

five cent fares, the municipal system under Johnson in Cleveland is making money on three cent fares. Hampered as it is with inadequate rolling stock—a deficiency which is being overcome as fast as is physically possible,—it is nevertheless carrying 460,000 passengers a day, or 60,000 more than the private monopoly system carried, and is operating more economically and collecting fares closer. Owing to the temporary inadequacy of cars after five months of the present municipal regime, the straps are much in use; but not nearly so much as in Chicago after eighteen months of operation under our “strap hanger” franchise.

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The only basis for the Associated Press story that three cent fares have been abandoned in Cleveland and five cent fares resumed, is the introduction of a system for securing full collection of fares. It had been impossible for conductors to make full collections, owing to delays in making change. Many of these delays were caused in good faith by passengers who thoughtlessly presented bills for change—one dollar and two dollar bills. But a large percentage of the delays was caused maliciously by persons who, like the Associated Press agent in Cleveland, were interested in one way and another in embarrassing the new system. Even ten dollar bills were handed to the conductors until the company adopted the awkward plan of requiring these passengers to go to the office of the company for their change, all bills over two dollars in denomination being meanwhile turned in by the conductors. Finally, to completely cure the evil of these delays and prevent the loss, the fare was changed to five cents *unless paid in aluminum tickets*, the tickets being sold by all conductors anywhere at five for fifteen cents and at either end of the line by starters at three cents apiece. It was this common sense requirement—necessary to secure payment for service and to minimize losses from careless or dishonest conductors,—that the Associated Press falsely reported throughout the country as an abandonment of three cent fares and a return to five cent fares.

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Plans are now in progress which will secure the largest possible return of fares with the least possible delay in collection. “Pay-enter” cars are being introduced with fare boxes on the rear platform. The conductors on these cars do nothing but sell fare tickets at the rate of five for fifteen cents. The passenger must put his own ticket into the box on the platform, and does not enter the car until he has done so. When these boxes

are brought into use, three kinds of payment will be allowed: An aluminum ticket costing three cents each in quantities of five, a nickel for passengers having neither tickets nor pennies, and three pennies for passengers preferring pennies to tickets. In other words, the fares will be three cents, with a penalty of two cents to cover loss for making change for passengers who ignore the reasonable requirement that they provide themselves with either tickets or change.

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For three months, a cent was charged for transfers, but this charge is no longer made. To prevent abuses of free transfers, however, the passenger pays a cent to the conductor who gives him his transfer, and receives back a cent from the conductor who takes it up. Experience shows that by thus giving a money value to transfers, passengers seldom take them unless they intend in good faith to use them.

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Despite obstructions by corporation interests both in Cleveland and elsewhere, despite the misrepresentations of local papers and the Associated Press, despite the hard times which have bankrupted private traction systems in New York, and caused others there to pass their dividends for more than a year, despite all the difficulties which enterprises honestly in the public interest always encounter, the Municipal Traction system of Cleveland has a foothold from which it cannot be displaced. Its service is better than ever, better than the Chicago service, better than the New York service; its fares are three cents instead of five to all passengers who provide exact change; and the margin of gross profit over operating expenses is already nearly as much as that of its monopoly predecessor. Whoever qualifies himself to judge can plainly see that Mayor Johnson's street car policy, so far from being the failure it has been represented to be by those who would profit should it fail, is a pronounced success. Only one step yet remains to make its success irrevocably complete, and that is the adoption of the plan by the people at the referendum. Of this no one in Cleveland has any doubt. All expressions of pretended doubt are obviously for stock-jobbing purposes.

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The Single Tax in Washington.

There is a superstition that the farming community will always stand as a rock against the adoption of Henry George's single tax program.

That they will do so is doubtless true, as long as they remain in ignorance. But every one who understands the single tax knows that it would be beneficial to all farmers who farm farms; and farmers themselves are beginning also to find that this is true. Here and there a farmer may be found who grasps the matter; and at Bellingham, Washington, the county Grange has voted unanimously for the adoption of the single tax. A little more of this, and the whole structure of farming opposition will collapse.

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A favorable opportunity for promoting the single tax movement is opening in Washington. The people of that State are to vote in November on an amendment to the Constitution permitting differential taxation. Under the Constitution as it has stood, all property must be assessed alike; but the proposed amendment allows discriminations as to classes of property, the restriction of uniformity of rate being limited to property of the same class. The amendment was proposed in order to enable the legislature to exempt bank deposits; but when adopted, as it probably will be, exemptions of other classes of property will be allowable, and the single taxers are not unlikely to succeed in exempting all personal property and real estate improvements, thereby casting the burden of taxation where it justly belongs—upon the monopoly value of land. This movement will be facilitated by the fact that in western Washington the improvement values of farms are very large relatively to the monopoly value of their sites; and by the additional fact that the labor unions there are already favorable to the single tax idea.

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The "Gentleman" Farmer.

In the industrial society of the United States to-day there are two kinds of farmers. There are the farmers who farm farms, and the farmers who farm gentlemen. A good representative of the latter class is the Country Gentleman of Albany, New York. This paper stands for the interest in farming which goes not to the men who sweat in the fields but to those who sit in the shade and collect the rent or the interest on purchase money mortgages. Naturally enough it is opposed not only to laws that may increase earned wages at the expense of unearned advantages in connection with farming, but also to laws that would enable the earners to dictate laws to the mere appropriators. The referendum, for instance, is particularly objectionable to this journal which represents the farmers who farm gentlemen. There lies before us

a copy of a letter from its editor written to a Granger who had advocated the referendum. It opposes the referendum as applied to anything involving either directly or indirectly the expenditure of public money, because this would play into the hands of the "non-tax paying element" (as if there were any such element except the class that pays taxes with money it doesn't earn), and into the hands of the labor element, "whose purposes are always directly opposed to the interests of the farmers" (as if the interests of any kind of labor could be opposed to the interests of any kind of farmers, except those that farm farms and whom the Country Gentleman represents). In this connection the editor of the Country Gentleman is especially hostile to eight hour laws because they make "everything dearer that the farmer has to buy, while not enhancing by a single mill the price of anything the farmer has to sell." A singular appeal this, to a class which has given in its adhesion to a protective tariff in a country whose farming products get their prices fixed abroad, tariff or no tariff. But that aside, the editor of the Country Gentleman has slippery notions of the relation of prices to earnings. High wages don't mean low farming profits—not low profits for farmers who farm farms; for the profits of working farmers and the wages of all other workmen are of one kind. Both of them rise as monopoly profits fall, and fall as monopoly profits rise. It is not the farmer who farms farms that loses by high wages, but the farmer who farms gentlemen. Naturally, therefore, no "country gentleman" is favorable to the referendum, for on referendum the workers would largely outvote the workers' parasites.

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The American Press Censorship.

As the American press censorship under the new law grows more drastic, let it not be forgotten that when this law went through the Senate last winter, Senator Hale gave warning. "I hope," said he, "that the Senators here fully understand that the effect will be to suppress freedom of the press."

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The Voice of Grover Cleveland.

It is not easy to see why Republican partisans should make so much of the late ex-President Cleveland's posthumous paper in behalf of Mr. Taft. Democrats who followed Mr. Cleveland's leadership blindly are already lined up behind Mr. Taft, along with the plutocratic Republicans who have somehow satisfied themselves that Taft will not be a Roosevelt. The Cleveland document can