

etary or possessory rights, whether of land or products, is not a satisfactory system. With reference to land, the principle of private possession is manifestly superior to that of communal use, as is private ownership with reference to the products of land.

More prosperity news for workingmen comes from the Mahoning valley in Ohio, where a reduction of ten cents a day in the wages of fillers and helpers at the blast furnaces has been accepted.

But there is a silver lining even to the cloud of McKinley prosperity, and the Standard Oil trust has a mortgage on it. That flourishing combination of land pirates has just declared another prosperity dividend. This dividend is a quarterly of 20 per cent. In November there was a ten per cent. dividend; in July one of ten per cent. and in April one of ten per cent. So the stock of the Standard Oil trust has paid in dividends just half its face value in one year. Who said "poverty"?

A full account of the action of the New York chamber of commerce on the local option measure in taxation which it indorses, including the explanatory speech of George T. Seward, the chairman of the committee which made the report, appears in the February 2 issue of that able economic journal, Public Policy, of Chicago.

Protests are made in New York against the reappointment of Wilbur F. Wakeman as appraiser of the port. He appears to have been too undisguisedly devoted to the principle of protection. One of the protests accuses him of having acted upon the theory that the importation of merchandise is a crime. If Mr. Wakeman did act upon that theory he merely put in practice what protectionism essentially affirms. If importation is not a crime, protectionism has no justification; for its sole

object is to obstruct importation, and if importation is an innocent thing, why obstruct it? All hail Mr. Wilbur, hail! You are a protectionist with the courage of your theory.

President Hadley, of Yale, has been lecturing at Princeton university on government by public opinion. If fairly reported, his idea of what kind of opinion goes to make public opinion is unique. He thinks, for instance, that the objections of people who oppose trusts merely because they do not own interests in them, are no part of public opinion. We suppose he means by this that the aggregate of selfish opinions does not constitute public opinion, but only the aggregate of unselfish opinions. Had Mr. Hadley been preaching a sermon upon the spiritual qualities of public opinion, his distinction would commend itself. But as he was speaking of public opinion as a mode of government, the distinction can hardly be held to exist unless there is no social force in the aggregate of opinions that are prompted by self interest. Can that be true? It would not be asserted of such selfish opinions as make for wickedness. Monopoly is prompted altogether by the force of selfish opinions. Why then is it said of such selfish opinions as make for righteousness? Though it is true that holders of these opinions, like Mazzini's Italian reformer who found nothing requiring reform after a philanthropist had given him a new pair of boots, may reverse themselves; yet their opinions in the direction of righteousness must count for something in the aggregate while they last.

At the conclusion of Mr. Towne's notable speech in the senate on the Philippine question he received many congratulations. Chauncey Depew said: "I congratulate you, Mr. Towne. Your delivery was fine, your diction elegant, your peroration superb and your argument damnable." "Mr. Depew," replied Senator Towne, instantly, "I am delighted to know you approve of the only features of it you could comprehend."—Chicago Chronicle.

THE STREET CAR QUESTION IN OHIO.

Universal as is the agitation of the street car question, it may be said at present to center in the state of Ohio. In the capital city of that state, Columbus, the street car monopolists are passing through an experience with which they are wholly unfamiliar. They are in conflict with a street car magnate whose knowledge, energy and skill are turned against monopoly with an unrelenting determination to destroy it root and branch. In the first skirmish they have been forced to yield something which, until his advent, they protested they could not afford to yield. And the end is not yet. This Columbus case possesses instructive elements of general interest.

The street car monopoly of that city owns a collection of miscellaneous street car franchises. Some of them have four, eight and twelve years yet to run, under the fixed terms of the grants. The other grants are without fixed terms, and as to them the monopolists claim that they are perpetual. On the other hand it is more rationally urged that they are mere licenses, revocable at will; and the city, acting upon this theory, has taken the necessary steps to revoke most of them. Measured by earning power, the franchises so revoked comprise from 50 to 75 per cent. of all the street car franchises of the city.

Such being the condition of the franchises, the mayor, who, to put it mildly, is partial to the monopolists, has promoted an ordinance, evidently prepared by the monopolists, for a blanket franchise for a term of twenty-five years. This ordinance has just passed the council, though with important amendments. The ordinance originally went no further in the interest of the city than to provide for five cent cash fares with transfers and six tickets for a quarter without transfers. Subsequently the monopolists offered to sell seven tickets for a quarter with transfers; and they have ended by lobbying the ordinance through with an amendment giving the city still better terms. But that was not until Tom L. Johnson and ex-Attorney General Frank S. Monett appeared upon the scene with an offer which stunned the monopolists and drew from Mayor Jones, of Toledo,

the following characteristic telegram to Mr. Johnson:

Toledo, O., Jan. 26.

Tom L. Johnson, Cleveland, O.: Bully for you. Your proposition to Columbus is one of the epoch-making manifestations of the twentieth century patriotism that will find expression in methods of loving service to the people, rather than in teaching them to be soldiers to kill each other. You have proven that that despised capitalist has a high and holy mission to perform in bringing the world to a right social and political system.

SAMUEL M. JONES.

(Non-partisan believer in all the people.)

The proposition to Columbus, referred to in Mayor Jones's telegram, grew out of a speech which Mr. Johnson made before the Columbus council on the 25th of January. He had been invited by the citizens' Committee of Twenty-five, and by 16 of the 19 councilmen, to address the council in committee of the whole on the street car subject. His national reputation as an expert in street car service, together with the fact that in that business he has made himself a millionaire, was the reason for this invitation, which was suggested by the Press-Post, the only Columbus paper that has stood faithfully by the people in this street car contest. Mr. Johnson responded, and at the meeting of the Columbus council on the 25th he ridiculed the absurd pretensions of the monopolists to the perpetuity of their franchises, and made an argument in favor of straight fares and universal franchises, advocating as the price of fares not five cents, but three.

On the following day, at the solicitation of Mr. Monett, he clinched his argument with a formal and specific offer, in which Mr. Monett, who resides in Columbus, joined him. The offer is in substance in these terms:

We will accept a franchise for the acquisition, equipment, maintenance and operation of an electric street railway upon all the terms and conditions of the ordinance now before the council, except that the rate of fare shall be three cents cash, and that the ordinance shall provide for universal transfers without additional charge for one continuous ride. The duration of the franchise is to be not less than ten years nor more than 25. As a condition precedent we agree to purchase from the present owners all

their equipment at a fair cash value, to be fixed either by agreement or arbitration. We also agree to pay the value of their unexpired franchises, such value to be fixed by agreement or arbitration. If the present owners refuse to sell, we will accept the proposed franchise nevertheless; and if through such refusal it becomes necessary to build new roads, we will bid to carry passengers for a single fare of three cents, with universal free transfers for the full period of 24 hours each day, upon the terms of the pending ordinance or other terms not less favorable to the city, and also to procure the necessary consents of abutting property owners, such consents to inure to the person or company that shall offer to carry passengers for the lowest rate of fare. We further bind ourselves to enter into a bond, with satisfactory sureties, in any sum required for the faithful carrying out of the provisions of this offer.

Prior to the foregoing offer the street car monopolists were confident of 10 out of the 19 votes in the council, and intended unceremoniously to railroad the ordinance through at that time. But this offer called a halt. It could not be ignored. Johnson's record as a practical street railroad man, his positive assurances that his offer was not at all an eleemosynary one but would return ample profit on the legitimate investment, his great wealth, which enables him to give abundant security, to say nothing of the fact that the offer proposed to protect the present owners from every possible loss except future monopoly profits, all contributed to make the majority in the council pause. The subject was consequently and reluctantly postponed until the 4th.

Meanwhile Johnson and Monett added still further to the liberality of their offer. At a large public meeting on the 1st, they announced the submission of a supplementary offer, in substance as follows:

In addition to and as part of our former offer, we agree that—

I. All our books, vouchers, papers and contracts in any way pertaining to the construction, maintenance or operation of the road shall be open to the inspection of city officers. We will also publish quarterly for free distribution full financial reports, showing the number of passengers carried, the number of transfers issued, the total receipts from all sources, the total expenses of all

kinds, the profits, the amounts paid in interest, dividends and on account of debt, and for extension, betterments and additions, together with the disposition of profits and the rate of wages in the different grades and the salaries of principal officers.

II. The city may reserve the right to reduce fares from time to time below three cents, provided it does not thereby interfere with payment of necessary expenses, inclusive of six per cent. on actual cost of plant, and with the maintenance of a sinking fund sufficient to extinguish during the life of the grant any bonded indebtedness created to pay for actual cost of plant.

III. The city may also reserve the option to purchase the road at any time, by paying so much of the cost thereof as may at the time of purchase remain after deducting the sinking fund; the city not to be required in such purchase to pay for any betterments, additions or extensions theretofore paid for out of the surplus earnings.

IV. If the city shall not have purchased the road by the last year of the grant, it shall make it a condition precedent to a new grant that the new grantee shall purchase the plant at a fair value to be ascertained either by agreement or arbitration.

V. Provides for settlement of labor disputes by arbitration.

Nor did the Monett-Johnson proposition stop even there. A question having been raised as to rates of wages, the editor of the Columbus Press-Post, which, assisted by Prof. Edward W. Bemis, the well-known franchise expert, has been making complete and able expositions of the franchise question, telegraphed on the 2d to Mr. Johnson to know if he would agree to pay 20 cents an hour to employes. Mr. Johnson replied on the same day:

Twenty cents an hour in Columbus seems to me the right pay to secure good men for the places. I don't think wages should be included in an ordinance, but there is no objection to providing the number of hours constituting a day's work. The arbitration clause really covers this entire subject.

At the mass meeting of the 1st, at which the supplementary proposal of Monett and Johnson was first made public, Mr. Johnson explained his position very fully. He said that the proposal expressed his faith that "money can be made by three-cent fares with transfers," and his belief that he could finance the transaction at 6 per cent., and perhaps less. He was not a philanthropist in this mat-

ter, he continued, and did not go into it as a matter of charity. "I believe," he added, "that more can be done by simple justice than by all the charity in the world," a sentiment which, to the credit of the people of Columbus be it said, was received with enthusiastic applause.

In the course of this speech Mr. Johnson made it clear that he intends to fight the matter to the end. Referring to the well-grounded suspicions of corruption in the council, he said:

I don't care if they get every one of the 19 councilmen to vote for the blanket franchise, the street car company can never control your streets on their seven-for-a-quarter basis as long as there is a law in the land. I came in here at the request of your Committee of Twenty-five and I am not going to desert them until the battle has been fought to the last ditch. If your council should pass this ordinance in the face of the offer which I have made and which is infinitely better for the city, I will carry it into the courts and will appeal and appeal until there is some court which finds justice and law coincident and declares against its validity.

Mr. Johnson's challenge to fight the matter to the last has been accepted. When the Columbus council met on the 4th it adopted the monopoly ordinance. Before doing so, however, it amended it so as to require, in addition to the provision for straight fares at five cents with universal transfers, that seven tickets with universal transfers shall be sold for a quarter until the gross receipts reach \$1,750,000, and that thereafter the price of tickets shall be eight for a quarter with universal transfers.

That an extension ordinance, even with these concessions (and eight tickets for a quarter comes pretty near to three cents a ride), should have been passed hurriedly, toward the end of the term of the present city administration, when the time grants still have four years and upward to run and the companies claim that all the others are perpetual, and in the face of the bona fide and financially well-backed proposal of Monett and Johnson, is circumstantial evidence of a very convincing quality that some sort of corrupt understanding must exist between the monopolists and the city administration. The Press-Post

directly charges corruption. And in support of that charge it produces a cipher telegram from the mayor, which indicates, when translated, that the city administration is under a corrupt contract with the street car monopoly, part of the obligation of the latter being to support the former at municipal elections with the votes of its employes. It is to be hoped that Johnson will make good the threat of his Columbus speech to carry the Columbus street car question into the courts. If any tenable legal basis exists he is certainly a man who may be depended upon to do it. According to the Press-Post, acceptance of his proposal would save to the people of Columbus, as compared with extending the monopoly franchises, some \$15,000,000.

Cleveland is another Ohio city in which a radical street car franchise fight has begun. It is certain to be the issue in the spring campaign for mayor. Although the street car franchises of Cleveland have yet several years to run, the monopolists are stealthily but industriously trying to secure immediate extensions on the basis of a five-cent fare. This is Johnson's home city, and here, too, he has raised the issue of three-cent fares. He has not made a proposition to Cleveland like that which he and Monett made to Columbus, but he has convinced the Cleveland public that street car service at a three-cent fare can be furnished profitably.

This has brought about a result that cannot be wholly welcome to him. An immense popular petition urging him to run for mayor on the franchise issue has been rolled up in Cleveland, which forces upon him the alternative of asking the nomination or of seeming to shrink from one of the first consequences of his own agitation. Such an alternative could not be at all welcome as a personal matter. Whatever his political ambitions may be, they could hardly be satisfied or promoted by a term as mayor of Cleveland. But the possibilities that a campaign for the Cleveland mayoralty upon such an issue, whether politically successful or not, would afford to advance the public interests to which Johnson has devoted himself, may well tempt him

into the contest. He could not utilize his energies to better public advantage. We repeat with emphasis what we said of Johnson in this connection two weeks ago:

If the street car ring doesn't want him to be mayor, and evidently its feelings that way are very strong, the people of Cleveland could hardly do better than elect him whether he wishes to be elected or not. With a term in the mayor's chair and a council that would cooperate, Tom L. Johnson would come nearer than any other mayor to settling the street car question in Cleveland in favor of the people. He would also promote in other desirable ways that rational radicalism which is the only true and safe conservatism.

In response to the petitions for his candidacy Johnson has now decided to make the mayoralty contest. Under the primary laws in force in Cleveland, candidates are obliged to declare themselves, and Johnson has accordingly announced his name for the action of the democracy of his city. In his letter, given out on the 6th, he makes a definite declaration in favor of the principles of Henry George as the sound basis of government, municipal as well as state and national, and urges specifically the policy of municipal ownership of street railway and other public utilities.

It is unusual for men of wealth to dedicate themselves to the work of securing justice. Most of them are ready enough to contribute money for charity. But as regards justice, they are like the Irish convict—it is the one thing they wish to avoid. Tom L. Johnson is the only prominent man among them who looks upon charity as a makeshift, and justice as the only solution of economic evils. What he said on that subject in his Columbus speech was not a new thought with him.

Years ago he became a disciple of Henry George, and no more intelligent and devoted disciple has the genius of that preacher of social righteousness brought to the cause for which his name is a world-wide synonym. Three years or more ago Johnson publicly announced his intention of giving himself wholly to the propagation of George's doctrines

of justice. During most of the time since then old business connections and complications have obstructed his purpose. But with his recent withdrawal from the Detroit street car system, he became free of business entanglements for the first time since boyhood. It was soon after this that in a speech he renewed the declaration of his genuinely patriotic purpose, coupling with it a statement of his withdrawal from business.

The speech was not widely published, but it came to the attention of William J. Bryan, whose interest in it drew out from Mr. Johnson a declaration which is not only authoritative in origin, but deliberate in expression. This telegraphic correspondence, brief as it is, explains fully the activity of Mr. Johnson in connection with street railroad issues in Ohio.

Mr. Bryan telegraphed as follows:

Lincoln, Neb., Jan. 29.—Hon Tom L. Johnson: Is it true, as reported, that you have closed out your business and intend to devote the remainder of your life to social and political reforms?

W. J. BRYAN.

Mr. Johnson replied:

Cleveland, O., Jan. 30.—Hon. William Jennings Bryan: It is true that I have retired permanently from business and intend to devote all of my time and energies to social and political questions, primarily in defense of the principle of equal and exact justice to all, special privileges to none.

TOM L. JOHNSON.

Pursuant to this purpose, Johnson is making the street railroad fight in Columbus and Cleveland. He has thus already vitalized an issue in Ohio which means death to street franchise monopoly everywhere. The monopolists and their corrupt defenders in city councils cannot long stand up against such unveiled tactics along purely business lines as Johnson has met them with in Columbus. Whether they win there or not in this particular fight, their business secret is now out. Through a street railroad manager of large and varied experience and ample fortune, who is willing to back his judgment with his money, it is now made certain that three-cent fares in the street

car business will yield a profit on short term franchises.

No one understands better than Johnson must that street car reforms will not yield any permanent benefit to the people as a whole. As a student of Henry George's economic philosophy, he knows that the pecuniary benefits of low fares will be reaped not by the patrons of street car systems, but by the owners of land so located as to be served by those systems. What the patrons save in fares they will pay in rents. But those reforms are a step in the direction of a reform more radical and lasting. The street franchise monopoly, since it now concentrates public attention, must be overthrown before the people can clearly see that there is another monopoly which absorbs every surplus. Toward that reform Johnson's face is turned in his crusade against special privilege and for equal rights.

His career in this expedition of a retired monopolist against monopoly will be watched with more than common interest. He will, of course, be regarded suspiciously as an Egyptian taskmaster planning novel ways of imposing further burdens upon weary bondsmen. He will be suspected by those who suffer, and he will be misrepresented to them by the newspapers and politicians of those who make them suffer. And truly it is unique enough to be suspicious, for a retired monopolist to lead a crusade against monopoly. Yet he who in old times led the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage came out of the palace of the Pharaohs. And after all, the question that Johnson raises is at bottom one of method. Only the light-minded will be influenced by the slings and flings of franchise monopolists and their hirelings. The real point is not what they think of Johnson, but what it is that Johnson proposes. This is the point from which the monopoly press of Ohio is trying to divert public attention. But it is the point that should decide, and which must be grasped and never let go of. To read his Columbus proposal is to realize that what he proposes is, without being monopolistic, utterly destructive to street car monopoly.

NEWS

The Queen Victoria funeral ceremonies began at Cowes, Isle of Wight, at 1:35 in the afternoon of the 1st. Notwithstanding the well-known repugnance of the queen to war, these ceremonies consisted almost entirely of naval and military displays. Hidden completely from view with splendid royal standards, topped with crimson cushions supporting her jeweled crown and sceptre, and draped with her coronation robes, the bier bearing the queen's body was carried out of Osborne house and lifted by men-of-war men upon a khaki covered gun carriage. Six beautiful bays drew this improvised military hearse through the gates of Osborne house grounds and between lines of soldiers to the pier, muffled drums beating Chopin's funeral march as it passed. The procession was led by a company of Highland pipers with pibrochs, and following the body were the queen's own company of grenadier guards and the royal mourners. At the pier a squad of naval sailors lifted the draped coffin from the gun carriage to the funeral yacht Alberta, which at once steamed slowly across the strait to Portsmouth, between a double line of ships of war which marked its progress by firing minute guns. The Alberta was preceded by eight ugly-looking torpedo boat destroyers, and was followed by yachts carrying the royal family. As the warlike sounds of the minute guns of the warships died away with the arrival of the naval cortege at Portsmouth, it was renewed with minute guns in the forts, varied by the tolling of all the church bells of the city. The queen's body remained on board the Alberta over night, guarded by 100 marines, and on the 2d the naval ceremonies from Cowes to Portsmouth were succeeded by a magnificent military display from Portsmouth to Windsor. At 8:53 in the morning the body was carried from the yacht to the funeral train, which transported it to London, 80 miles away, along what seemed like an endless line of black-clad and head-bare people; and at 11:20 the military march through London from Victoria station to Paddington began. For this display 30,000 troops were massed. The king, who closely followed his mother's coffin, was flanked on one side by the duke of Connaught and on the other by the emperor of Germany. At Paddington station the body, accompanied by the royal mourners, was