

*"There is a pleasure in being mad which none but madmen know."—Dryden.*

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THE patriotic policy of public ownership of all important franchises is being well encouraged by the Ross Government. If Mr. Ross and his colleagues continue with their present methods, we may hope soon to have everything under Government control.

They refused to grant the City of Toronto the privilege of conducting electric power from Niagara to Toronto for the purpose of protecting its citizens from the extortion of the monopolists, who found no difficulty in securing the charter that was refused the city. Now they have closed a deal with the Utt, Egan Syndicate, of Chicago, whereby that group of foreign capitalists obtains acres of splendid Ontario farming land at fifty cents an acre. Of course the Chicago syndicate is not given a free hand, which would enable it to extort unreasonable sums of money from Canadian settlers, who would have settled on the land even had not Messrs. Utt and Egan called their attention to its existence, and would have been entitled to it—through the generosity of Messrs. Ross and Company—at the same price as the foreign syndicate promises to pay. The Chicago gentlemen are not permitted to charge the settlers more than three dollars an acre for the land—unimproved—on which they have been given an option at fifty cents! Remember, it is only an option that the syndicate has been given, for it has not to pay for the land till it has been settled upon—and paid for—by the individual farmer. Six hundred per cent. is not a bad jobber's profit, but then the jobbers were obliged to pay exorbitant fees to the persons that acted as brokers for the people of Ontario and themselves.

Without doubt, at this rate, we shall soon have complete public ownership; but the public is likely to be that of the United States, for the people from the south are more liberal with their brokers than are the Canadians—though we know of some Canadians that pay well.

THE great and much discussed Referendum is once more a thing of the past. It came off as arranged, and no one that knows anything of political matters is surprised at the result.

At the time when Mr. Ross hum-bugged the prohibitionists into supporting him, by promising to pass an act that would do away with the saloons, providing that they could poll an impossible majority, every sensible man threw up his hands in astonishment at the blindness that love of party will inflict on men of average intelligence. Mr. Ross knew, when he promised to submit the Referendum to the people, that no measure under heaven could be carried under such conditions. The whole affair was a deception from first to last. The proposed liquor act was an attempt to blackmail the public. "If you don't vote for me, the act cannot be submitted to the public, for Mr. Whitney is not in favor of prohibition," is what Mr. Ross said, by word and deed. The plan worked to a certain degree, for Mr. Ross escaped overwhelming defeat in the last election only because the prohibitionists were cozened into paying blackmail, in votes, to Mr. Ross.

Be Mr. Whitney's policy right or wrong, one thing is certain: he was possessed of sufficient manhood to declare openly that he was not in favor of prohibition. There was no trace of Mr. Ross' trickery in Mr. Whitney's conduct. He held no club over the heads of the public. He made no attempt to blackmail.

THE much discussed and little understood Munroe doctrine is really a matter so easily comprehended and so transparent that it has caused much confusion to persons that think of it as a great national policy of the United States, which requires the intellect of a trained diplomat to fathom.

In view of the fact that Great Britain has been caused much trouble and annoyance by this bugaboo, and is now about to test its strength, it may be said that the Munroe doctrine is not a policy, nor an act of Congress, but a national characteristic. The people that have the misfortune to live to the south of our country, in the smoke and gas of the coal fields, cannot but absorb the spirit of its surroundings. The atmosphere is filled with gas, consequently the Yankee is gassy. The chief characteristic of gas is its expansiveness; consequently the "American" is expansive—he fills unlimited space. The southern half of this continent is too small for his accommodation; he spreads to South America and to the North Pole. In the latter districts, however, he is so rarified that he is not explosive, or, in other words, he melts no ice; the gas produces only an unpleasant odor, which is mistaken by many for a sign of danger of combustion. There is no reason for alarm, as recent developments have demonstrated. The smoke of a man-of-war will dispel the gas in the most miraculous manner—witness the Venezuela demonstration.

"Americans" should not be blamed for the Munroe doctrine; it is merely a weakness of character, which has been developed by an unhealthy atmosphere.

**Everything in THE MOON is original. There are no stealings.**