

erty and not public property, the land is handed over to individuals as a social trust. It is to be well utilized, to furnish food and clothing to man, and sites for his dwellings. If we reflect on what this implies, do we not readily perceive that it throws a flood of light on the question: What may I own?

If private property is a trust from society, a social institution, an individual as an individual cannot change it. We must make use of external valuable things, and we are responsible as members of society, and not as individuals, for the institution of private property in its present form. It is not for the individual to change the institution of private property in land. If the individual thinks that some other form of landed property is better than the present, he may advocate a change, but then he must leave it to society to make this change or not.

But there is something more to be said than that. If private property is a social trust, has the individual a right to refuse that trust? Is it not incumbent upon the individual to show good grounds for such a refusal? Let us take for illustration our clergyman who was convinced that the private ownership of land was not consistent with justice. Might not society address him in this wise? "Private property in land is a social institution and is a social trust. Accept this trust and use it for the interests of society. You say that you think the public ownership of land in some form or another would be a good thing, but that is not something of which society has as yet become convinced. The social mind is not yet persuaded. Private property in land exists as a matter of fact, and it involves a trust—that is to say, not only a privilege but an obligation."

Is not this position sound? If our clergyman believes that nationalization, so called, of the land is in the interests of society, he may attempt to persuade others that such is the case, while at the same time he accepts the trust of private property in land. Is it not evident that if he refuses the trust, it may fall into the hands of less conscientious persons, who will not make so good a use of it as he can? If, indeed, he conscientiously believes that the great thing needed, the thing above all others, is the nationalization of land, let him use the income of his private landed property to advance his view. It is not our purpose to argue concerning the correctness of

his view; we simply take the case as an illustration.

The argument which has just been advanced applies manifestly to the ownership of gas stock, railway stock, telephone and telegraph lines, etc. Of course, it is an entirely different thing, and one which needs no consideration at present, when a man on account of his private interests refrains from an expression of his own opinion, or attempts to suppress the expression of opinion by others. . . . We must have the regulation afforded either by public property or by private property in the case of land, of gas supply, of railway services, etc. But it may be asked: Does the social theory of property carry, then, no limitations upon the rights of ownership? Take the case of gambling halls and resorts of vice in cities. Can a person who tries to regulate his conduct by ethical consideration own property which is used to promote gambling or other vices? Certainly not. Here we have not to do with simply a question of expediency. The question is not: Shall we have public or private ownership? It is not admitted that the pursuits just mentioned are desirable. What the ethically sound person wants in these cases is entire suppression, or the nearest possible approach thereto. Consequently, no one who attempts to govern his conduct by ethical considerations will participate in evil pursuits and occupations through ownership of property.

But to return to our question of the traffic in intoxicating beverages. May a person own property connected in any way with such traffic? The answer depends precisely upon the view which one takes of the liquor traffic. If we think it a necessary and desirable thing, and all that is wanted is moderation in the use of intoxicating beverages, then we cannot condemn the persons who own the property in which the traffic is carried on with an honest effort to avoid anything which promotes excessive indulgence. But if we say that this traffic in intoxicating beverages works evil and only evil, then we must condemn those who own property used for saloons, or otherwise consciously and purposely connected with the traffic in intoxicating beverages. . . .

It is hoped that what has been said will be helpful theoretically and practically in working out ethical aspects of ownership; and in conclusion, the following is offered in a tentative way as what may be called the ethical law of ownership: When the service or commodity furnished is socially desir-

able, private property in the goods connected with the traffic or business is ethically permissible, if legally allowed. When the service or commodity furnished is socially injurious, private property in the good connected with the traffic or business is reprehensible, whether legally allowed or not.

MAYOR JOHNSON'S WAY.

NO POLITICAL ASSESSMENTS.

Superintendent of Streets John Wilhelm was discharged by Director Salen at the instigation of Mayor Johnson, yesterday afternoon. Mr. Johnson stated that there were a number of reasons for Wilhelm's removal, but that the primary cause was that he had attempted to levy a political assessment in his department.

A few days ago Superintendent Wilhelm caused his secretary to make out notes to be sent to each employe of his department requesting an assessment of one per cent. of their salaries for campaign purposes, this fall. These notes were not taken in a kindly spirit by some of the jobholders, and a copy was presented to Mayor Johnson. The mayor at once sent for Director Salen and declared that Wilhelm must be decapitated.

As the mayor and Salen were leaving the city hall together they encountered Wilhelm on the sidewalk.

"You have been making trouble," said the mayor to Wilhelm.

"What do you mean?" asked Wilhelm.

"You tell him," said the mayor to Salen, as he stepped into his carriage.

Salen and Wilhelm went to the office of the director of public works, and Salen accused the superintendent of having attempted to levy a political assessment in spite of direct orders from the mayor that no assessments were to be raised. Wilhelm admitted the charge, and Salen announced that the mayor wished Wilhelm to hand in his resignation. Wilhelm flatly refused to comply with this request. He told Salen he had no reason for resigning, and said that if he wanted to get rid of him he would have to discharge him.

Salen attempted to reason with him, but without avail. He then told Wilhelm that he had better think the matter over. Wilhelm left Salen's office, and a short time later his discharge was upon his desk.

Mr. Johnson is very strongly opposed to political assessments of all kinds and had supposed that none were being levied under his administration. The mayor said that he had

not decided upon Wilhelm's successor.
—Cleveland Plain Dealer, of August 9.

THE STREET RAILWAY COMPANIES MUST OBEY THE ORDINANCES.

Mayor Johnson combated with Director of Public Works Salen and with the Little Consolidated upon the same issue, yesterday, and came out victorious in each instance. The contest with the director occurred at the board of control meeting yesterday morning, and the subject of contention was the laying of new rails by the Little Consolidated in Superior street between the Square and Erie street. Mayor Johnson had learned that the rails which are being put down are not groove rails, as was required in an ordinance recently passed by the council. He requested Director Salen to stop the work at once and to force the Little Consolidated to live up to the requirements of the ordinance.

"I am informed," replied Director Salen, "that the company is unable to obtain groove rails."

"Then you are misinformed," said the mayor. "I could get those rails within ten days."

"The company says they cannot be obtained."

"Well, that is not so. An ordinance was passed for the express purpose of obtaining groove rails on the downtown thoroughfares. I think the work should be stopped at once."

"I do not think the street ought to be left open," persisted Salen.

"There is no reason why the street should be left open. Stop their laying the flat rails and they will get other rails which will answer the requirements of the ordinance."

"I will think it over," said Salen.

"No, that will not do," said the mayor, evidently becoming aroused at Salen's attitude of obstinacy. "I want your decision right now. Will you stop that work at once, or won't you?"

"I don't think the street ought to be left open," doggedly replied Salen.

"Will you stop that work or not, yes or no?" exclaimed the mayor.

Salen hesitated in replying.

"Because," continued the mayor, "if you don't have that work stopped immediately I will have it stopped by the director of police without consulting you."

"Well, I'll stop it," said Salen, but—

"All right," said the mayor, "and if the company says it can't get groove rails come to me and I will get them myself. We will have that work done as it ought to be if we have to do it ourselves. The Little Consolidated can get these rails if they wish to.

The Big Consolidated had no trouble in securing them."

The laying of rails was progressing in front of the city hall, and the loud crash as they were being riveted down was audible in the board room. City Engineer Carter at once left the room to order the work stopped. He found Superintendent George Mulhern, of the Little Consolidated, personally supervising the work. In three minutes Mr. Mulhern was in the mayor's office in a very excited frame of mind.

Mr. Mulhern explained to Mr. Johnson that it would be impossible for the company to obtain groove rails. Mayor Johnson doubted the accuracy of this statement. Mulhern then asked to be allowed to connect up the rails already laid, so that traffic could be resumed on both tracks. The mayor would not allow this, declaring that not another rail should be laid until the groove rails were obtained in accordance with the ordinance. Mulhern then left, and succumbing to the inevitable ordered the laborers to quit work. At the same time the mayor requested Police Director Dunn to place a policeman on guard to see that no work be done. He also directed that two officers be placed on duty all night to see that the order was not violated.

Two hours later Superintendent Mulhern again called at the mayor's office. When he emerged this time it was with a smiling countenance.

"We will resume work in the morning," he said.

"With flat rails?" was asked.

"No, sir, with groove rails, the same as required in the ordinance."

"You find, then, that you will be able to get the rails?"

"Yes, they will be on hand in the morning."

"Why didn't you lay groove rails in the first place instead of the flat ones?"

"Oh, didn't know anything about that ordinance. Never heard of it until to-day," and Mr. Mulhern smiled benignantly and retired.

The ordinance passed recently by the council provides that whenever new rails are laid by either of the street railroad companies they shall be of the groove pattern. This rail makes scarcely any depression in the streets, and is better for all kinds of vehicles. Both companies accepted the provisions of the ordinance as reasonable, and it has been lived up to by the Big Consolidated. The work at present being done by the Little Consolidated consists in taking up the old cable conduits and laying new rails.

The taking up of the conduits was

ordered by the board of control, as it was feared that the accumulation of filth through the open slots would be a menace to public health.—Plain Dealer, of August 9.

THE MAYOR'S TAX BULLETINS PRODUCE RESULTS.

Mayor Johnson's tax bulletins are having the desired effect. Discontent with the returns is being stirred up all over the city and the board of review is receiving letters from numerous taxpayers asking for remittances.

Yesterday morning an irate woman from Oregon street stepped into the board of review room.

"Is this the tax office?" she asked.

Upon being told that it was, she said: "Where's my \$1.10?"

"Your \$1.10!" exclaimed Sarstead, one of the members of the board, in surprise. "I don't know what you are talking about."

"Why, that is the money I paid on my taxes that I should not have paid. You assessed me too high, and I want you to take it off."

"How do you know we assessed you too high?" asked Sarstead.

"Because it says so right here and I want that money back." With a triumphant smile the woman produced one of Mayor Johnson's tax bulletins.

"Oh," laughed the board, "that has nothing to do with us."

"I'd like to know why it hasn't," exclaimed the woman, angrily. "You've got to pay that money back. I have paid \$15.30 taxes, when I should have paid only \$14.20, according to this book."

The members of the board explained that the statement was not official.

"Why," exclaimed the woman, "it is from the mayor himself."

It was then explained that the mayor was not on the tax board and that if there was anything wrong with the appraisement a petition should be filed and the board would look it up. The woman could not be convinced that she was not being swindled directly in some way or other, however, and left the office with vengeance in her eye and the vow that she would see the mayor.—Plain Dealer of August 15.

There is an old Shakespearean joke that is worth the retelling at this time. A wag, after having witnessed an unusually villainous performance of "Hamlet," remarked: "Now is the time to settle the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. Let the graves of both be dug up and see which of the two turned over."—The Woman's Journal.