

ring as true and seem as courageous to the democratic-Democrats as did his gold standard telegram to the plutocratic Democrats—there would be something for the leaders of democratic-Democracy to work for with hope for the future, and with enthusiasm and effectiveness in the present.

Eastern Democrats are at present threatened with future mental suffering, by John P. Hopkins and Roger C. Sullivan, of Chicago. These delectable Democrats assure their Eastern coadjutors not only that Illinois will give its electoral vote to Parker (which politically is proper, since they are responsible for Illinois), but that Indiana is a "sure thing" and that prospects are bright for Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, Nevada and Utah. When Hopkins and Sullivan return to Illinois, which they themselves have made hopeless, they will doubtless report bright prospects in another quarter. They can't fool Western Democrats with glittering predictions about such States as Illinois, Montana and Colorado; but they might arouse enthusiasm over prophetic victories in Maine, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

Municipal-ownership advocates who object to municipal operation, might profit by an object lesson in Union county, New Jersey. There is a trolley line in that county, in the region of Roselle, which is owned by the county but operated by a private corporation. Behold the result. The private corporation has a lease which is virtually perpetual; the fares cannot be regulated; the private company is as masterful and arrogant as if it owned the property of which it is only a tenant; and the county not only furnishes the trackage and other line equipment, but keeps them in repair. The net benefit, therefore, to the county is nothing, minus cost of erecting and maintaining the line; to the operating company it is the same as private ownership, plus the advantage of having a line furnished and maintained for it free by the county.

Traction is not the only subject regarding which Union county, New Jersey, affords valuable object lessons. This is one of the localities in which even the water supply is furnished by a private corporation. Water, gas, electric lighting, street car service, steam car service, trolley service—all but the one county-owned trolley line—are under private ownership, and all are under private operation. Union county, therefore, is a place where the beauties, comforts and general perfection of private enterprise in the management of public utilities may be expected to shine forth. But it doesn't shine. The character of the water service in comparison with cities that own and operate their water supply may be inferred from the fact that in this region of abundant water conveniently located, the charge for serving a cottage is over \$30 a year. And as to "graft," what is the graft of the graftiest political grafter in comparison with the enormous graft of the owners of this Union county water privilege? Nor is it a matter alone of graft and dear service. The owners of this water supply privilege dominate both political parties with a degree of arbitrary power which might make any mere political boss envious to distraction. Look to it, you who are doubtful of the wisdom of municipal ownership and operation of municipal utilities! Investigate the wretched experiments in private ownership and operation of Union county, New Jersey, before you close your minds to the successful experiments in public ownership and operation elsewhere.

Two or three weeks ago it was announced that Eugene V. Debs had been requested by McClure's Magazine to reply to ex-President Cleveland's defense in the same periodical of his action in the Chicago strike (p. 195), and that the magazine had been obliged to reject Mr. Debs's article because it was abusive. What purports to be the same article has

now appeared in the Socialist papers,—among others, in the Chicago Socialist of August 27. As it is there printed, we fail to find anything in the Debs article that can fairly be characterized as abusive. It is certainly not as abusive as Cleveland's. Controversial it is, and overwhelmingly destructive of Cleveland's defense of his action. But if this constitutes abuse, Mr. Cleveland should be wrapped in paraffine paper and put in a glass case where he may be admired but not "abused." McClure's was under no obligation to print any reply to Cleveland. There are good reasons why it should have refused, for it is doing vigorous and valuable work against plutocracy at great risk and may be pardoned for avoiding further risk. Besides, the publication of Cleveland's article may be justified on the business ground that it would largely enhance the demand for the magazine, whereas, on the other hand, Debs's would have little or no effect of that kind, if, indeed, it might not be prejudicial. But nothing can excuse the rejection of Debs's reply as abusive, if it was not more abusive than its present publication shows it to have been.

It is a great mistake, we beg to remind both the confident conservative and the impatient progressive—a very great mistake, to suppose that the Henry George movement, because it makes little or no organized display, is making no progress. In one way and another, here in advancing legislation and there in developing public sentiment, in one place crudely, in another timidly, in a third boldly, but everywhere persistently, this movement is advancing with leaps and bounds, though many there be who having ears hear not and eyes see not. Its advances in Australasia, in Great Britain, in Canada, and even in the United States are notable; but in Germany it is supposed to have made none whatever. Yet now come reports from Germany which show that even there, crudely and without

premeditation but unmistakably, it has been silently gathering force until now its beneficent effects are manifest and its single tax characteristics obvious.

A very good though unfriendly editorial explanation of this development in Germany may be found in the New York Evening Post of August 23d. We reproduce it in the Miscellany Department. The editorial is based upon a German municipalities' report made at a British conference on housing reforms. It appeared from this report that Germany has adopted a thorough policy—paternalistic in many features, but impregnated nevertheless with the individualism of the single tax—of municipal land-purchase, street planning, site control, building regulations and taxation of vacant lands on the outskirts of towns.

That public sentiment even in conservative New York, is feeling the effect of this irresistible tendency toward encouraging building by exempting buildings from taxation and discouraging land monopoly by concentrating taxes upon sites in proportion to their values respectively, is evident from a real estate news article in the Brooklyn supplement of the New York Herald of August 29. That article tells of the exasperating rise of rents along with, and even ahead of, advances in public improvements. It appears that Brooklyn rents have in some places risen within a few months from \$15 to \$20 a month; from \$18 to \$22; from \$15 to \$25; from \$13 to \$23.50, and so on. These appalling increases are explained in the article by a real estate owner whom the report quotes as follows:

The new bridge, the contemplated Blackwell's island bridge, and the Pennsylvania tunnel, with its promised improved facilities, have made a boom over all Long Island. The rush of people early this year out of New York has made houses valuable. [He means sites, of course, for houses do not rise in value. When they tend in that direction, new houses are built to compete with them. But you can't build new sites. Consequently it is sites, not houses, that rise.]

Therefore rents have jumped. Small houses "for persons of ordinary circumstances" at reasonable rents are eagerly snapped up, which shows them to be a good investment. Few men who are employed in this city live in the country from choice. It is the penalty they pay for being fathers. But rents are bound to be abnormal here because the price of land increases by leaps and bounds. There is a piece of land [pointing to a wooded tract] that has trebled in value in less than ten years, and they are growing corn on it! There is one farm on the west, another property on the east, two large tracts on the north. And if the owners of these and other tracts could be made to let go their holdings at reasonable prices there might be hopes of cheaper homes. Certain families hold their lands at from \$4,000 to \$12,000 an acre, if anybody desires to buy; but when the assessor comes around the value sinks amazingly, the rate being fixed at from 12 to 17 percent of the price it would bring at auction. These complaining tenants you speak of have much of justice on their side. I feel that this persistent rent raising will result in a decrease of population. If, however, we could reach the influences that are causing congestion in a territory where thousands of acres of land are totally unoccupied or unprofitably used, it would do much to cheapen the cost of land. Take an instance: I am paying on my house and lots on a valuation of \$4,000, more than 70 per cent. of the selling value. Across the street is a farm of 16 acres or thereabouts, which is taxed on a valuation of about \$900 an acre. Yet the family owning it has to my knowledge refused \$9,000 an acre. What is true of that farm is true of all the large tracts around here. Now, suppose the assessor in his judgment should decide to make the owners of these tracts pay taxes on 70 per cent. of their own valuation, what would happen? They would be compelled to throw their tracts into the market, because they could not raise enough corn on them to pay the taxes. Then we would have cheaper land, and ordinary houses could be built upon them for sale or rent at a moderate price.

The common sense of the latest in a long line of sheriffs of New York county has called public attention to a scandalous practice which has endured in that city decade after decade for generations. For the detention of prisoners charged with crime under the State law, there has all this time been a city jail, colloquially known as the "Tombs." The old county prison has survived, however, and has been known colloquially as "Ludlow

street jail." It has been used as a debtors' prison, for be it known that imprisonment for debt still exists in New York. If by hook or by crook it can be made to appear that a debt is tainted with fraud, plump goes the debtor into Ludlow street jail, there to stay, unless he can give bail not to leave the county on pain of making his bondsmen liable for the debt, until he divests himself of every tangible aid to getting a new start in the world. There are instances of incarceration in Ludlow street jail for debt for years and years. And the incarceration is not in the company alone of unfortunate debtors. While the State does not detain in this jail persons charged with crime the Federal government does. That government detains its accused prisoners in county jails. Consequently those prisoners in New York go not to the "Tombs," but to "Ludlow street jail." As a result some of the most seductive of professional criminals, the counterfeiter class, are brought into close daily intercourse with unfortunate debtors. It would not be easy to contrive a better plan for educating criminals. With professional counterfeiters for the faculty, and unfortunate debtors (somewhat unscrupulous, perhaps, or so believed to be) for the student body, this college of crime ought to rank high. And no one has ever tried to break it up. Federal judges and county sheriffs have come and gone, each patronizing the crime-breeding institution, thoughtlessly, of course, until Sheriff Erlanger, now in office, puts down his foot and cries "Stop!" His method is very simple. It could have been adopted long ago, and would have been if officials had felt any sense of responsibility. He has merely had the Tombs declared officially to be a county jail; and now he notifies the Federal authorities that their prisoners must be placed in this county jail or they will not be received by the sheriff at all.

All that is necessary to justify the people of Chicago in condemn-