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MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP—WHAT IT IS DOING.

Paddington, England, has invested \$125,000 in a cycle track in a recreation ground, with power to make charges.

If the labor unions of New York can force the project through, the city will have municipal ice plants to break the trust.

Victoria, Australia, has built seven local railways on the co-operative principle. The railways were estimated for by contract at \$5,000,000, but by working the co-operative principle they were completed for \$1,000,000.

London, England, is putting in its own telephone system at a cost of nearly \$5,000, and expects to furnish service to 40,000 subscribers at nominal cost.

In Denmark provision is made for old age pensions to needy workmen of good character, which is borne in parts by the state and the commune. In 1899 there were 36,246 such pensioners who received \$1,052,707 during the year.

The profits accruing to the city of Auburn, Me., under municipal ownership of the waterworks system seem very satisfactory, says the Waterville Mail. The net profit last year was almost \$9,000, and the total net profit for all the time since the city acquired the works is about \$57,000. That is rather better than putting that much money into the pockets of private corporations.

The Prussian government has issued an order constituting eight hours per day a day's work on the street railways, and providing that in no case or under any emergency shall the hours exceed ten.

In Austria every man of 60 years of age, who has fulfilled certain conditions, is entitled to a pension equal to one-third of the amount per day which he earned during his working days.

There has been altogether 205 changes from private to public ownership of waterworks in the United States, and only 20 changes from public to private. About one-eighth of all the private works built have become public, while only one seventy-fifth of the public works have become private. If experience and tendency of custom prove anything they prove that public ownership is more desirable than private ownership. Keep this fact before the minds of the people until every public utility in the city is municipalized.

The Chicago gas companies' plants are estimated to have cost \$20,000,000. They could be duplicated with the

most modern appliance for \$18,000,000 or less. They are capitalized at \$80,000,000. This means that some \$60,000,000 of water have been pumped into the capitalization of Chicago gas. Dividends and interest to the amount of \$8,500,000 are annually paid on this huge capitalization, when \$1,200,000 would be an ample return for the investment. The balance, \$7,300,000, represents the power of the monopoly to make the community pay. In one part of the city the People's Gas Company, otherwise the Chicago gas trust, is selling gas at 40 cents per thousand. In other parts of the city the house-keepers pay \$1 per thousand.

Those who scoff at the declaration made by those who favor government ownership of railroads, that under that system a passenger could ride from New York to Chicago for \$2, or across the continent for \$5, should know that in Switzerland, where the railroads are owned by the government, one may ride day and night for 15 days for \$6. To those who cannot believe until convinced by a practical demonstration, what more proof do you want? If the government owned the railroads of the United States, workmen of New York or other northern cities could visit the beauties of California every winter, those of torrid southern cities could take a week off to visit the cool retreats of the Adirondacks, or of the Rockies, every summer, and those of back north and south could revel in seasonable fruits and vegetables the year around. Are these not reasons why workmen should work for the system of public ownership? There are other reasons, scores of them, but are not these enough?—St. Louis Labor Compendium.

STANDARD OIL CRUSHED IT.

An Illinois industry representing an outlay of \$2,000,000 and five years' labor has been utterly destroyed by the Standard oil trust.

Several years ago the Cudahy Brothers, of Chicago, went into competition against the Standard oil trust. They constructed a six-inch pipe line, beginning near Wabash, Ind., running westward 150 miles to Momence, Ill., where extensive oil refineries were built. In the laying of the line and erection of the plant \$2,000,000 were expended and hundreds of people given employment.

The abandonment of the line and the closing down of the refineries are due to their purchase by the Standard oil trust. The pipe line is being taken up, and the plant at Momence is being turned over to the bats.—Argus, Clinton, Ind.

CO-OPERATIVE TELEPHONES.

As a hint as to what can be done by co-operation in the management of public necessities, the following article from the Independent, will not be without interest:

"The co-operative telephone system established at Grand Rapids, Mich., should be brought to the attention of the public. It seems that the city has enjoyed a service that is not only efficient, but remarkably cheap. The company was organized in 1896 with a capital of \$5,000, divided into shares of \$60 each. Any person could become a member of the combination by subscribing for one or more shares and by leasing one telephone for each share of stock. The company was thus to be controlled by the telephone renters and for their sole benefit. A writer in the current issue of the Municipality says the company now rents 300 telephones and has increased its capital stock to \$10,000. The rents are uniform, being established at first at \$2.50 per month for business houses and \$1.50 for residences, and after six months a dividend of 1 per cent a month was declared. After 18 months the rates were reduced to \$2.25 and \$1.00, and the dividends were increased to 1½ per cent a month. The net cost of service to each of the renting stockholders shows a cost of \$24 a year for business houses and \$7 per year for residences. Let any town having a service on the non-co-operative basis come forward with a better showing than this. Next to actual municipal ownership and operation, private co-operative telephone companies would seem to be easily the best."—Freeman's Labor Journal.

The Elderly Gentleman—The true secret of success is to find out what the people want.

The Younger Man—And give it to them, eh?

T. E. G.—Now! Corner it.—Indianapolis Press.

When a banker goes to the penitentiary he always gets a job as book-keeper. The class division holds even there.

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It appears that the Marconi wireless system of telegraphy has been perfected. The British government has contracted for the right to use the same.