

bilities are so limited that it cannot hunt out and expose the forms of corruption that Lincoln Steffens describes, then its functions and possibilities are too limited to warrant its further existence. The type of alderman who ostentatiously wears asbestos gloves so as to be ready on call to steal red-hot stoves, no longer demands much attention. His heyday has passed. The Municipal Voters' League did much to rid us of him—more, perhaps, than any other agency; but it cannot thrive in the future by boasting of its past and imagining that the old battles with unmasked grafters are still to be fought. A new type of official grafter has the boards now, and the League, with all the boasting of its friends, has been under the unhappy necessity of not condemning individuals who are unmistakably of this type.

Perhaps it is a disturbing realization of this inherent weakness of their organization that has led some of the progressive members of the League to venture a step in the direction of organizing the good government movement in all cities, for a radical crusade—a crusade for city government along lines that would end the power not only of the "gray wolf" remnant, but also of the respectable money changers who desecrate our civic temples.

At any rate the League has brought together distinguished representatives of clubs from some fifteen cities, including New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Denver, Minneapolis and Chicago. The delegates met at Chicago on the 11th and 12th. After two days' consultation, they adopted unanimously a most excellent platform for progressive city work. Its text is given in our news columns. Enough to say here that it demands untrammelled local government in local affairs, and approves—though without particularizing—of the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, for the purpose of making local officers responsible to the people that elect them.

The most significant fact in connection with the gathering was the unanimity of the reports made by these conservative reformers from most leading cities, to the effect that official cor-

ruption in their respective cities is traceable to the public utility and other privileged corporations and financial interests. In this fact alone there is great encouragement for the future. These conservatives have discovered the cause of bad government and are becoming radical. They are learning that bad government comes from above, not from below, and are going straight to the remedy. As Clinton Rogers Woodruff, one of the most conservative of them, expressed it, quoting the words and adopting the sentiment of Macaulay, "the cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy." This was the line of policy which the conference of these clubs laid out. They are looking to the people for good government. They are changing their mission from one of petty reform to one of militant democracy.

Let us not be misunderstood as to the petty reforms. They are petty only in their relation to others that are pressing upon us; petty only when they are held so close to the eye that greater ones are hidden from sight. The civil service system should be a merit system; public officers should be efficient and honest. But these things are secondary, not primary. They are consequences, not causes. Democracy comes first; honesty and efficiency in public office according to the degree of your democracy follow. If there were no other or better reason for democracy, the reason that is scientifically demonstrable would be enough, namely, that democracy is necessary in order that we may have good government. The least democratic country, Russia, is the worst governed; the most democratic country, England, is the best governed.

In this turning of the good government movement from its petty fetishes to democracy, we have another instance of the breaking away of democratic conservatives from plutocratic conservatives, of those who would conserve the interests of all from those who would conserve only their own or their class interests. On the other hand we may observe a correlative cleavage of democratic radicals, of the radicals who would radicalize in the interest of all from those who would radicalize for personal

or class interests alone. In all this there is reason to hope for that natural union in the early future of what have been called the radical conservatives with the conservative radicals. This alone can give us a progressive movement capable of persisting and progressive policies worthy to endure.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

AUSTRALASIA.

Corowa, N. S. W., Australia, Dec. 1.—The New South Wales shires (local government) bill (p. 594) has not yet been finally dealt with, but it is almost certain to be passed within the next fortnight. It has been amended, in some respects for the better.

As for some time nothing had been heard of the trades marks bill with the union label clause (p. 487) in the Federal parliament, it was supposed it had been dropped. But in the beginning of November the Ministry suddenly brought it up and tried to push it through the House almost without debate. The Opposition "stonewalled" it; and the Ministry carried some very drastic closure motions. No doubt the bill will now be forced through.

There is great opposition to it all through the country. Whether it is constitutional is doubtful. Many authorities hold that the States could legalize the union label, but that the Commonwealth has no power to do so.

The question of the site of the Federal capital is still in dispute between the Federal and the New South Wales governments, and at present there seems no chance of a settlement being reached.

Reports from New Zealand state that the parliamentary campaign is being carried on very vigorously, but it is expected that Mr. Seddon will return to power with a reduced majority.

One of Seddon's proposals is a reduction of tariff duties in the direction of a free breakfast table, any deficiency in the revenue so caused to be made up by increasing the graduated land taxes.

Mr. Massey, the leader of the Opposition, advocates purer government, and allowing crown lessees to obtain the freehold of the land they occupy.

The liquor prohibitionist party is also very active. It ignores the ordinary party lines, and supports any candidate who is in favor of prohibition.

The New South Wales parliament is now debating a local option liquor bill. Children's courts have recently been established in New South Wales.

Gen. Booth has been the unintentional cause of bringing Australia face to face with the overshadowing importance of the land question. A short time ago he offered to bring out 5,000 emigrants; but, although Australia is sparsely populated, no land could be found for them. Apropos of this astonishing condition. Max Hirsch's paper, the Reform, has explained:

The proposal of "General" Booth to send 5,000 emigrants to Australia is doing more than reams of printed argument or floods of political speeches to bring us face to face with the great fact of the land question. Our own people have been leaving us for years in search for land, but that did not move us; but when we get a definite offer of immigrants we are forced to confess the truth that there is no land available. The continent of Australia is still as big as ever, and our population is as small as it has been for many years, but somehow there is no land for immigrants—not even enough for ourselves. Our territory is as large as Germany, France, Austria, Spain and all the other countries of Europe combined, exclusive of Russia; it is about the size of the United States or Canada; but we find there is no room in it for more people. We did not believe our own people were being crowded out, but we can no longer deny it, when there is no land for those who would take their place. It is hard for us to admit that we have ourselves erected artificial barriers to keep people off the land—that the land is there but we have fenced the people off. Therefore, attempts will be made to blame the country, and we may be prepared to hear Australia slandered. More than half of our land is unoccupied owing to artificial restrictions, and it is easy to falsely charge that portion with being unfit for settlement; but how the occupied portion? It is larger than China, and 11 times as big as the United Kingdom. If fault is found with the leased portion of Australia, how about the purchased portion? We have shown our appreciation of 111,000,000 acres by acquiring the fee simple of it. This purchased territory is twice as large as Victoria, over one and a half times the size of New Zealand, and nearly one and a half times the size of the British Isles. To this extent we have demonstrated that the country is good. It is so good that we can live by owning it, and keeping the cultivator off. In all countries there is a tendency towards land monopoly, and that is generally recognized as an evil. In Australia there is added to this a second tendency, which constitutes a double evil. In other countries when a man acquires more land than he can cultivate he must employ labor to cultivate it for him; but in this country nature is so lavish in her gifts that she rewards the man who acquires more land than he can cultivate by relieving him from the need of cultivation at all. Land monopoly in the rest of the world turns the cultivator into a servant of the landlord, which is held to be undesirable; but under our winterless climate land monopoly turns the cultivator out on to the road, for the landlord has no use for him. Nature's lavishness does not confine her munificence to the large land-owner alone; but to every cultivator who can contrive to buy his neighbor's land, she says: "Well done! Leave the plough and take up the stock-whip. You need cultivate no more; your land will keep you without even employing a cultivator." In Victoria alone some 33,500,000 acres of land are under occupation, and of this area no less than 28,500,000 acres are held in holdings over 320 acres in extent; while only about 4,000,000 acres are under cultivation.

Where nature in a special way encourages the grazier, all artificial arrangement ought to aim at helping the cultivator.

This extract may serve to explain some anomalies in connection with Australia—the strength of land monopoly in a large country with a very small population; overcrowded cities, low wages, unemployed men, and yet a high average production of wealth. The land is so fertile that little labor is required in grazing pursuits.

Although Australia exports metals largely, the net profit on them is small if the money spent on unproductive mines is taken into account. It is said that in Victoria, which exports a good deal of gold, the metal really costs more than it is worth.

Not knowing the drawbacks other countries have to contend with, Australians do not properly appreciate their own land. Our one trouble is uncertain rainfall, with occasional droughts, for which little or no provision is made. A great deal of the driest country could be irrigated from rivers or artesian supplies. An immense tract of artesian country runs from northeast Queensland across western New South Wales and southern South Australia. Artesian water has also been found in West Australia, but the extent has not been proved. The only real desert (sandy waste) is in interior West Australia, and is not so large as used to be thought.

We had seven poor seasons in succession, followed in 1902 by a drought. During this time, the worst known to white men, the losses of sheep and cattle were very great. Yet already, in only three years, the increase has been so rapid that the number of stock is now nearly as large as in the early '90's. The country will grow almost everything; and under the single tax, which would automatically limit ownership to occupation and use, it could support an immense population.

ERNEST BRAY.

NEWS NARRATIVE

How to use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives: Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue so until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Thursday, Jan. 18.

The British elections.

Confident as the Liberals have been of success at the general parliamentary elections (p. 673), and hopeless as the Conservatives have confessed themselves, no one had expected the tidal wave to-

ward Liberalism which the earlier pollings have disclosed. The first test took place at the borough of Ipswich on the 12th, which has for 20 years been represented by at least one Conservative. At this election the Liberals won both seats by large majorities in an unusually heavy vote. Since then returns have poured in from different parts of the country, most of them of like tenor. The Conservative leader, and late prime minister, Arthur J. Balfour, was defeated at Manchester on the 13th by T. J. Horridge, the Liberal free-trade candidate, and as yet no safe constituency has offered him a seat. Among the other Liberal successes of the 13th was the election of Winston Churchill by a majority of 1,241. Out of 76 contests on the 15th the Liberals and Labor candidates together secured 62 seats, and their majorities were overwhelming. Up to that time the Liberal gains had been 42, while the Conservative gains were but one. The aggregate Conservative majorities of 7,321 in five Manchester districts have been turned into Liberal majorities of 11,111, and the Liberal majority of 26 in the South district has been increased to 2,454. Campbell-Bannerman was elected without opposition. Out of 21 Conservative strongholds in London, the Conservatives saved only five. Herbert J. Gladstone, Augustine Birrell, James Bryce, Sir J. Lawson Walton and John Burns are members of the new ministry who, in addition to Campbell-Bannerman, have been elected. Burns increased his majority of 254 in 1900 to 1,600, and this in spite of Socialist opposition. The Labor candidates, cooperating with the Liberals, have been so successful that on the 15th they had more members of the new parliament than they had all told in the old one. On the 16th the Liberals did not lose a single seat in the 53 contests, but with their Labor colleagues they gained 25. The returns of the 17th showed the only bright spot for the Conservatives, and this was for the Chamberlain faction. Chamberlain and his Birmingham colleagues were elected. His own majority was 5,000; the majorities of his colleagues averaged 3,000. But as these seats had been practically uncontested at the previous election, Mr. Chamberlain