax collector called, and seeing the clean windows, told me that if I could afford to have new glass in my windows, I could afford to pay a higher tax rate. He charged me this higher rate, but I went to court about it, for I am a poor man, and can't afford to pay any more taxes than I pay now. Only when they tax us for trying to keep things nice, they shouldn't talk about us being lazy."

Here was fertile ground for a little single tax propaganda, and I did not neglect it. My guide was much interested in what I said, as his complete understanding of the harmful result of wrong taxation made it all the easier for him to understand right taxation.

There is a most fertile and promising field for single tax work in the colonies, particularly among the population of mixed blood. These colored people, as they are called here, combine the initiative of the white, with the love of the soil, the simple good nature, and the immunity to climatic conditions that characterize the black of the West Indies. If a little understanding of this simple fundamental principle of taxation were spread among these people who suffer most from abuse, due to wrong taxation, they would advance a long way towards a capacity for self-government; and the knowledge must be spread among the people themselves, not dealt out to them, ration-wise, by any governmental agency.

The experimental character of all colonial government makes it just as easy to try a good experiment as a bad one. Before our present rampant spread-

eagelism grabs any more colonial territory it would be a good thing to have the ground sown with the right kind of seed. I was unpatriotic enough to tell my Jamaican friend that just at present I did not think the United States had anything better to offer Jamaica than England had, and I cited New Zealand as an example of what an English colony can do. But I told him that when the single taxers had somewhat leavened the lump of political and economic conditions, then it might be worth while for Jamaicans to become American citizens—although I still didn't see why they shouldn't be just Jamaicans.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Thursday, April 5.

Municipal Ownership in Chicago.

At the municipal election in Chicago on the 3d (vol. viii., pp. 854, 873), the one important issue was on what is locally called the "little ballot." This name comes from the fact that referendum questions in Illinois are required by law to be printed on a ballot separate from the ballot bearing the names of candidates, and as a rule this separate ballot is much smaller than the other. There were three referendum questions at this election, all of them relating to the controversy over the traction problem, which for full five years has intensely agitated public opinion in Chicago and been strongly felt throughout the country.

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The first of the three questions on the "little ballot" was in terms as follows:

Shall the City of Chicago proceed to operate street railways?

This question called for a popular vote on an ordinance previously adopted by the City Council (vol. viii., pp. 705, 710, 729), which authorized municipal operation. Under the State statutes, the Mueller law, such an ordinance requires, after its adoption by the City Council, an affirmative vote of 60 per cent of all the votes cast on the question at a referendum. The vote on this question, as reported by the local press of the 4th was:

Affirmative	120,911
Negative	110,260

Majority for the ordinance

10,651
As the affirmative vote was 52 1-3 per cent instead of 60, the ordinance for municipal operation does not become legally effective; but it is rightly regarded (except among the advocates of private franchises) as a popular vote in favor of municipal operation.

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The second of the three questions was as follows:

Shall the ordinance entitled "An ordinance authoriz-

ing the City of Chicago to construct, acquire, purchase, own and maintain street railways within its corporate limits and providing the means therefor," passed by the City Council of said city on the 18th day of January, A. D. 1906, making provision for the issue of Street Railway Certificates not to exceed in amount \$75,000,000, be approved?

On this question the following was the referendum vote:

Affirmative	110,008
Negative	106,669

Majority for the ordinance 3,339

As only a simple majority is required by the statute for the adoption of this ordinance, it was legally adopted by the above vote and is now fully operative as a law.

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The third question had been formulated under the advisory referendum law, and presented by petition at the time when the City Council seemed about to grant a further franchise for 20 years to the existing companies. It read as follows (vol. viii., p. 749):

Shall the City Council proceed without delay to secure Municipal Ownership and Operation of all Street Railways in Chicago under the Mueller Law, instead of passing the pending franchise ordinances or any other ordinances granting franchises to private companies?

On this advisory question the following vote was cast:

Affirmative	111,862
Negative	108,025

Majority against franchises to private companies 3,837

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Upon the announcement of the above result, Mayor Dunne made a public statement in which he said:

The program for the acquirement of the street railway properties I do not care to discuss at present. I first wish to ascertain the attitude of the street car companies and to consult with my advisers before announcing my plans. It is up to the street car people to make the next move. They now know that Mueller certificates can be issued for the purchase of the roads and that by virtue of the approval given the third proposition on the little ballot no more franchises will be granted private street car companies. Before I take any further step toward carrying out the will of the people I want to find out what terms the companies will make. Under the law as interpreted by the Supreme Court they can occupy the streets until they sell out to the city, and now that the city has the authority to purchase, it is up to the companies to state their terms. Of course, I am disappointed that the victory is not a greater one. I am disappointed that the proposition authorizing operation of the lines did not carry by the legal majority of three-fifths of the vote cast on it, but I do not regard this as a real setback. The problem of securing possession of the roads is a tremendous one and cannot be solved in a hurry. We shall begin on the task of acquiring ownership, and by the time we are in possession I am confident that the people will have voted to give the city the right to operate. Operation always comes with ownership. It was so in London, Glasgow, and other large cities. The proposition to operate can be submitted at the first election at which it seems advisable—next Fall, perhaps. This time it had a clear majority of 10,000 votes, still I regret that it did not receive the majority of about 28,000 which would have been necessary to make it effective. I am convinced, however, that the people will vote for municipal operation at the proper time, which will be when the city gets possession of the lines. You may retard the principle of municipal ownership, but you cannot defeat it.

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Half of the City Council was chosen at this elec-

tion, and on the question of co-operating faithfully in the execution of the municipal ownership ordinance adopted at the election, the Chicago Tribune, an advocate of private ownership regardless of the ordinance just adopted and the public policy vote, estimates in its issue of the 4th the attitude of the new Council as follows:

For municipal ownership	28
Against municipal ownership	32
Doubtful	10

Of the ten alderman here accounted "doubtful," two were supported by the Municipal Ownership League, to whose platform they are pledged; one made his campaign as a municipal ownership candidate without that endorsement; and one is a hold-over member who voted in support of Mayor Dunne's traction policy when a large majority of the Council voted against it. The other six voted against the Mayor's policy until the collapse of the opposition, when most of them came to his support. It would seem, therefore, that as the result of the aldermanic election Mayor Dunne will have the co-operation of about 32 aldermen out of a total of 70—a majority against him of only 6. It is not probable, therefore, that any reactionary ordinance will secure the necessary two-thirds vote to pass it over the Mayor's veto, and it may be that affirmative steps will be immediately possible.

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The Socialist Vote in Chicago.

The aggregate Socialist vote for Chicago aldermen, as reported, is 27,715, an increase of 7,382 votes over the vote of 20,333 for mayor (vol. viii., p. 7) at the municipal election of 1905.

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Municipal Ownership in Springfield.

In Springfield, Ill., on the contest led by the Mayor in support of municipal ownership and operation of the electric lighting system (vol. viii., p. 345), the voting on the 3d resulted in the election by the Democrats of a two-thirds majority of the City Council. They carried all but two wards. In one of these Joseph Farris, a single tax Democrat, was defeated by a small plurality through Democratic defections; but the strongest Republican ward of the city, one that has always heretofore been carried 2 to 1 by that party, was wrested from it by a plurality of 47 by Frank Bode, another single tax Democrat. Municipal ownership and operation is assured.

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Municipal Ownership in Kansas City.

Elections were held on the 3d in the two Kansas Cities which are separated by the Kansas-Missouri line. In Kansas City, Mo., the Republican candidate for mayor, Henry M. Beardsley, was elected. Both the Republican and the Democratic platforms declared for the principle of municipal ownership, regarding which Mr. Beardsley is reported as the more satisfactory leader. Municipal ownership Democrats are glad of his election.

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In Kansas City, Kan., where Mayor Rose, a single tax Democrat, was elected mayor a year ago on a municipal ownership issue (vol. viii., pp. 9, 855), a prohibition issue was stirred up, the closing of the