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The democratic and the republican machines of Chicago are vigorously charging each other with having received a \$10,000 campaign contribution for spring election purposes from the city railway monopoly. It is not improbable that both charges are true.

Peoria is in the midst of a municipal campaign in which the democrats are well represented on the street franchise question, both in their candidate for mayor and in their platform. William F. Bryan, the candidate, has a record of two years in the city council, where he has won public confidence as a consistent adversary of franchise grabbing. Of the platform nothing more need be said than to quote the first plank:

That, in all franchises hereafter granted by the Peoria city council, reservation should be made for the city to purchase the franchise plant whenever it decides to do so—the purchase price to be the fair market value of the plant, nothing to be allowed for the unexpired term of the franchise.

A movement among women is reported from Germany which has for its object a gigantic protest against the agrarian tariff duties. The call has been signed by more than a million women. They complain that these duties raise the price of the necessities of life, to the injury especially of the working classes. Essentially this is an uprising against protection. The agrarian duties have been imposed upon agricultural products for the purpose of buttressing the values of farming land. It is a landlord's policy, as all protection movements

are. In Germany now, as in England 60 years ago, protection is in the interest mainly of the great landlords of farms; in the United States it is in the interest of the great landlords of mines, forests, etc. Everywhere it is a policy of oppression and plunder.

The American allies of the British ministry seem to be in a hurry to recognize British sovereignty over the South African republic and the Orange Free State. In the annual review of the commerce of the United States, just issued by the American state department, the former is described as "the Transvaal" and the latter as "Orange River Colony," the British appellations; and in a footnote it is explained that the two republics have been annexed by Great Britain. Since Great Britain herself has not yet formally announced the annexation to the other powers, this documentary recognition of British jurisdiction is at least premature, not to say unfriendly to the republics, which continue to contest the British conquest. Probably this act of recognition is attributable either to a stupid or to a swift clerk; but coming as it does from the state department there should be promptly made an authentic disclaimer of intention. Silence under these circumstances would give color of authority to the implied recognition.

A very significant remark came to light through the Chicago Tribune of the 11th. It was packed away in an inside paragraph of the Washington correspondence, and related to the demands this country is making upon Cuba. If these demands are not submitted to, it reads, the shrewdest Cuban leaders fear that—

Congress will interpret this at once as a refusal to accept independence. The offer to Cuba and the refusal by the Cubans would be considered as a

fulfillment of the Teller pledge, and the way to immediate annexation would be opened at once.

Of course that notion originated with no Cuban leaders, shrewd or otherwise. But, as the Chicago Tribune is the western organ of the administration, it may not improbably have originated in the white house. There is ample evidence, at any rate, of a burning desire on the part of certain Americans to redeem the Teller pledge in some such hypocritical fashion.

Tom L. Johnson's mayoralty campaign in Cleveland has opened with enthusiasm. His meetings are numerous and large. A feature is the questioning. It is freely invited, and questioners are courteously treated. Johnson greets his audiences with startling but characteristic candor. At a meeting in the heart of the labor district, some one described him in a question as a friend of the workingman. Usually candidates for office make the most of that kind of flattery. But Johnson promptly explained:

I don't know as to that. But I know I've been a mighty good friend to Tom Johnson. I lowered the working hours of the men on my street railroad and I raised their wages, but I did not do that because I loved them. I did that because I thought it was the best thing for the company.

It is stimulating to American self-respect to find a candidate for office who does not think it worth while to be a demagogue. Usually, also, when a rich man runs for office he doesn't go out of his way to offend anybody—not even the fellows who want to get at his barrel. But in the same speech Johnson gave notice that he intended to open no barrel. "I want to say right here," said he, "that in this campaign I have no use for boodlers, and any man who thinks he can get money out of

me might just as well stay away. I won't buy votes. If I can't be elected honestly, I don't want the office." To this plain spoken notice he added that his election was a matter of slight personal concern to him and that whether elected or not he intended to serve his city to the fullest extent in his power.

The objection to Johnson which is being worked most vigorously is the accusation that he is not sincere. This is an allusion to the fact that while he opposes monopoly he has made his fortune from monopolies. One peculiarity about this objection is the fact that it is the monopolists and their henchmen who use it. They try to create the impression that as a monopolist he cannot be sincere in assailing monopoly. But he has himself put a question which takes the ground from under that objection. He wants to know why it is, if these monopolists think him insincere in opposing monopoly, that they so strenuously oppose him. The truth is that what really disturbs these people is their conviction that Johnson is sincere. Insincere anti-monopolists have never given monopolists a moment's uneasiness nor excited in them a particle of hostility, since time began. Not a few of the insincere sort, some of whom are now more or less openly fighting Johnson in Cleveland, are secretly upon monopoly pay rolls.

It is because monopolists of the Johnson type are so rare, that he is charged with insincerity. The superficial contradiction between his former business connections and his economic principles—a monopolist anti-monopolist—excites wonder, which hunts for an explanation and takes up with the first thing that comes along. Yet there is nothing suspicious about this contradiction. The most depressing thing about our political life is not that a monopolist should be opposed to perpetuating monopoly by law, but that monopolists generally should be in favor of it. The former attitude implies a de-

sire for better things even at personal loss; the latter implies a desire to subordinate the better possibilities of social life to personal gain.

Be it observed that monopolists cannot make things better by ceasing to be monopolists; they can make things better only by throwing the weight of their influence against the perpetuation of monopoly. This is the sane policy that Johnson has adopted. He adopted it more than 15 years ago. At that early day he was one of the contributors who made Henry George's first mayoralty campaign a possibility under the burdensome election laws of the time; and from that day to this he has consistently, devotedly and disinterestedly promoted the principles he imbibed from George. And when occasion has demanded it, he has proved his fidelity by a defiant manifestation of moral courage that nothing short of the profoundest sincerity could evoke. In the estimation of those who have been close enough to Tom L. Johnson to know what his ambitions are, his sincerity is as far above reproach as his ability is above question. After an intimacy with him of ten years Henry George retorted to a caviller, "I should as soon think of doubting my own sincerity as Tom L. Johnson's."

Mayor Harrison is brought up with a round turn by the Chicago Tribune upon his trifling with the street franchise question. His hobby in connection with this question is "adequate compensation." He seems never to have considered, says the Tribune very justly, "where such payments really come from and what the alternative to their exaction would be." Where such payments really do come from the Tribune pointedly explains. "The exacting of such compensation," it says, "in the case, for example, of street railway franchises, is special taxation of street railway passengers as such." It adds that this constitutes "one of the most unjust and impolitic in-

stances of indirect taxation anywhere to be found;" because it forces the working class families to contribute most heavily toward the compensation fund, they being the principal users of street cars. The alternative to compensation which the Tribune names is reduction in fares, and as it truly observes, "public opinion is going over steadily, and irresistibly to this alternative."

Facts are coming to light which show that in proposing "compensation" to the city for franchises, Mayor Harrison is playing into the hands of the street car monopolists. They could well afford to pay a large percentage upon gross receipts for such an extension as Mr. Harrison is disposed to concede, with its privilege of exacting fares of five cents. Ten per cent. of gross receipts would be only half a cent a fare, and even 20 per cent. would be only one cent a fare. That extraordinarily large rate of compensation to the city would leave the monopolies a net fare of four cents. Yet Tom L. Johnson has offered to take the Columbus system on a three-cent fare, to buy off all rights at a fair valuation, and at any time to turn over the plant to the city upon being reimbursed for its actual cost and interest, meantime managing it so as to furnish the highest class of service and to pay the highest rate of wages. The motive of this offer was not, it is true, strictly a business one. Mr. Johnson simply intervened in behalf of the people of Columbus against local street car monopoly. Yet he asserted at the time that it was a business proposition essentially, because he knew from experience it would yield a fair business profit. And now comes Albert L. Johnson, in the character simply and solely of a business man aiming to make money, who, with prominent capitalists behind him—capitalists who are not philanthropists—offers to establish in the city of Philadelphia a street car system with universal transfers, on the basis of a three-cent fare. This Philadelphia proposition