

Pickering Putnam, architect. In his interesting brochure on "The Outlook for the Artisan and His Art," just published by Charles H. Kerr and Company, of Chicago, Mr. Putnam defines socialism as "the substitution of constructive for destructive competition." The difference between the two he succinctly describes. "Destructive" competition is "objective, a seeking to obtain for oneself some object desired equally by others, but without adding to the world's wealth;" whereas "constructive" competition is "subjective, aiming at the development and happiness of the individual without injury to others, through the creation of something useful." We doubt if socialists generally will accept Mr. Putnam's definition. They may well object to it, for it would sweep away their philosophy, which rests upon the idea of abolishing economic competition. What he calls "destructive competition" is nothing but monopoly; and what he calls "constructive competition" is nothing but true economic competition. Mr. Putnam vaguely recognizes this when he says that "the most prominent and dangerous characteristic of the present industrial scramble is not the fostering of a healthful competition, but rather its very destruction by monopoly and special privilege." To foster healthful competition, what is really needed, is very far from being the program of change in industrial details which Mr. Putnam prescribes. All that is needed is the abolition of monopoly and special privilege, which he truly indicates as the antitheses of healthful competition. With freedom and equal opportunity secured to all, men would decide for themselves, through the action and reaction of healthful competition, better than they could through any law making machinery, whether such changes as Mr. Putnam proposes are desirable. Desire would then regulate production. That is what it should do. That is what all classes of economic reformers wish it to do. That is what it naturally would do. Yet that is

what it never can do except through the force of economic competition, of free competition, or, as Mr. Putnam calls it, of "constructive" competition.

It is unfortunate that the old-time American debating society has never developed into something like the parliamentary debating clubs which are found in England and some of her colonies. The old American debating societies were never very useful. Seldom did they discuss questions of more vital interest than "Resolved, That country life is preferable to city life." Vital questions were as a rule taboo. Those of a religious character opened the door to heterodoxy, and those of a political character to partisan rows. Both were, therefore, dangerous. Modern American debating societies, however, do handle questions that have life in them, but usually in academic form, and as a rule men are assigned to debate the question, on this side or the other, with an utter disregard of the debaters' convictions. Debates of that kind can have but little influence either in making debaters or influencing public opinion. Yet debating societies could be so organized as to make them the moulder and mouthpiece of public opinion wherever they exist.

Even in so large and cosmopolitan a city as London the parliamentary debating clubs are real institutions, and in provincial places they exert a marked influence upon public affairs. They are mimic parliaments, where actual measures are as seriously discussed as in the law making body itself. To illustrate the earnestness and public spirit which characterize these clubs, we quote from the leading paper of Durban, Natal, South Africa, the following report:

The concluding meeting of the fifth session of the Durban Parliamentary Debating society was held in the council chamber, town hall, on Tuesday evening last, and proved to be one of the most interesting meetings of the session, the business being the election of leader for the ensuing session. Messrs. McLarty, Tassie and Dunlop were nominated for the post, and the

two first-named were chosen to submit programmes they would be prepared to debate should they be elected. Mr. Tassie's programme was as follows: (a) Imposition of income tax in order to relieve existing duties and abolish the stamp duties; (b) compulsory vaccination of the white population with calf lymph; (c) the introduction of the decimal system of weights and measures; (d) amendment of the customs union tariff as regards the tax on meat; (e) introduction of the postal order system on the same lines as existing in England; (f) proposed issue of loans for railway extensions, acceleration of traffic and the duplicating of the main trunk line; (g) taxation of land values. Mr. McLarty's programme embraced the following: (a) Abolition of taxes on food; (b) imposition of the single tax; (c) entire stoppage of Indian immigration; (d) railway reform and facilities as regards the export of coal; (e) safeguarding of drifts and rivers; (f) provision of open spaces as "lungs" for the populace of towns; (g) vaccination of the white population. Questions were asked the two candidates on their respective programmes, and upon a ballot being taken, Mr. McLarty was declared elected as premier, and Mr. Tassie as leader of the opposition.

No one could participate in debates of that kind without gaining strength as a practical debater, nor could any community maintain such a society without benefit to its political and moral sense. If the entrance into American public life were through similar debating societies, we should soon have a higher grade of politics and a better order of politicians than we are at present familiar with.

#### LAND TENURE AND TAXATION.

Though the imperialistic craze has thrown English politics into confusion as regards foreign policies, pretty much as it has disturbed the currents of politics in the United States, the political tendencies in England were never so satisfactory as now, so far as they concern home government.

Sound principles of taxation are making a distinct impression there upon public sentiment. Split into two great factions as is the liberal party—which corresponds to our democratic party—by the tory principle of imperial expansion, it is nevertheless virtually a unit for the democratic principle of taxing ground values. Upon whatever else that party