

gan of Cleveland, Ohio, manufactures in quantities to suit, with the view of discrediting Mayor Johnson in the public mind, is now being circulated outside of Cleveland. We quote it as we find it afloat in the exchanges:

Having granted the Standard Oil Company a perpetual gas franchise in Cleveland, Tom Johnson went to Columbus yesterday to air his views on the franchise question.

This sort of thing doesn't go at face value any longer in Cleveland, where the people have come to know Johnson; but out in the State of Ohio and over the country it may still pass current. It is worth while, therefore, to circulate Johnson's reply. When he went before the Ohio legislature—"to air his views on the franchise question," to quote from the extract given above,—he referred to the "perpetual gas franchise" in the following terms:

Perpetual street car franchises have been suggested and in support of this proposition it has been said that the gas companies all over the State hold perpetual grants. This is not true. The law of Ohio limits gas franchises to ten years. At the end of that time the council fixes a rate for a new term of ten years. If no price is fixed the company can charge no rate for its product. This is different from a provision for a ten-year revision on terms to which the company must agree. Again, there is no limit to the number of pipes a gas company or any other company can put in the street. But with street railways, when you have placed two tracks, or at the most four, in the street you can put down no more. And you can't put street car tracks in all streets. The cases are not parallel. The ten-year gas grants are in no sense perpetual.

These facts were known, of course, to the Hanna organ when it charged Johnson with collusion with the Standard Oil trust to fasten a perpetual gas franchise on Cleveland. The truth is that a natural gas company offered to come into Cleveland and undersell the company already in possession. Johnson therefore properly favored the grant of a franchise to it, as did most of the city council, Democrats and Republicans. The franchise was accordingly grant-

ed, and without express limit as to time. No express limit was necessary or is usual, because, under the law of Ohio, the companies cannot charge for gas without the consent of the city renewable every ten years. In effect, therefore, this gas franchise, which will lower the price of gas in Cleveland, was not a grant in perpetuity but for ten years.

Another charge that the Hanna organs are circulating against Johnson is that he is a tax dodger. It is based on the fact that the tax inquisitor of Ohio has sued him for personal taxes on the basis of a valuation of \$1,000,000. This is twice as much as the valuation of all the other residents of Euclid avenue combined, with Senator Hanna's thrown in for good measure. The bad faith of the charge is therefore obvious upon its face.

It is cold comfort that the Democratic "reorganizers" and their Republican allies are getting out of their efforts to "down" Bryanism by a process of silent negation at State conventions. Their latest success was in Massachusetts. But the Springfield Republican, which is neither "silvercratic" nor "popocratic," condemns their platform as lacking the ring of sincerity and genuineness; as being "a platform of the character made to get in on rather than to stand on," and, worse still, as thereby calculated to "fit in perfectly with the general character and purposes of the new leadership in the Massachusetts Democracy." On the other hand it commends the platform proposed by George Fred Williams and defeated by the "reorganizers," as presenting "in the briefest compass a sharp, direct, ringing and comprehensive statement of principles which any party must stand by that is to represent Democratic tendencies and reasonable aspirations at this time." The "reorganizers'" victory in Massachusetts turns out, like that in Wisconsin, to have been a pretty bad piece of business from

every possible Democratic point of view.

Yet Wisconsin and Massachusetts are the only States in which the "reorganizers" have scored a victory. In California, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, Wyoming and Iowa, the only other States that have not in terms reaffirmed the Kansas City platform, local issues dominated all others. In Michigan, at least, Bryan's friends were in control but voluntarily confined the issues to State questions. They were in control also in Iowa, but a large proportion of them were influenced by the "Iowa Idea" to avoid offending Republicans. Even at their best, the "reorganizers" can count only 14 States in which the Kansas City platform is not in terms reaffirmed, while 17 have gone dead against them,—Arkansas, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Idaho, Colorado, Utah and Washington, and Montana. Besides this, a large majority of the only States in either list that the Democrats have a ghost of a show of carrying on any issue, are in the Kansas City platform column.

#### SUGAR AND POLITICS.

The man who will cheapen the cost of bread 40 per cent. and reduce the cost of living to our people by more than \$100,000,000 a year will virtually make two blades of grass grow where only one now grows and will be hailed as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. The man, corporation or combination responsible for a 25 or 30 per cent advance in the price of bread or meat deserves the curses of mankind.

An article of food almost or quite as important as either bread or meat is now selling for two prices in this country, three prices in Germany and Belgium, four prices in France, Spain, Austria and Russia and five prices in Italy. Certain men, or