

When the manner in which Aguinaldo was captured, and the glittering prize his ignoble captor received as a reward, are considered in connection with those letters (except the sarcastic one, if it is sarcastic), a serious question of comparative civilization arises, and one wonders whether all the virtues really are monopolized by the white man.

This wonder grows when we turn to the horrifying official report from China, partially divulged on the 6th by the state department, which tells, so reads the Washington news dispatch:

1. Of the Chinese married women who announce to their families that on a given day they will depart this life.

2. Of Chinese women who submit passively to death at the hands of their relatives as an honorable method of suicide.

3. Of Chinese girls who drown themselves in water hardly up to their waists to escape brutality at the hands of soldiers from European nations.

4. Of Chinese husbands who bid their wives kill themselves after suffering indignities.

5. Of Chinese towns where it is difficult to find a female between the ages of ten and 50.

6. Of Chinese families murdered—fathers, uncles, brothers and mothers—that the young women might fall into the hands of the European soldiers.

The official report charges the atrocities here hinted at to the French and the Russians, exonerating the British, the Germans and the Americans. This exoneration may be just; but what of it in the minds of the outraged Chinese? How can they be expected to distinguish the different bearers of the white man's burden? If "all Chinamen look alike to us," may not an American, virtuous and mild mannered butcher though he be, look like a barbarous Russian to them?

Not long ago local self-government was conferred upon San Francisco by the adoption of a charter of an unusually advanced type. San Francisco was to be allowed to work out her own municipal salvation, and

the state was to keep hands off. Nothing has yet happened to disappoint the expectations of the friends of this truly democratic charter. But the republican politicians have begun to tinker it. Gov. Gage, who was elected over that unwavering democratic democrat, James G. Maguire, has signed a bill to nullify the merit system of the municipal civil service which the charter established. This act of his is fitly characterized by the San Francisco Star when it says:

In signing the bill intended to destroy the civil service system in San Francisco, Gov. Gage has disgraced himself and his party. In this the Star not only speaks as an advocate of genuine civil service reform, but also as a champion of a far more important principle—that of local self-government. The charter was adopted by the people of this city, and was solemnly ratified by the legislature. In that charter are provisions for its amendment by the people of this city, by direct vote, on their own petition, in any manner that they may desire. Under such circumstances, it is an insult to the voters of the city for the governor and legislature to attempt to change one of the most important sections in the charter, either for better or worse. More than that, it is a denial of the right of the people of this city to manage their local affairs. Once the right to so interfere in the local government is established, all hope of decent city government, of municipal ownership, or of anything except high taxes and no return, will go glimmering. The people of San Francisco are competent to run the government of the city, and the politicians who think otherwise will find themselves beaten by the very trick intended to destroy their enemies.

Tom L. Johnson's entry into office as mayor of Cleveland was as meteoric as his election. During the incumbency of his predecessor, Mr. Farley, an arrangement had been made to turn over the lake front to a railroad corporation, and the ordinance for its consummation had passed the council. But before Mayor Farley could approve this ordinance, as he intended to do, Johnson went into the courts and procured an injunction. This injunction remained in force until 11 o'clock on the morning of the 4th. Whether it

would have been longer lived, depended upon the action of the court at that time and was problematical. So Johnson solved the problem for himself. Though it has been usual for newly elected mayors to go into office a week or more after the election, there is no legal limitation of that kind. The new mayor becomes mayor by law as soon as he qualifies, a fact of which Johnson took advantage. Soon after ten o'clock on the morning of the 4th he demanded and received his certificate of election, took the oath of office, filed his official bond, and half an hour before the expiration of the injunction order had taken the place of Mr. Farley as mayor. It is needless to add that the lake front grab will not be consummated for at least two years to come.

It is not generally known that Johnson has tied up the Columbus street car monopoly by legal proceedings. He had offered, in conjunction with ex-Attorney General Monett, to take the system and operate it for 3-cent fares (see vol. iii., page 692), with a privilege to the city to buy at any time at a fair valuation; but the council by a small majority undertook to grant a long term franchise on the basis of 5-cent fares, with seven tickets for a quarter until gross receipts should reach \$1,750,000, and thereafter with eight tickets for a quarter. Johnson advised an appeal to the courts, and Thomas Ross, a resident of Columbus, brought suit accordingly. Now the Columbus street car monopoly offers to compromise on the basis of eight tickets for a quarter, but Mr. Johnson advises against acceptance. It is his idea that street car monopolies can be forced to reduce fares to three cents each, without the wholesale humbug; that in connection with this reduction arrangements for municipal ownership can be made which will culminate at an early day; and that the consequent rise in land values, giving to landlords the money value of these municipal benefits, will popularize Henry George's single tax reform, as

similar improvements have so notably done in Glasgow.

Cleveland is not the only city of the United States that got a single tax mayor out of the municipal elections this month. The city of Solomon, Kan., though a much smaller and less famous city than Cleveland, can also boast a mayor who believes as Johnson does. His name is E. Z. Butcher.

It is not always wise to applaud even the good acts of autocrats, for it is the occasional goodness of the autocrat that makes autocracy tolerable. If there were no good autocrats there could be no bad ones. We are therefore, not enthusiastic over the decree of the Autocrat of the Philippines, addressed to his managing commission, which, in directing the commission to inquire into the tax laws of the islands and improve them where they need it, warns that body that it is to "bear in mind that taxes which tend to penalize or repress industry and enterprise are to be avoided." This is sound doctrine, even if an autocrat did formulate it. And if the Philippine commission were to carry it out literally—remove all taxes that repress industry and enterprise, which would include almost every tax except ad valorem land taxes—the American autocracy in the islands would mark the beginning among the Filipinos of an era of greater liberty and prosperity than the masses of any people in history have ever known.

Our attention has been called to an article from the pen of Herbert N. Casson in the Bellamy Review, which asks us a question about the single tax. The article refers to the late George Francis Gilman, the tea millionaire, who operated 285 tea-stores, from which he made \$20,000,000 besides all he spent. To remedy this concentration of commercial power and congestion of wealth, Mr. Casson says that "the socialist suggests the public ownership of the tea business,"

and he asks us how the single tax would "solve this social problem." As The Public is not a single tax organ it does not undertake to answer socialist riddles in behalf of the single tax belief. It thinks, moreover, that in the present stage of social agitation no good can come from sectarian debate between different schools of social agitators. For those reasons we decline the discussion to which the Bellamy Review courteously invites us, simply referring all who may be interested in Mr. Casson's question to Henry George's discussion of the principle it involves. That discussion will be found in chapter xxviii. of "Protection or Free Trade"—the chapter on "Free Trade and Socialism." We might properly observe, however, that Mr. Casson has not very carefully analyzed the Gilman problem if he thinks it nothing but a question of store-keeping. Tariffs and other taxes, tea gardens and other kinds of land, and disinherited labor, all entered in to give to Gilman, on the one hand, abnormal commercial power and to make his employes, on the other, abnormal commercial power, and to The Gilman problem is much less a question of competitive store-keeping than of legal monopoly.

The Australian land tax reform meets much the same reception in this country as did the Australian ballot reform. Political machines oppose it, regardless of party. The measure was adopted by the democrats in the Colorado legislature, the republicans opposing it in the interest of the great corporations. But in the Maryland legislature the republicans introduced and supported it and the democratic machine turned it down.

It is not strange that even a thoroughly democratic democrat, so far away as the Pacific coast, should get but a dim view of the outlines of so small a figure as the mayor of Chicago. The San Francisco Star is accordingly excused for supposing that Mr. Harrison has "in former years

made a record against granting long franchises." It is quite true that Harrison opposes franchises of more than 20 years' duration, but as the state law forbids longer terms that is a narrow basis for a record.

PERMANENT SIDE PARTIES IN POLITICS.

Circumstances connected with the recent municipal election in Chicago, make a discussion in these columns of the question of side parties in politics appropriate at this time. In that campaign the leading candidates of both leading parties were in our view objectionable, and, for reasons which we stated then, we advised radical democrats to vote for the republican candidate. Without repeating those reasons now, we shall merely note our conviction that when the democratic party nominates undemocratic candidates, the cause of radical democracy is often best served by voting outright for the republican. But because in this instance we advised radical democrats to support the republican candidate against Harrison for mayor of Chicago, we have been more or less severely rebuked by some friends of the paper—not for advising opposition to Harrison, but for declining to urge support of some one or other of the several reform side parties that were in the field.

The particular reform party which our critics admonished us we were conscience-bound to support was in each instance, of course, the one with which the critic himself had affiliated. There, would, indeed, have been no lack of variety for a choice, not less than five of these parties being represented on the official ballot. Their importance as political factors may be inferred from the vote they commanded. The socialist party polled 4,713, less than 1 2-3 per cent. of the total. The prohibition party polled 2,804, less than 1 per cent. The social-democratic party polled 1,844, less than 2-3 of 1 per cent. The single tax party polled 950, less than 1-3 of 1 per cent. The socialist-labor party polled 638, less than 1-4 of 1 per cent. We are inclined to think that men who take politics seriously will