

PROGRESS IN GRAND JUNCTION

Grand Junction, Colo., June 17.

The Initiated Municipal Ownership Ordinance, heretofore presented and filed with the city council of Grand Junction, Colo., was yesterday withdrawn by its friends, and a new ordinance providing for the inventory and appraisal of the present electric light, power and gas plants, and for estimates of new and complete plants, was unanimously adopted by the city council. This ordinance will come up for second reading and final passage in ten days, and will undoubtedly pass.

The new ordinance is satisfactory to the friends of municipal ownership, and is the first step officially taken by the city towards municipal ownership of electric light, power and gas. It is the second step towards the ideal city, outlined in "Nature City," the other step having been taken in 1909 in adopting our charter, followed by a large program of constructing a mountain water system by the city, the paving of the streets, new sewers, cleansing and beautifying the streets and parks, new public buildings, fountains and other public improvements. The bill for a grant of 640 acres from the U. S. Government to the city of fine coal land only eight miles distant is still pending in Congress, the land having been reserved from private entry by the land department. Congressman Taylor writes that there is a fair prospect of its passage this session of Congress.

Our plan is at the next regular election to initiate an ordinance for the gradual exemption of personal property and improvements from municipal taxation, although we intend to move slowly and conservatively at all times.

JAMES W. BUCKLIN.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

A WORD FOR CHARITY.

Salem, Mass., June 14.

It seems time for someone to throw a kind word to the dog. The dog is Organized Charity, trotting humbly at the heels of the noble company of Social Reforms, picking up the crumbs that they, in their occasional lordly moments, drop, and taking the frequent kicks that they turn to bestow on it. Charity suffereth long and is kind. So a devout single taxer, who is yet a friend of dogs, may be permitted to say a word for it.

The ministrants of Organized Charity recognize that their service is temporary and, in the broad sense, superficial, that they but patch the holes in underlying conditions. They may be found supporting the propaganda of all the fundamental social reforms—which seldom reciprocate. They take up their work knowing that "There is no end—the end is death and madness," but yielding to the obvious need of immediate relief—an act of renunciation which, in its personal quality, compares favorably with that of espousing a profound and Utopian cause, and bearing its banner quite harmlessly through a respected life to a tranquil grave.

To say that self-respect is the price demanded by charity, one must have seen charity at its worst, not

at its best. I have watched for some time the Anathema Maranatha itself—the Charity Organization Society of a big city [Associated Charities of Boston] at work, and I am not yet through marvelling at the difference between what it is, and what the people who don't know think it is.

If one lives in the country, or a small town, he has dally helped and been helped by his neighbors. If he lives in a big city, he knows that there are no neighbors—that the people in adjoining houses, adjoining tenements, adjoining rooms, are as likely as not to remain strangers. Well, the Charity Organization Society—begun to keep various charitable institutions from treading on each other's heels—has become just a device for making neighbors. It distributes no doles, and the least of its services is to give food to the hungry. But its laborers find jobs for the jobless, treatment for the sick, guardians for the feeble-minded, friends for the lonely. Where the accidents of our industrial chaos have left a family literally without sufficient support, these workers collect the necessary pension from the agencies most nearly concerned—relatives, friends, the church, funds, public or private, provided to meet such emergencies—finally, if necessary, "benevolent individuals." But for one case where they do this, in nine cases they simply help a family in difficulties to stand on its own feet, finding suitable work for the husband, sobering up the errant son, fighting off the loan shark, getting the sick girl into a sanitarium, dropping a few hints on hygiene and cookery to the wife. People in trouble come to the agents of this Society without loss of self-respect, for they are offered nothing but neighborly advice and assistance, and their self-respect and self-reliance are encouraged by what they receive.

This organization, with no showy beneficences to appeal to emotion, depends for support on the efficiency and economy it can demonstrate. No private business could be run so well and cheaply, for good men who would demand their full worth for Capital, work here for love and a living; and I doubt if any public welfare department, with a hand in the treasury, and the authority of government behind all its decrees, could work so simply, so humbly and so well.

I do not know whether other cities are equally well served. As human institutions go, this is a good one, and a present well-spring in a desert that stands no chance of being irrigated by Singletax for many years to come. We owe it more crumbs and less kicks.

J. W. HELBURN.



A LAND OWNER—NOTHING MORE.

La Porte, Texas, June 16.

The other day the papers in Houston, Texas, mentioned the fact, in speaking of the funeral services of a man who had just died in that city, that only thirteen people were in attendance. The man in question left a fortune estimated at \$10,000,000. True, he was somewhat of a recluse and no members of his family lived with him in Houston, but the fact that a man worth so many millions should pass away and only thirteen people should attend his funeral services is worthy of comment, and brings to the thinking man the question of why it should be so.