

The recommendations in Mayor Harrison's message regarding Chicago street car franchises, are on the whole most excellent. While his advocacy of compensation based on gross receipts and his proposition that fares be reduced during rush hours are false in principle, and his suggestion that better accommodations be required is a detail, his recommendation that a provision for municipal ownership at the expiration of such franchises as may be granted be made a condition of the grant, and that no franchise be allowed to become operative until it shall have been approved by a general vote of the people, goes really to the heart of the subject, and in the right way. If franchises are to be renewed at all, it should be upon condition that they be followed by municipal ownership. And if every proposed franchise be made subject to a referendum vote, none will become operative if the people are now ready to do away with the private monopoly of their public streets.

Mayor Harrison makes another recommendation which should not be ignored. In its beneficent possibilities it is perhaps the most important suggestion in his message. Calling attention to the large amount of space under and over sidewalks belonging to the city—1,411,947 square feet—for which adjacent landlords are charging rent, he advises that this rent, or a reasonable part of it, be taken by the city. At the low average rate of only 33 1-3 cents per square foot annually these usurped spaces would yield the city nearly half a million dollars additional revenue. To compel the squatters who appropriate the rentals of this land to turn them over to the city treasury where they belong would make a first rate beginning in the important work of lifting taxation from business and putting it upon land monopoly.

By encouraging the mobbing of peace meetings, the British ministry manage to preserve an appearance of

unanimous war sentiment in England; and by suppressing Irish papers and Irish demonstrations that are hostile to the raree-show of the queen's visit, they are able to keep up an appearance of unmitigated loyalty in Ireland. These methods of unifying sentiment have often before been effective, but they were supposed to have gone out of fashion in democratic countries.

There is good reason to suspect that pinchbeck patriotism is not such a drug in the English market as the Tories would like it to be. The people there are naturally affected by military victories and reverses, but on the whole many of them do not like the war into which their government has so wantonly plunged them. From a thorough Briton, resident in London, a man who nevertheless knows right from wrong, even when the country he loves and believes in is involved, we have a private letter from which we make this interesting extract:

I quite indorse your views of the South African war. It is a wicked war, brought about by the sordid greed of capitalists and speculators. It is sad, but it is true, that the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race who have been supposed to be the great champions of freedom, should to-day be both engaged in wars of aggression and spoliation; both engaged in putting down freedom in the name of freedom; and both egged on by the greed of a few speculators and capitalists. . . . Despite hating this South African war from the bottom of my soul, I cannot like to hear of disasters to our troops. These gallant fellows go to do what they are told, and lose their lives doing it, leaving sorrowing households at home. It makes me sad. But I nurse a righteous wrath against the incompetent scoundrels who have landed us in this imbroglio.

Disaster to the armies of one's country is not pleasant to hear of. Yet it is only through military disaster, as a rule, that a nation can be saved from military intoxication. Sore defeat might discourage men of the Chamberlain type. Victory has certainly multiplied them in number, in influence and in arrogance. And as to the gallant fellows who die in battle, what difference does it make

to them whether their survivors win or lose? They die anyhow.

The street car manager in Chicago who precipitated a power house strike last week had a tolerably clear apprehension of the kind of prosperity which workingmen are enjoying. He increased the wages of the men 12½ per cent., an increase which might be heralded as one of the evidences of prosperity, but which produced a strike because the manager also increased the hours of work 50 per cent.—from 8 hours to 12. If other instances of higher wages were investigated, it is not improbable that a like proportion between increase of pay and increase of work would be discovered, though the increase of work would not always, if at all, show itself so clearly. Hours of work would usually appear to have been undisturbed. But greater intensity of work as compared with higher wages would doubtless prove to be not far from the proportion of 12½ per cent. increase of wages to 50 per cent. increase of work.

In Youngstown, Ohio, similar results have been experienced, but through a reverse process. Instead of paying somewhat higher wages by the day and largely increasing the hours of a day's work, the plan there has been to pay a somewhat higher price by the piece and very largely diminish opportunities to produce. In that iron center the mills that are not closed down are working only part of the time or in only a few departments. With the rise in the price of iron, the pay of puddlers went up, under the scale agreed upon, from \$4.50 to \$6.00 a ton. But the men get fewer chances to work. The reason is that in some cases the mills are over-stocked, and in others their managers shrink from producing, at a high cost for labor, iron that may soon take a tumble in price. Here are some of the increasing indications that our "marsh light" prosperity is on the wane.

In the proposed constitutional