

newspaper that is not valued by the assessor at a vastly higher figure than any of the great San Francisco dailies and with some it is considerably more than the combined assessment given.

It might be that the papers named have "a pull" with the assessor to get their property valued at what must seem to people here ridiculously low figures; but that does not appear likely. It is more probable that the custom of assessment is to put property values at a very small figure, and then, though the rate of taxation may be high, the actual tax paid is not. In the face of the figures given in this assessment, the comparison of the tax rate in this city and in San Francisco is absolutely worthless for purposes of comparing real taxation; for, after the manner of of assessments here, the tax rate in San Francisco would need to be at least twenty times as high as in this city to make the same actual tax in proportion to real values of property. Taking these newspaper assessments as a basis for property all around, when the levy in San Francisco is shown by the figures of a comparative rate to be five times as great as here, the actual tax would be only one-fourth as heavy. Thus a high assessment and low rate make a showing that is not borne out by facts in comparison with a low assessment and a high rate.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

Among the important economic questions which the present generation will be called upon to solve is one relating to the management of railroads, telegraph and telephone lines, municipal lighting plants, etc. The public nature of such industries is now recognized, and the question what to do with them is a natural consequence of a desire to see them manipulated for the best interest of the general public instead of the enrichment of a few individuals. Two views obtain on this question. According to one, all business of a public character ought to be controlled by the government. Another claims that this is impracticable as long as the ownership is private and that consequently not only the control but the ownership of such undertakings should be public.

Recently Professor T. Ely, of the University of Wisconsin, has been attacked as a heretic on political economy and, although he was promptly acquitted, his trial caused a great deal of discussion and gave prominence to the views of which he is an advocate. He believes in state ownership of railroads, telegraphs, etc., and favors all legislation aimed at trusts and monopolies. These circumstances give peculiar interest to a paper recently published by Professor Ely, in which he sets forth some reasons why public control of private property is, in his judgment, inadequate as a remedy of the evil complained of. In substance the author argues:

First of all, under such a system, the special knowledge of the business to be controlled is on the side of those who are subject to control. This knowledge is gained by experience and this belongs to those who conduct the undertaking. Can anything more utopian be imagined than the idea

that inexperience shall control experience, ignorance knowledge?

Secondly, social philosophers recognize that there must be a certain correspondence between economic and political relations. Ownership and management of industries which include in the scope of their operations an entire continent cannot fail to give the owners and managers vast social power of every kind, and it is not to be expected that they should neglect to use this power. Popularly they are called "magnates" and "kings," and the presence of so many railway presidents and attorneys in the United States Senate is not surprising. The policy then to control these vast monopolies resembles the conduct of a man who should put a giant in charge of a boy with the instruction to the latter to make the big fellow behave himself.

Furthermore, it is clear that those to be controlled will seek to escape from control, if possible. And this means an interference in politics of the worst kind on the part of those who are most powerful. The result is corruption which takes so many forms. The distribution of railway passes, telegraph franks, etc., is familiar to all, but the solicitude with which the appointment of judges is watched by those whom it is proposed to control is less familiar. "The court is the critical institution with us, and those who hold the rigid theories of private property are naturally inclined to declare any really effective control of private property unconstitutional in some essential feature. Should, however, a judge be appointed who can reconcile the necessary control with the institution of private property, it is always possible for the private corporation affected to attempt to lure him from the bench by a position as attorney with a large salary."

After a review of the subject in this spirit the author concludes that we need as a preparation for coming changes a better training in every branch of economics and politics. There must be instructions in these branches in all the schools of higher grade and the departments of economics and politics in our universities must be developed into civil academies where men can be thoroughly trained for the civil service. When these reforms shall have been accomplished, there will be men enough to operate for the public benefit, such industries as those referred to and which, he thinks, ought to be owned by the public instead of private corporations.

The subject is one of vast importance and the opinion of those who have made it a special study are worth knowing, whatever may be their intrinsic value.

SHOWS HIS PREFERENCE.

We have had long accounts from Japanese sources of the strong favoritism shown by the Korean king for the mikado in the war against the Chinese. If the Korean minister to the United States were in harmony with his own government, his actions would be an effective denial of these Japanese accounts, for under no consideration will he associate with a subject or representative of the mikado, but is on the

best of terms with the natives of the flowery kingdom.

The minister was recalled on the opening of the war, and immediately left Washington, engaging passage on the steamship *China*. While en route across the continent he took ill, and his voyage was postponed till the departure of the *Belgic* this week. The manager of the hotel where he engaged rooms called in an American physician, but the minister would not have his services. Then a Japanese doctor was called, but the Korean would not permit him to enter his room. The sick man's secretary was dispatched to Chinatown, and brought from that quarter a manipulator of medicine who was accepted, and the minister progressed toward recovery until he could again exhibit his vanity in public by driving through the park in an open carriage with liveried servants, and evidently enjoy the admiring glances which his style and grandeur drew from the crowd.

When the *Belgic* passenger list was being made up the official representative of the hermit kingdom discovered that Prince Komatsu, cousin of the emperor of Japan, who came through Salt Lake a few days ago and was known as Count Mishiima, was intending to go by that vessel. The prospect of thirty days or so on a steamship with the mikado's cousin was not palatable to the minister, so he decided to defer his departure another week, that is, if a Japanese cook does not have an engagement with the *Peru*, the vessel now selected; in which event the whimsical and undiplomatic minister may stay a while longer in this country. It may be just as well for him, though, since the Ming dynasty, which heretofore has controlled the Korean king and has afflicted the country with its corrupt and vicious rule, has been driven from power. Taking this fact into consideration, the attitude of the Korean minister toward the Japanese is confirmatory of rather than antagonistic to the reports from Japan, and when the minister does go he is much more likely to remain in China than proceed to Seoul, where it might not be as easy for him to pick his company as it is here.

OIL THAT NOISY LARYNX!

The following item may not be of special interest to snorers, but we venture to think it will not be passed over carelessly by their families or friends. It is a true story of love turned to bitterness, vouched for by no less a personage than Major Moses P. Handy, who regularly has a great deal to say, in the first person singular, in the good and truly pious *Mail and Express* of New York. He takes for his text the announcement to all snorers who love their fellowmen that a cure for snoring has been found; and says that a Philadelphia woman, having suffered much in mind and body by her husband's snoring, finally applied for a divorce from him on the ground of cruelty. Her attorney filed the bill of divorce, but disliking to go to an extreme, went to work to find a cure for snoring, and did it. The remedy consists of olive oil and mustard, six drops