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The Chicago board of review has decided that under the law it has no authority to assess the value of franchises belonging to corporations, this being a function of the state board of equalization. So the immense monopoly values of Chicago street rights are to escape the scrutiny of the local taxing authorities. Yet the decision is very likely a correct interpretation of the law; and what the state board does when it comes to play this game of fiscal thimble rig will now be of unusual interest.

Bishop Potter is a man of warm sympathies, and if only he were able to think better, his writings might be more valuable. Take, for instance, his latest, in which he tries, milk-and-water fashion, to reconcile the conflicting interests of labor unions and trusts, or, as he calls them, "labor and capital." His idea is a "republic in which he of largest gifts will have learnt that his noblest and sweetest use of them is not for his own gain or his own aggrandizement, but for every weaker, lowlier, less endowed brother or sister, who may need to have a narrow and sordid life touched with the hand of brotherly help and illumined by the light of brotherly love." Here is sympathy in abundance and of the warmest kind. But it serves only to obscure the fact that narrow and sordid lives are products of a civilization which destroys the rights of many by maintaining privileges for the few. Of this question, Bishop Potter has nothing to say. Yet it is a deeper question than the sentimental one he presents in the guise of brotherhood. It is a question of justice,

and justice comes before charity, even the charming charity which he describes. If Bishop Potter were a thinking man as well as sympathetic, he would see that equality means not necessarily equality of life, not "the dead level of a dreary commonplace;" but the equality with which God has endowed every human creature—equality of right to natural and social opportunities. This is brotherhood; while it is only charity that Bishop Potter exalts to the plane of brotherhood.

It is not so much reorganization as education in elementary democracy that the Democratic party needs. Corrupted by long contact and frequent business intercourse with the dominant party of centralization, it has also imbibed many of its political heresies. Protective tariffs, federal supervision of elections, government by injunction, a growing regular army, bounties, pensions, and the treating of franchises as contracts instead of licenses—all these perniciously undemocratic doctrines have so-called "democratic" support. A reverence for officials, merely as officials, has also grown up, so that so-called democrats think that the supreme court, for instance, should not only be above suspicion, which is true, but should also be above criticism when not above suspicion, which is dangerous doctrine for a republic. The first elementary lesson for the Democratic party to learn is that public officials of all grades are neither deities nor masters, but servants. The second is that questions of public policy should always be brought to the test and measured by the standards of democratic principle.

Now that the discussion about changing Inauguration day and the day for the beginning of the congress-

sional term from the 4th of March is renewed, it would be well to bear in mind that the great desideratum is not to push the day farther yet from election day, but to bring it nearer. Too long a period already intervenes between elections of presidents and congressmen and their taking office. A new congress and a new administration should begin as soon after election as possible, so that they may come fresh from the people. As our elections occur in November, the successful candidates ought to take office not later than the following January. Whether any change can be made with reference to the inauguration of president, without amending the constitution, is more than doubtful. But there would be no difficulty in changing the beginning of congressional terms from March to January by mere act of congress. And as to the president, if the term of an incumbent can be constitutionally extended from March to April, as is proposed, it can be extended from March to the following January; and this is the proper change to make if the constitution admits of any change at all.

One of the political sensations of the season—the summer season, which is proverbial as the sprouting season of political booms that wither—is an announcement that Mr. Bryan has pledged himself to support Mayor Harrison of Chicago for the next Democratic nomination for president. It is hardly necessary to state that this announcement is not made upon the authority of Mr. Bryan. Strange as it may seem to some people, who, unable to discredit Mr. Bryan's integrity, want to regard him, for want of a better basis for hostility, as a fool—strange as it may seem to such people, Mr. Bryan has a good stock of common

sense. But how much of that sort of equipment Mr. Harrison's political trainers credit Bryan with may be inferred from their far and wide advertisement of him this week, as having committed himself to Harrison's summer-solstice candidacy. If Mr. Bryan were guilty of so foolish a thing, his bitterest enemy could do him no worse turn than to advertise it. If he is not guilty of it, only an enemy or a dolt could couple his name with a faked-up story that he is. For our part, until very much better evidence is forthcoming than the Chicago ring can furnish, we prefer to believe that Mr. Bryan is still the honest and level-headed leader of American democracy that his whole career thus far has shown him to be. To believe this, is to know that he has not agreed to lend his name and influence to the ambitious, intriguing and politically treacherous mayor of Chicago, whom he must know to be without political principle, and whom he cannot but suspect of having traded the presidential vote of Chicago in the autumn of 1900 for the mayoralty vote of Chicago in the spring of 1901.

On mere grounds of ordinary political expediency, Mr. Bryan could not support Mayor Harrison's absurd pretensions. Harrison would be unable to carry his own state in the national convention. He could not carry his own party in his own state at the election. And the members of his own party who would vote against him if he were the candidate are the class of men who constitute the backbone of Bryan's political strength. But that is not the only consideration. Mr. Bryan has thus far confirmed the faith of democratic Democrats in his devotion to democratic principles. They are confident that he means it when he says he stands for these principles regardless of men. They believe, therefore, that although he is not himself a candidate, yet that he will not so entangle himself in the petty intrigues of ambitious small fry that he cannot

be the candidate if circumstances demand it. And circumstances might demand this. If a heavy cloud of hard times should darken the land before the convention of 1904, and public opinion should attribute the stagnation and suffering to an iniquitous money system, which is not improbable and certainly not impossible, then there would be only one conceivable Democratic candidate; and he would be Bryan, whether he desired the candidacy or not. Should this contingency not arise, it is improbable, since Mr. Bryan has declared himself out of the field, that there would be a demand for his nomination. But, in any event, he would be regarded as one, if not the principal one, of the party leaders, with a relation to the party of too delicate a nature to warrant him in consenting to entanglements with any candidate three years before the convention, much less with one whose political character, policies and methods place him in the category of the impossible.

Congressman Hull has returned from the Philippines. He throws further light upon the motives which led this great American republic to make war upon its ally, the Philippine republic, when in an interview he says that he is "convinced that we only fairly guess the richness of our Philippine possessions." "Mindanao," he tells us, "is full of gold." While there he saw a nugget as big as his fist. And he complains of the Spooner law as "most unwise legislation" by which "we are badly handicapped," because it temporarily holds back enterprising Yankees from grabbing Philippine land. Mr. Hull is the man who serves his country in congress by supporting laws creating privileges in the Philippines, and makes his living by working the privileges. One remark in his interview is significant with reference to the pacification of the islands. It is this: "If troops were withdrawn the civil governments would fall at once, as they are only maintained by the presence of the soldiers." Apro-

pos of this remark, isn't that the way the tsar maintains in Russia what he also calls civil government?

This curious controversy has been submitted to us for an opinion: "In a discussion A argues that there never was manhood suffrage in the United States until 1865-67; whereas B argues that there was in theory, but that Negroes were barred as being not men?" Such a controversy cannot be settled, because it turns upon individual motives. The fact is, and to this both disputants agree, that Negroes were not generally allowed to vote prior to the close of the civil war. Consequently, until that time the principle of manhood suffrage was not operative. But whether the dominant race was governed in this violation of fundamental principle by indifference to the principle, or by a conviction that Negroes were not men, or by other reasons, no one can tell. The probability is that the governing motive was either indifference or hostility to the principle. We do not believe that any intelligent person does now or ever did believe that Negroes are not men. All professions of such belief were most probably made to evade an embarrassing issue. In our opinion manhood suffrage, which includes womanhood suffrage, has always existed in theory as a fundamental principle of the American government. The declaration of independence admits of no other interpretation, and the constitution rests in terms upon the consent not of the white people alone, nor of the male people alone, but of all the people of the United States. If the principle is as yet inoperative, that is not because it does not exist. It is because its operation is obstructed.

A well-known Canadian, the journalist, author and caricaturist, J. W. Bengough, criticises the admirable article by Charles E. Russell reprinted in these columns in the issue of August 24, at page 316, in which Mr. Russell castigates the British government for its prosecution of a