

a fruitful source of income. But if there is too much cramping in area, the result will be not only a heavy expense to be rid of fetid material, but constant liability to damage suits from neighbors who may feel aggrieved. There will be no more opportune time than the present for the municipality to investigate the subject thoroughly and secure or negotiate for needed lands while they are obtainable at reasonable prices. We need hardly say the News is opposed to any ax-grinding in this matter. But suggestions on the subject seem to be timely, and they ought to bring about investigation and careful consideration of all present and prospective requirements.

### YOU TAKE YOUR CHOICE.

It is amusing, and not altogether uninteresting, to listen to the explanations given by political speakers and writers on either side, of the results of the local elections recently held in some of the northern and western states. These elections, it will be remembered, have almost universally shown immense Democratic and Populist losses, and corresponding Republican gains. This fact being undeniable, the amusement which the non-partisan finds in the situation is furnished by the ingenious variety of reasons given for its existence.

Strangely enough, those who, it would naturally seem, should be embarrassed and disappointed by the result alluded to, only see in it an additional incentive to faster progress along the line they have already marked out. Their courage is quite unshaken, their confidence wholly undismayed. The Democratic view, for instance, is that the political upheaval is unmistakably an expression of strong popular disapproval of Democratic delay in carrying out the pledges upon which the party was voted into full control of the government two years ago. The Republican view, on the other hand, is that the same upheaval signifies a sweeping change in popular sentiment since the general elections of 1892 upon the question of tariff revision, and that the voters of the country, having been converted from the error of their former opinions, are now declaring as strongly for the retention of the McKinley law as they declared in 1892 for a reduction of duties. Just how the Populists regard the situation and explain it, we are unable to say; we meet with very few of the genus in this vicinity, and have but very few Populist newspaper exchanges—in those which do come to hand, the disposition, like that of "Brer Rabbit," seems to be to "lay low."

In view of the fact that the argument on the side of both the great parties is in favor of an adherence to the respective and antagonistic party policies, the independent voter will again be forced into the necessity of doing his own thinking in election affairs. The editor of *Public Opinion* seems to strike a happy medium of independent advice when he suggests that the individual voter is left no alternative but to study the questions at issue upon their merits and shape his own course without regard to election returns. It would not be strange if the

individual voter should ask himself at this point what reason there is anyhow for allowing himself to be swayed by the course of any other voter or number of voters. His class in the great political school room does not appear to be increasing in numbers very fast, but it is usually respectable and always more or less influential; and in these recent events there is nothing that it ought to regard as discouraging.

### SENATOR PEFFER'S PLAN.

Only a few days more and our national legislators and government officials will have to deal with the industrial army problem in some practical way. It is supposed that about 50,000 men from all parts of the country are now converging upon Washington and the advance columns are already outside the gates of the capital. But little, so far, is known of what measures have been adopted for possible emergencies. There seems to be a general disposition to allow the crusaders full liberty to present their petitions to Congress and to go and come unmolested as long as they commit no acts of lawlessness. President Cleveland's semi-official proclamation, issued after consultation with cabinet members, and warning all intended visitors to the capital to respect the laws or be prepared to take the consequences, is a fair expression of the general sentiment on the subject in Washington.

This course will be regarded as wise and will meet approval throughout the country, but it will not satisfy the petitioners, who come not for courtesies alone. Senator Peffer, according to the reports, is almost the only one who is endeavoring to find some means of meeting the immediate demands of the industrials. He proposes that Congress appropriate \$1,000,000 to be expended for the improvement of the public grounds of Washington, by laying out and making walks and wagon ways and by opening up highways wherever needed in the District. He adds that the wages are to be fixed at \$1.50 a day and the time of labor at eight hours.

As this measure is intended to meet an emergency in which good advice is precious because conspicuously scarce, it may perhaps not be timely to criticize it too closely. But it is certainly only a palliative, and nobody should be allowed to harbor the illusion that its adoption would cure the malady for which it is applied. In the first place it may be asked, whether Congress has the right to take a million dollars from the country's treasury and distribute it among men who say they are out of work. Is that what is expected of our legislators? But granting them such a prerogative, how long would a million dollars last among say 20,000 men at \$1.50 a day? It would carry them just about one month, giving each man \$50; and at the end of the month, when the expenses for living were paid, they would be ready to form another industrial army and demand another million, virtually at the expense of the workingmen who have no government employment. How long would the rest of the people stand an experiment of this kind? If Mr. Bel-

lamy's socialism has to be applied by Congress, as Senator Peffer proposes, it must be extended to every laborer in the country; but the Congress of the United States is not as yet constituted for that purpose.

It would seem, if labor must be provided by the State for the unemployed that some scheme must be devised whereby that labor is made remunerative to the State, and thereby lessen the burdens of taxation. It would never do to think of increasing them for any such purpose. The work proposed by the Populist senator is of the latter kind; it would simply entail an extra outlay of a million dollars at a time when the people can ill afford it. It would have been less surprising if the senator from Kansas had recommended for our country to follow for the benefit of the "industrials" the example of the European monarchies in adopting a colonial policy. If the state is to engage in the employment business without embodying socialistic principles, that seems to be about the only resource open at present.

### HIS OPPORTUNITY.

President Cleveland has, or is about to have, the chance of his lifetime to win back a measure of that popularity which ought to attend the most prominent citizen of the Republic but which in his case has considerably departed. The opportunity which presents itself comes in the form of the so-called "industrial army;" and whether the incident is to yield him favor or blame will depend altogether upon his treatment of the problem—the reward is sure to be abundant either way.

No one doubts Mr. Cleveland's courage, or his unyielding temper when once an object or a plan has been decided upon. But in this case tact will be a more effective attribute than bravery, and stubbornness will only be applauded if it happens to be on the right side. There will doubtless have to be a disregard in some degree of the narrow, strained construction of governmental prerogatives; but such contingencies are not wholly novel—Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln met and grappled with them, and both are heroes now. Unexpected and desperate emergencies require the same kind of treatment; yet prompt decision must not be untempered with patience, and a high determination to maintain the integrity of the laws will be rendered far more amiable if presumed offenders are regarded as respectable and patriotic but unfortunate and perhaps misguided fellow-citizens.

The course of some of the state governors where these "armies" are originating, or through which they pass, adds materially, and we think unnecessarily, to the embarrassment which the President must naturally feel. As a Democrat he holds that it is the duty of the respective states to check and punish lawlessness within their borders, and that the aid of the national forces should only be invoked when the local power is found to be inadequate. The dispatches have narrated, however, that in more than one instance no attempt whatever has been made by the state authority to protect the property of citizens, and that, so