

firm in the delusion that the voters can be bamboozled forever, to let the election take care of itself.

In the light of what has happened in the past few years to awaken public sentiment and to enlighten public intelligence, is it possible that such a scheme can succeed—even at the next election?

D. K. L.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEW PITTSBURGH.

Two years ago John Z. White came to Pittsburgh, under the auspices of "The Henry George Lecture Association", and delivered a series of lectures on Direct Legislation. Perhaps not more than two dozen—and they were single taxers—were interested in hearing those lectures; but they worked hard to induce influential men to hear Mr. White, and now note one of the results. Last Tuesday a special train took 240 citizens, representing every civic body in the city, every board of trade, the church, and organized labor, to Harrisburg for the purpose of demanding from the legislature direct legislation as part of the new "Pittsburgh plan" of city government.*

Briefly, the "Pittsburgh plan" provides for a council of only 9 and elected at large, instead of 67, as at present, elected from wards; the Initiative, the Referendum and the Recall; a non-partisan ballot, and nominations by petition. This plan has been discussed for over a year. It has the indorsement of every one of the seventeen civic organizations in the city. It is approved by the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce without a dissenting vote. In advocacy of it 203 meetings, aggregating 20,000 people, have been addressed; and 35,000 Pittsburghers have sent communications to the legislators at Harrisburg petitioning for it. The hearing at Harrisburg was before the Senate committee of municipal affairs and the House committee of municipal corporations.

A Pennsylvania Railroad official remarked to a member of the delegation: "This is the largest and most representative body that our road has ever carried from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg." A delegation of 120 came from Scranton and joined the Pittsburghers on their arrival. Headed by a brass band, both delegations, bearing numerous banners, moved on the Capitol.

For four hours the legislators listened to a veritable fusillade of oratory in behalf of direct legislation for cities of the second class. G. W. Wallace of Pittsburgh, the first speaker, asking for the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, said: "Certain men in Pennsylvania, who are either ignorant themselves or rely upon the ignorance of the public, are condemning these measures on the ground that they are novel, revolutionary, untried and a product of the States which produce alfalfa and long whiskers. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While the particular forms are adapted to modern conditions, the principle involved, namely, the direct vote of the

people on questions of importance, is as old as Anglo-Saxon institutions. . . . This great inheritance of our fathers we have to some extent lost in this country, and we have suffered for it. We are suffering for it now. In advocating it we are not advocating anything new or untried. Surely if the people of the city of Pittsburgh have brains and character enough to elect their public officials, they ought to have brains and character enough to determine when those public officials have betrayed their trust and should be retired from public service."

Every speaker, both from Pittsburgh and Scranton, talked in terms that could not be misunderstood. For example: "When you were candidates for office you promised to serve us, now we give you the opportunity"; "If you don't serve us now, others will hear us in the next legislature"; "This time we present a request, next time it will be a demand"; "You are our servants, why do you refuse to give us what we want?" "If we err in our request, we, not you, will shoulder the responsibility." Such words, coming from ex-Mayor Guthrie, from the President of the Chamber of Commerce (once termed "the white-vested millionaires of Pittsburgh"), from the President of the Amalgamated Association of Labor, from Bishop Whitehead and from Rabbi Levi, made it clear that they were spokesmen for an aroused people determined to rule their own city.

When John Z. White is again in Pittsburgh he will marvel at the changed attitude of its people toward the principles he advocated here two years ago. Instead of a few dozen advocates he will find a populace explaining, discussing and demanding direct legislation. They no longer call it the "doctrine from the West"; it has become a part of them. And this in the East, in Pennsylvania, in wealthy, boss-ridden, machine-ruled Pittsburgh.

BERNARD B. MCGINNIS.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

LETTERS FROM CHINA—III.

Peking, Jan. 25, 1911.

The Tzucheng Yuan.

I went a little while ago, before its adjournment, to see the National Assembly* in session. It is, as I have said, not the full parliament, but only the upper house of the future parliament.

In the deliberation I understood one word—rather two words, taking them together. I knew beforehand what subjects were to be discussed, but this did not help me much. One of the Imperial Princes presided. The Minister of Education spoke. The most striking objects in the hall were the ink-wells—quite large blue boxes (4 or 5 inches long)—one on each member's desk. They give a general indigo effect to the whole scene. But the costumes of the members were almost equally striking; they were dressed, some of them, in brilliant silks that would do very well for ladies on parade at a great social function. My small nephews will be able to tell their children fifty years from now that their uncle was present at a scene as impressive in the history

*See The Public, vol. xiii, p. 794.

*See last week's Public, page 295.