

has 364.78 square yards to each inhabitant, has proportionately more land than any other municipality.

Frankfurt-on-the-Main has just taken a step which has already been essayed by some of the principal German cities, and which may frankly be termed socialistic. It is the taxation of unemployed lands—"a rate on unearned increment of value"—much as was urged by the late Henry George. The town councils are permitted by law, and strongly encouraged by high imperial officials, to tax sites which have not yet been built upon, for the amount for which they could be sold. This policy has been adopted in Crefeld, Breslau, Aachen, Duesseidorf, Elberfeld, Charlottenburg, Kiel and Wiesbaden—among other towns. Mr. Horsfall calculates the following results from the introduction of the system in Halle: One owner of building land worth \$276,750, who now pays a tax of \$8.50, will have to pay \$685 a year. Another speculator who owns land worth \$361,500, and now pays only \$4.25 a year, will be taxed \$895. When this plan was introduced in Breslau in 1900 speculators paid into the city treasury in increased yearly taxes the sum of \$76,250. The following are the rates for increase of value upon which the Frankfurt-on-the-Main town council has decided: No tax is charged on an increase of less than 30 per cent.; five per cent. on an increase of from 30 to 49 per cent.; ten per cent. on an increase of from 50 to 74 per cent.; and 20 per cent. on an increase of 74 per cent. or more. Such effective rating of "unearned increment" has hitherto been unknown, says the *Soziale Praxis*, a well-known German publication.

The object of the tax is a double one—not only to depress the price of lands and prevent speculation, but directly to stimulate the building of houses. That Berlin is about to follow the example of Frankfurt seems to be evidence that this policy has demonstrated its value in the German empire. Whether it can ever be adjusted to meet American conditions is an entirely different question. But as the record stands it affords proof of the correctness of an English writer's statement that the German cities have advanced farther in the direction of what is known as municipal socialism. He adds that this is not the result of political propaganda, but of gradual development from their own experience, under the most expert guidance.

Tommy—Don't you want some of these cakes, Tottie?

Tottie—What's the matter wiv 'em?  
—Chicago Examiner.

#### THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

##### A HOUSE OF LORDS JUDGMENT AFFECTING \$20,000,000.

From the news columns of the Manchester Guardian of Aug. 2, 1904.

In the House of Lords yesterday judgment was given in the Scottish ecclesiastical appeal, deciding the ownership of property valued at some four millions sterling. The action stood as that of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland and others vs. Lord Overtoun and others. The case arose out of the union between the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church, which was effected in Edinburgh in October, 1900. In the Free Church the union was approved by a majority of 643 against 27 in the General Assembly. A small number of ministers—about 24 out of about 1,100 belonging to the Free Church at the time of the union, mostly residents of the Highlands—disapproved of the union, and refused to enter the United Free Church of Scotland. These were represented by the pursuers and appellants in the action, and they claimed that they and those who adhere to them, alone represent the Free Church of Scotland and are alone entitled to the whole funds and property of the Free Church, which are held by its general trustees. The successors of these trustees now hold the funds and property on behalf of the United Free Church. An alternative claim of the appellants was to share these funds and property along with the United Free Church. The Second Division dismissed the action and gave judgment for the respondents, confirming the decision of the Lord Ordinary to the same effect. Hence this appeal to the House of Lords.

The appellants complained that the Free Church in uniting departed from the principle of a State establishment and embraced voluntarism, and qualified or abolished the Westminster Confession of 1643 as its creed. On the other hand the respondents maintained that these two principles were not fundamental principles in the constitution of the Free Church as it existed from 1843 to 1900, and that the General Assembly possessed full legislative power to effect the union.

##### THE INCONGRUITIES OF THE SITUATION.

From the editorial columns of the Manchester Guardian of Aug. 9.

The actual facts of the situation today, as described by the Edinburgh correspondent of the Times, are such as to threaten the religious life of Scotland with a temporary paralysis which, if prolonged, might end in ap-

athy. The ministers of 28 congregations who, in opposition to the wishes of the remaining 1,000 congregations, are now in possession of the temporalities of the Church, amounting to some five millions of realty and personalty, have by their victory incurred a burden of responsibility which it is beyond their power to bear. They have churches and they cannot fill them; they have chairs and they cannot appoint to them; they have pulpits and they have not the men to occupy them. One may go further and add that, while they have wealth to be devoted to causes which they cannot maintain, they have also causes to maintain for which they have not the wealth. For the home mission halls which they now possess have, under the terms of the trusts, to be carried on, but the endowments afforded by these particular trusts are not sufficient for the purpose unless supplemented by such voluntary munificence as the dispossessed majority alone can provide. They have too much for one purpose and too little for another, for they cannot divert the funds of one trust to the purposes of another.

Under these circumstances, it is to the interest as well as to the reputation of the "Highland Host" to agree with their adversary quickly before endless litigation arises over the application of local and particular trusts. Nay, taking higher ground, they owe it to that peace which the world cannot give to mete out mercy and equity to the unsuccessful respondents.

##### THE FREE KIRKERS AND THE WEE KIRKERS.

From the editorial columns of The New Age, of London, for Aug. 11, over the signature of A. E. Fletcher.

Sunday last was a memorable day for Scotland. Eleven hundred ministers of the United Free church read to crowded congregations a manifesto of the nature of a death warrant. According to the decision of the highest tribunal in the land, these 1,100 clerics have no right to the pulpits they occupy, and in a few weeks' time if the law takes its course they will be liable to ejection from their churches and manse. No event since the famous Disruption of 1843 has created a greater sensation north of the Tweed than the ruling of the House of Lords in the appeal case against Lord Overtoun and other trustees of the funds of the Free Church. When that church federated with the United Presbyterians four years ago, and the two bodies became one under the title of the United Free Church of Scotland, it was thought that a great advance had been made toward Christian unity. There were, however, 27 of the Free Church ministers—old stagers

hailing for the most part from obscure Highland settlements—who protested against the amalgamation on the ground that it was an acceptance of the voluntary principle and a violation of the constitution of the church as adopted at the Disruption. The dissentients were treated with scant courtesy. An attempt was made to thrust them out of the synagogue, and their offers of compromise were rejected. But they were sturdy Scots, and not to be put down. They claimed that they were the faithful among the faithless, and that the property of the Free Church belonged to them. The Scottish courts decided against them, and they resolved to appeal to the House of Lords. When, in view of the enormous cost of that appeal, they suggested that whichever side won the expense of the trial should be paid out of the church funds, the suggestion was scouted with a bad grace. The United Free Kirkers thought the Wee Kirkers, as they dubbed the dissentients, would never be able to raise the money to carry on the appeal, but they were mistaken.

The document read from the United Free Church pulpits on Sunday was drawn up in the spirit of humility, and contrasted remarkably with the hoity-toity tone assumed by the defendants in their negotiations with the appellants before the trial. "Once again," says the manifesto, "the church is apparently to endure the loss of possessions for obedience to what we regard as the will of Christ, and for practically asserting in that line the inalienable liberties of the church. The ground of the judgment is that the Free Church has no right to take the steps which her convictions demanded; no liberty to distinguish what is essential and non-essential in the Westminster confession; and no power, therefore, to enter into a union with a sister church, though that church was one with her in all essential points of doctrine, discipline and government." The judgment is certainly an astonishing one, and confirms us in the belief that Mr. Bumble was right in his opinion about the law. We suppose if there had been only one appellant, instead of over a score, the lords would have decided that he was the rightful custodian of the Free Church property, which is valued at over £10,000,000. The costs of the trial, we are told, will be not less than £40,000. The defendants have been ordered to pay these costs, and we should say they are now sorry that they did not listen to the proposal of the appellants that the costs should be paid out of the Church property. John Stuart Mill said that the English law put a premium on injustice. That it

should cost £40,000 to settle a religious dispute proves, we think, that Mill was right. The judgment was not a unanimous one. Two of the seven law lords did not agree with their colleagues. We hope, however, it will rouse Scotsmen to agitate for home rule and for the disestablishment of the House of Lords. It must appear to them ridiculous that an English court should be allowed to upset a judgment of the Scottish courts, and still more ridiculous that a great organization like the Free Church of Scotland should not have the power to revise its constitution, and to modify its creed in accordance with the fresh light which is being constantly thrown by the higher criticism on the Scriptures which the churches still acknowledge as the rule of faith and practice. The Free Church was founded by Dr. Chalmers, a man of liberal ideas, who, had he lived, we feel sure would have approved of the union of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian. There is one thing in favor of the defendants; they are in possession of the churches and the manse, the training colleges and the bulk of the Free Church property. The 24 successive appellants will have their work cut out if they decide to carry out the lords' judgment to its logical conclusion. Some compromise is surely possible. The lords may be technically right, but they have struck a heavy blow at spiritual freedom, and in favor of an antiquated orthodoxy. Yet there have been times when our law lords have done better than this. It was said of Lord Chancellor Westbury that by his judgment in the Wilson case he abolished Hell with costs, and thereby deprived members of the Church of England of their last hope of eternal damnation. Our present Lord Chancellor, however, and the majority of his colleagues seem to be desirous that Scotsmen should retain that hope. The appellants against the United Free Church are faithful preachers of the Gospel according to Calvin, who discovered that usurers had a chance of Heaven, and that there were babies in Hell a foot long. They have been rewarded for their orthodoxy, but we do not believe that they will be able to fill the 1,100 pulpits which the House of Lords has handed over to them with men of their own way of thinking.

The question of the connection between church and state is raised afresh by this judgment. The Free Church, that is to say, the Church of the Disruption, did not object to state endowment; what they protested against was the interference of the State in spiritual matters. By amalgamating with a Nonconformist body like the

United Presbyterians they undoubtedly abandoned their State Church position. It would be a good thing if all State churches were disestablished. Clericalism under State patronage is an enemy to progress, and we rejoice that in France the quarrel between the Vatican and the Government seems likely to lead to a permanent rupture. By insisting upon adherence to the Concordat the French Government are well within their rights. The Concordat was the work of Napoleon I., who drew it up in such a way that there could be no doubt that he meant France and not the Pope to be supreme. France therefore will not accept bishops of whom she does not approve, or allow bishops of whom she does approve to be removed without her consent. It is curious that Scotland and France, old allies, should both now be agitated by something of the nature of a religious revolution. The loss of the Free Church property may be a spiritual gain for the United Free Church of Scotland, and the severance of the Church and State in France will help the cause of civil and religious freedom all the world over.

#### EUROPE'S MUNICIPAL STREET CARS, AND THE ECONOMIC LESSONS THEY PRESENT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

By Judson Grenell. (Copyright, 1904, by Judson Grenell.)

Glasgow is an excellent place from which to study the street car problem. It is probable that the statistics furnished by Glasgow officials have been more quoted than from any other municipality, but, after all, figures are not everything, and, as has been before remarked, while figures do not lie, liars sometimes figure. So I shall not weary the reader with statistics. Suffice it to say that the reports are all in favor of municipal ownership from the financial standpoint. But there are other things to consider as well as money, and it is necessary to view the problem from all sides if one desires to come to a correct conclusion.

After talking with city officials and intelligent citizens in Glasgow; in Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, Bradford, Salford and London, England; in Berne and Lausanne, Switzerland; in Freiburg, Germany, and in various other localities; after viewing the magnificent plants some of these cities have installed and noting how the public is being accommodated; and, keeping in mind also the financial side, I can truthfully say that the street car problem has been solved in Europe over-