

are very small. The population of the state is 480,000 and the land area 1053 square miles (673,920 acres). Nearly one-quarter of the state is woodland. Providence has 203,000 population. Woonsocket, 33,000. Pawtucket 44,000. Three-fourths of the population dwell in cities, and are employed in manufacturing industries. Practically there is no farmer vote to deal with. The manufacturers should not be opposed to the exemption of personal property and improvements from taxation. The people of the state are a progressive, hard-working lot. With a considerable degree of home rule, which they zealously guard, it should not be hard to induce them to support a change in the law, giving each locality full home rule in taxation.

A less hopeful situation, however, is presented in the fact that the state has an antiquated system of electing state senators; one senator being elected from each city or town. The town of West Greenwich with a population of 426 and 120 voters has the same representation in the senate as has Providence, with a population of over 200,000. But this is not a serious obstacle. For with the proper efforts made in each city and town it would be possible to elect senators who would be favorable to home rule in taxation. The state at large very often has elected Democratic Governors, Lieutenant Governor and State Officials, but because of this unfair system the state has remained in Republican control.

Considerable judicious educational work must be done in the state, however, before any change in the tax laws can be made. The people must desire these changes. At the present time the only effort being made is by a few earnest, willing workers led by the twice elected governor of the state, Dr. L. F. C. Garvin. These few men are inadequate to cope with the situation, and should be given the hearty assistance and co-operation of tax reformers generally. If home rule in taxation can be secured, the people through their town meetings will have the entire matter of taxation within their hands. This is really the ideal condition to be hoped for by all who seek advance in tax laws. WILLIAM RYAN.

WHAT THE RAILROAD MONOPOLISTS WANT.

Two streaks of rust and a right of way! How few people realize the force of this pithy sentence as applied to a modern railroad, and yet if you wish to see the difference between the real and the artificial, tangible and intangible, take a trip from a big city for a few miles, then come back again, and keep your eyes open and your brain at work, and see what it is that constitutes the "terminal facilities" of a railroad. Acres, just hundreds of acres of enormously valuable land in the heart of a populous center like Chicago.

Where is the monopoly or advantage if not in this? Is it in rails? They can be and are constantly reproduced on any scale. Is it in rolling stock? Labor makes cars, engines and rails; has made them all; can make them again and again. There is no monopoly in this; then where is the advantage the railroad monopolist enjoys? Is it in depots, round-houses, bridges, machine shops, or any of the paraphernalia labor has made to transport passengers and freight? Verily no. So true is this that any one can go in the market and buy anything any railroad corporation possesses, except a place to put them.

The Monon Railroad Co. gets from a single lessee entering the Polk St. depot, every year twice as much rent as the original right-of-way cost that corporation. Is this rail rent, tie rent, spike rent, depot rent, or is it ground rent for the use of a choice part of the planet underneath called Chicago, and a very appropriate one to draw railroad business. Three-quarters of a million of dollars, from one lessee! This spells respectable socialized graft; this is an unearned increment of value, a very appropriate term; and the fact that it is unearned is evidence enough on the face of it that those who now appropriate it should be allowed to do so no longer.

This land value is the thing the watered stock is issued against; it is what the gamblers of Wall Street bet on; it is the sole source of their unearned revenues and their political corruption funds. It is to retain this privilege that the railroad grafters will bend their energies; they care nothing for

rails, which can be bought on the market any time, as can everything else they own; all on its way to the junk pile, everything made by labor, but not that made by law, by sheer legislative fiat. Behold, how important is the law to a railroad corporation.

It was to protect this ocean of watered stock that the Railroad Rate Bill was emasculated in the last congress. It was to perpetuate this injustice that the Interstate Commerce Commission was shorn of most of its legal and judicial power. It is not to protect or preserve an honest business that they raise their outcry against government ownership. The railroad managers are willing to sell the government anything they have, that they now own, but will fight to the last ditch any proposition to part with that which they do not own, have not owned and cannot own as private property; the right of way—that invaluable strip of land on which they lay their perishable rails and run their transitory cars.

Their rights of way are obtained by exercise of the sovereign powers of government, the "right of eminent domain," based, as it is upon the theory that the whole is greater than a fraction, an undubitable principle both in theory and in practice, in law, in morals and ineconomics, and the courts, one and all, in countless decisions from the lowest to the highest, have reiterated this time-worn and tested principle that land secured by the power of condemnation for public purposes is, in the nature of things, public land, and that the business done on it is public business. The notion that this enormously valuable and constantly growing value is a private asset of private persons and can be considered private property, is as silly as it is pernicious, and has no warrant either in law or in morals.

The only possible reason that things are now as they are with reference to the railroads of this country is the fact that the people have been unconscious both of their rights and their power. Now they are waking up to a sense of both, and it is this wholesome fact that is striking terror to the hearts of the Wall Street gamblers and manipulators in general. Eternal vigilance is not only the price of liberty, but is

the price we have to pay for good and cheap transportation. The strength of the railroads is in the political and economical weakness of the people. Once this is corrected the rest is easy. If we are sufficiently vigilant we can get the roads for the price of their tangible, physical property, (supplemented by a wise and judicious use of the sovereign power of taxation.) Nothing in civilized government is so potent as this to establish or destroy privilege. Once the people get acquainted with the fact that privilege and equal rights cannot exist in the same country they will disestablish privilege by utilizing the same power that now maintains it—namely taxation—the greatest power to-day of government.

H. H. HARDINGE.

THE CAPTAIN KIDDS OF INDUSTRY "HAVE SEEN THE CAT."

Henry George, with the clearness of vision that was not the least of the distinguishing traits of that great man, in his "Protection or Free Trade" prophesied that the day would come in the United States when monopolies could co-exist with free trade. True, the Americans still hug the delusion of "protection" to their foolish bosoms. There is talk, however, of allowing some of the giant "infant industries" to stand on their own feet, instead of walking all over the feet of their fellow countrymen. The ways and means committee of the House of Representatives, in order to make at least a pretense of carrying out the platform pledge of the dominant party to revise the tariff, has been giving hearings. At these hearings appeared not only those who would revise the tariff downward, but those who would revise it upward. Andrew Carnegie, to the surprise of all and amid the sneers of many, actually advocated the total abolition of the tax on iron ores and on steel. I was at first inclined to share the popular impression, that having amassed hundreds of millions by means of the robber tariff and "cinched his pile" in first mortgage bonds, Carnegie could now afford to pose as an apostle of freedom. My eyes were opened to Mr.