

cessful resistance in war or peaceful negotiations with plutocratic profit for their objective, will cause the United States to abandon the Monroe doctrine.

That some such negotiations are contemplated, under cover of the child's-play ceremonial of the naming of a German royal yacht by the daughter of an American republican president, is a fair inference. Such suspicion is at any rate abroad in Germany. The present German ministry is in the hands of capitalists who organized the reaction against the young kaiser's factory legislation, during the early nineties. Many of them are heavy holders of colonial investments. Their interests and needs are of the same kind as those of the capitalists now wielding power in Washington, and it is suspected that the visit of Prince Henry to President Roosevelt will result in an "understanding between statesmen" about South American affairs. Such arrangements are believed to be probable as will enable the German capitalists to push their South American schemes without restriction, while the sacredness of the Monroe doctrine is preserved on paper for purposes of domestic politics. The German suspicions—expectations or hopes would probably be a better word—may not be without a basis in fact. When potentates play with the vanity of presidents, it is not unreasonable to suppose that they are not seeking exercise merely nor are solicitous alone for their health.

An enormous work and a valuable service have been performed by Daniel Cruice, Thomas G. McElligott and W. J. Sullivan and their associates, in Chicago, in securing a municipal petition from over 140,000 signers demanding a popular vote, under the Illinois advisory referendum, on three questions: (1) municipal ownership of street railroads; (2), municipal ownership of light and power; and (3), nominations of city officers at primary elections. This referendum law was enacted last winter. It allows an advisory vote in municipalities on any

question, upon the petition of 25 per cent. of the voters. The large percentage was inserted under plutocratic influence with the unconcealed intention of making the law practically inoperative. In this instance, the number necessary was 104,000, and but for the energy of the gentlemen named and their supporters, so huge a petition could not have been secured. Even with that the effort would probably have failed but for the timely and effective assistance of the Chicago American. All the other local dailies were either silent or obstructive. Since the filing of the petition some of them have tried to discredit it and to cause its rejection by picking out and making much of a few instances of false signatures made by practical jokers. But all opposition is likely to fall through and at next spring's municipal election the three questions outlined above will probably be voted on. A favorable vote will not be mandatory. Neither legislature nor council need pay any attention to it. But after the vote, if favorable, one of the objections to these reforms—alleged popular indifference or hostility—will have been knocked out of the fight.

Indications regarding the delegate conference of the People's party to be held at Topeka on the 21st are pointing more and more in the direction of an amalgamation in that state of the People's party with the Democratic party. As already explained in these columns (p. 660) the necessity for some such action is due to the ballot law recently enacted by the Republican legislature, which prevents fusion nominations. One of the strongest advocates of amalgamation is Annie L. Diggs, editor of the Topeka Advocate and widely known as state librarian of Kansas. She argues that—

events are now shaping (notably the conflict of the people of the northwestern states with the consolidating railway corporations) which in the near future will compel a national party to take an unequivocal position and fight the battle for the people as against the corporate powers. This position the national Republican party cannot

take, because it includes in its dominating membership men who desire the corporation side to win. The national Democratic party can, and will, unequivocally and aggressively espouse the people's side, unless its next national convention shall be recaptured by the men who dominated it before "Bryanism" came to the front. Right here is the great service which Kansas Populists might render to practical politics; they might, by uniting with Kansas Democrats, form so consequential and forceful a delegation to the national convention as to aid greatly in holding that body to the new Democracy and prevent Messrs. Hill, Cleveland et al from walking off with the situation. For should Kansas show her faith in the new Democracy, like action would follow in other states and reformers everywhere would take heart and enthrust with the effort to use the great national party machine, already constructed, for genuine reform and progressive politics.

That is good argument and good sense. It has the merit, moreover, of telling the whole story in the briefest possible compass. And this and other like arguments are having the effect of fostering the amalgamation sentiment among the rank and file of the People's party. Many of the delegates are coming up to Topeka instructed by their constituents to favor amalgamation with all the forces opposed to the Republican party in Kansas. One obstacle to this most important conclusion is the fact that prohibition is generally opposed by Kansas Democrats, whereas Kansas populists very generally favor it; but it is believed that this obstacle may be surmounted. Should the amalgamation be made, the Republicans will of course promote the organization of a bolting People's party—another "middle-of-the-road" contingent in Republican pay and service. But that need give the body of the party no serious concern. Investments of that kind by Republicans in the past, whether in Kansas or elsewhere, have not proved profitable to the investors.

"About this time look out for"—something; snow, or rain, or hail, or winds, according to the season. That was a familiar warning in the patent medicine almanacs of our youth. The

idea is now adopted by the war department with reference to the Philippine situation. "About this time look out for"—official reports of pacification, or treachery of the natives, or outrages upon American soldiers, according to the disclosures leaking through the censor's office the effect of which it is officially desirable to counteract. Some such prognostication might be made almost any time with confidence. The latest verifying instance is an account of Filipino outrages occurring in November and apparently held back till wanted. It seems that a detachment of American soldiers, who had broken into a Filipino house to search it, was precipitated into a pit bristling with pointed bamboo sticks, on one of which the native guide—as we call him, but spy as the Filipinos do and as we would if conditions were reversed—was impaled. This is a sickening thing, of course. But it must be remembered that such catastrophes can always be avoided by keeping out of other people's houses. And bad as it is, it is hardly bad enough to accomplish its evident purpose of offsetting the infamy of the concentration camps that our army has established in the Philippines in imitation of Weyler in Cuba and Kitchener in South Africa.

The efforts of the Ohio Republicans to checkmate Mayor Johnson in his crusade for equitable taxation are full of entertainment. Having a notion that the sentiment to which Johnson appeals is hostility to corporations, merely as corporations, they are "faking" tax laws aimed at all corporations. No distinction is made between those which have valuable special privileges and those that are only incorporated partnerships without special privileges. This policy may get the Republicans into deeper water than they have bargained for. A grocery store corporation, for instance—and there are enough such corporations to make the welkin ring if they wake up—is not likely to relish a corporation tax which

falls upon it with the same weight that it does upon a railroad or street car corporation with exclusive and extremely valuable highway privileges. Meanwhile the Republican leaders in the legislature are floundering about in amusing fashion in their efforts to explain the equity of their most inequitable policy. Chairman Cole, of the House committee on taxation, is an example. He justifies the tax on corporation capital stock, which is to fall upon the stock of all corporations indiscriminately, and at par value regardless of market value, on the ground that all corporations enjoy the special privilege of incorporation! It may be conceded that incorporation is a privilege, since it protects stockholders from personal liability—repeals, as to them personally the laws for the collection of debts; but as any partnership may avail itself of this privilege, one may well inquire what it is that makes the privilege special. It certainly is not valuable. No one would buy a corporate charter unless it conferred some exclusive privilege, which but few corporate charters do. Mr. Cole appears to have heard the bell ring, but he doesn't seem to know where the clapper is. He knows that it is valuable special privileges that ought to be taxed, but he does not know that privilege must be exclusive to be special and that the tax ought to be proportioned to the actual value of the privilege. This is one of the mentally-muddling effects of legislative anxiety to serve monopoly corporations at the expense of the general public.

For the present the corporation rings that now dominate the machinery of the Republican party in Ohio, have obstructed Mayor Johnson's efforts to tax all railroad values. The board of revision in each case is composed of state officers whose leading spirit is Attorney General Sheets, the man with whom Senator Hanna displaced the anti-trust Republican, Monett, at the Republican convention a year and a half ago. This board decided last fall that it could not in-

crease the tax valuations of the steam railroads, which Johnson had demanded, and the supreme court of the state, which is acquiring a reputation for friendliness to monopolies, now sustains it. Consequently these privileged corporations pay taxes on only about a fifth of the real value of their property, while farmers pay on two-thirds. The same board, with the change of only one member, not Sheets, has now also overruled the city board of Cleveland with reference to the taxation of the street cars and other local monopoly corporations. This local board, appointed by Mayor Johnson, had added millions to the tax valuation of these corporations, though still keeping within the rule of 60 per cent. of true value. It based its action upon the market value of the stock and bonds of the corporations. That action is now reversed by the state board, which holds that the local board had no authority to take the value of stocks and bonds into consideration. The result is that the street car and lighting companies pay nearly half a million less taxes than they ought to as compared with the taxes paid by other Cleveland taxpayers. Mayor Johnson declares his intention of keeping up this fight in the courts, but he can hardly have any hope of success as the taxing and judicial bodies of Ohio are now organized. He himself confesses that he has little hope short of the final appeal he will make to the people, but that he is confident of success before that tribunal; and it certainly does look as if the Republican corporation rings of Ohio had grown reckless of public sentiment and were treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Even to the imperial revolutionists, who are getting used to their policy of turning our nation away from the path of its high democratic ideals, Senator Cullom's speech of last week must be startling. In this carefully prepared speech, delivered on the floor of the Senate on the 29th, he boldly announced the doctrine that the Senate and the President alone, with-