

steel, etc., is worth less than one-quarter the value of the room it takes up. In the business sections the building that is worth as much as the land it stands on is a rare exception. Those below Union Square of which this may be said may be counted on one's fingers. Uncle Russell Sage lives in a \$10,000 house on a \$250,000 lot. John Wanamaker's great store is worth \$400,000, while the land under it is worth \$1,600,000. The Equitable building, ten stories high, numbered among New York's finest structures, is assessed at \$2,580,000, while the land under it is valued at \$8,365,000. The Waldorf-Astoria and the Fifth Avenue hotel each stand on ground assessed at \$4,000,000; the former structure is assessed at \$5,000,000 and the latter at \$500,000. R. H. Macy Co.'s great \$6,000,000 store is assessed at \$3,500,000 for the land and \$2,800,000 for the building. The Metropolitan opera house is worth \$405,000, but it takes up \$2,225,000 worth of room. The palatial home of the New York Herald is worth \$200,000, and it stands on a Broadway and Fifth Avenue lot worth \$1,900,000. The Stewart building, a marble structure of which New York is justly proud, is worth \$520,000, and the land under it is valued at \$2,850,000. But the Park Row building, towering 28 stories toward heaven, is worth \$2,000,000, taking up only \$1,241,000 worth of space.

Think of it, you who believe in straight taxation! A few centuries ago the great metropolis was non-existent and the land worth \$0. Now the presence of a great population makes the land worth the vast sum, according to the assessment rolls, of \$3,697,686,935. The labor of past and present generations has built up a city worth \$1,100,657,854. The grand total foots up the inconceivable sum of \$4,798,344,789!

Think of it—more than three-fourths of this sum represents the capitalized power of exacting tribute that goes with land ownership in fee simple, while less than the quarter remaining represents the concrete, tangible results of the labor of some eight generations! When you come to think about it, what measure could be better calculated to make the power of tribute less and increase the worth of human labor than this: Tax that tribute into the communal treasury until not a cent remains in private hands, at the same time exempting human labor and its fruits from any tax whatsoever. This will kill land speculation but not the real estate business, which, legitimately, is the building up of a city. It will force improvement, but it will at the same time make improvement easier by exempting it from taxation. Improvement now waits for the pressure of demand to make high rentals possible, and they must be very high indeed to be profitable. But under the single tax the improver could make more money at low rentals than he can now at the high ones, because the

necessity for the enormous investment in land would be gone.

New York is a collection of "chicken coops"—of temporary "taxpayers." It needs rebuilding. This is going on as fast as it becomes profitable, which is none too fast. We need legislation to make improvement profitable—to make dog-in-the-manger speculating unprofitable. Stop taxing the builders—tax the land values instead.

Among those who will read this there are many who are acquainted with people in the metropolis—business men, laborers, politicians—men of all classes. Correspond with them—call attention to the separate assessment—urge them to study it and see how they are either "done" by or "doing" others, as the case may be.

Great Scott! Think of it! The metropolis of the western hemisphere worth only eleven forty-eighths of the value of the room it takes up in the world! This ought not to be.

STEPHEN BELL.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, Jan. 28.

Immediately after his welcome-home reception at Lincoln (p. 663), William J. Bryan went East to fill speaking engagements. His first engagement was at the nineteenth annual dinner of the Holland Society, at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, where he is reported to have been "the chief figure at the principal table." His speech was free from partisanship, but not from references to the immoralities of contemporaneous politics. Its dominant note was against war, but Mr. Bryan mentioned—

one thing far more dangerous than war—that is the organization of capital, which has no conscience. Another thing is the use of money in elections. It has debauched politics. It has made it possible to buy voters in the streets. To my mind this is the greatest menace to the country.

Referring to these and other social evils, he insisted that they are due, not to material progress but to the fact that the moral sense of the community has not kept pace with material progress. Another of the distinguished speakers on this occasion was the Chinese minister, Chentung Liang Cheng, who spoke earnestly for the abolition of war, concluding with the hope that "the time is not far distant when war between na-

tions will be only a painful memory of the barbarous past."

On the 26th Mr. Bryan addressed a meeting at Madison Square Garden, which he had called himself. Though the weather was extremely inclement, and no organization aided to make the meeting a success, the large hall is described by press dispatches as having been "filled from main floor to the uppermost gallery." The audience is reported to have been composed of "men in all walks of life, including clergymen by the score, judges now on the bench, laborers and business men," who "stood on their feet cheering until the speaker was compelled to raise his hands for silence and beg that he be permitted to resume his speech." It was notable also for its non-attendants. "Organization Democrats," say the reports, "were conspicuous only because of their absence," and among the large number of clergymen there "were few of the better known preachers of the city." Mr. Bryan's subject was "Moral Issues." In opening, he explained:

I have preferred to speak independently of any organization because I do not care to embarrass any friends or supporters who may differ from me in opinion. Both I and they, therefore, are left to pursue in the future, as we have in the past the course that seems to us best.

He made no reference to candidates, insisting that the essential thing is not so much the man as what the man stands for and in what direction he is going to lead the party. To the plea that it is "desirable for all Democrats to get together," when that plea is urged by itself, Mr. Bryan said he had turned a deaf ear because he wanted to know what the getting together is for, "whether to defend rights or to enter on a course of pillage." On this line he continued:

The trouble with our government today is that it is too much influenced in its operations by men whose only loyalty is loyalty to the money bags. "Will it pay?" has been substituted for "Is it right?" and as a consequence our legislative assemblies, city, State and national, are becoming auction-rooms in which governmental privileges are knocked down to the highest bidder. One evidence that our party was honestly seeking to secure justice to the

masses in 1896 and 1900 is to be found in the fact that our campaign funds were insignificant in both campaigns. In 1892 the Democratic party collected a large campaign fund from the corporations. It spent more than \$1,000,000 in the two States of New York and Indiana alone, and what was the result? The most plutocratic administration this country had ever known. We witnessed a surrender to organized and predatory wealth so abject and so complete that seven years of exile from power have not entirely removed the stain from the party. You ask why I am opposed to the reorganization of the Democratic party? Because I want my party to define the rights of the people; I want it to be the fearless champion of their interests; I want it to present the moral issue involved in public questions and to appeal to the public conscience.

In closing, Mr. Bryan "hurled defiance," as the reports express it, "at that element within the Democratic party which is now clamoring for another reorganization," by saying:

I helped to reorganize the Democratic party to rescue it from the doctrine that makes money the master and all else the servant. I have never regretted what I did and I would do it again. Let the Republican party be challenged to meet the moral issue presented—this is democratic, this is patriotic. Let this be done, and unless reason and love of country have fled we shall fight without being ashamed. If we lose, it will be but a temporary defeat and will bring no disgrace with it. If we win, the victory will mean much for our country and for the world.

Meanwhile Mr. Bryan's insistence that it is more important for the Democratic party to be morally right than to win by pacifying monopoly interests, appears from the newspaper reports to be creating great commotion among the official class of Democrats. The following extract from Walter Wellman's Washington dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald of the 24th seems fairly to summarize the situation in that respect:

William Jennings Bryan's "rule or ruin" pronouncement has stirred Democratic senators and representatives almost to a fury of indignation. Their public comments on Colonel Bryan's declaration that the Kansas City platform must be reaffirmed are caustic enough, but their private remarks are absolutely unprintable. Leading Democrats say they cannot understand Bryan's game. Some think he is determined to wreck the party in order to show that no Democrat can succeed in winning the

Presidency where he failed twice. Others believe he is consumed by vanity and a desire to advertise himself, and that he is also suffering under the sting of the snub—for that is what it was—administered to him by the Democratic national committee at its meeting here a few weeks ago. At any rate nine Democrats out of ten in Washington are thoroughly disgusted with his course. They say just as the party was trying to get itself in shape to put up a stiff fight for the Presidency this year Mr. Bryan comes along and kicks up a rumpus which can do no one on earth the slightest good, and which may do a world of harm.

In response to the distorted reports of his views (for which he has certainly given no occasion in his speeches), Mr. Bryan gave out the following interview at New York on the 27th:

While a great outcry has been made because I have demanded the reaffirmation of the Kansas City platform, and an attempt has been made to show that I want to fight over again the battle of 1896, those who are best acquainted with my real views have known that I have been misunderstood. Ever since 1900 I felt that the question of gold or silver is no longer of great importance. But that does not mean that I consider the question answered. I believe it has been absorbed in an issue of greater importance. In the same manner the questions involving trusts, labor unions and imperialism have been included in that larger question: "Shall the money changers rule the United States?" I do not favor making silver the paramount issue of the campaign. I do not favor making the trusts the paramount issue of the campaign. Neither do I believe it wise to make imperialism the paramount issue. The tariff would not be accepted as the paramount issue. But all should be merged into the greater question which I have put into words. That is my suggestion, and I am willing for it to be submitted in advance of the convention to the public to be passed upon by the majority of the Democratic voters.

Complete returns from the Australian Commonwealth elections (p. 646) are now at hand. They show the following result:

	Senate.	House.
Ministerialists	8	26
Opposition	13	26
Labor	15	23

The Opposition gains were in New South Wales, while those of the Labor party were in Queensland and West Australia. As New South Wales is distinctively the free trade State of the Commonwealth, and Victoria is as distinctively the protection State, a com-

parison of the results in these two States is interesting:

VICTORIA (pro.)		
	Senate.	House.
Ministerialists	3	16
Opposition	1	5
Labor	2	2

NEW SOUTH WALES (f. t.)		
	Senate.	House.
Ministerialists	0	3
Opposition	6	16
Labor	0	7

But little interest appears to have been taken in the election as a whole, hardly more than a third of the electors having voted. This could not have been due to any special neglect by women, who have been recently enfranchised; for about as many women voted as men. There were four women candidates, but none were elected. The Labor party is reported to have been the best organized and the least apathetic. Among the defeated candidates was Max Hirsch (author of Socialism versus Democracy), the leading single taxer and, next to Mr. Reid, the leading free trader of the Commonwealth. Mr. Hirsch had resigned a seat in the Victorian parliament in order to be a candidate for the Commonwealth parliament. Judging from the result as a whole the probabilities are that the tariff will not be altered. It is likely either that the ministry will go on with its old programme through petty bargains with the Labor party, or that (if the Labor party demands more than the ministry is willing to yield and presses its demands) a coalition will be formed against it.

The Iroquois theater disaster at Chicago (p. 659) has been made the basis of criminal proceedings against the principal manager and several city officials, including the mayor. This is in consequence of the verdict of the Coroner's jury rendered on the 25th, which recommends the indictment of Carter H. Harrison, mayor; of William H. Musham, chief of the fire department; of George Williams, building commissioner, and of Edward Loughlin, building inspector—all for official negligence. Also of William C. Saller, theater fireman; of James E. Cummings, stage carpenter; of William McMullen, operator of the flood light—for negligence as employes of the theater; and of Will J. Davis, president of the Iroquois theater corporation, for negligent