

into concerns that were privileged to use the Magic of his Name. Some of them Succeeded in spite of the fact that they started on the "get-rich-quick" basis. As the Wonder had no conscience, and a heart like the Material convicts break for Amusement, he never hesitated when it came to Taking the Widow's Mite or the Orphan's Heritage.

Before the Paragon realized where he was at, his name got in the Newspapers. While he was expecting a Penitentiary Sentence every minute, he found that the world insisted on looking up to him as a Saint, who could land the money Every Time.

In addition to his other Investments he purchased a Beautiful Wife, who became the Unconscious Partner in his criminal schemes.

When the Crash came he had wisely got from under and hired a lot of Legal Liars, who kept his reputation spotless as the Driven Snow.

Moral: If you want to become a Successful Thief, invest in a suit of Lamb's-Wool.

—The Socialist Spirit.



## THE UNDEMOCRATIC GOWN.

A Belated Correspondence.\*

March 17, 1902.

Mr. C. E. S. Wood,  
New York City.

Dear Sir:

Please accept thanks for your courteous letter of March 15th expressing your views upon the subject of judges' gowns. We are sorry that you do not approve of this uniform for judges. We think that some of your arguments might apply against any uniform, such as that of the army or the police.

Judges' gowns are essentially gowns of learning, the uniform of the educational army. Judges if decorated with degrees are doctors of the law, and others that are not doctors of law are at least learned in the law; and we presume that the general use at the present time of gowns by the universities and colleges of the country has had its influence in robing the bench. There is much force, of course, in your position. We of the laity confess to feeling that the judges are something more than ordinary men, if not in their individual capacity, certainly in their official capacity when holding court, and in a practical way we believe that the wearing of robes of office marking them to their especial position may have in some cases a distinct moral effect upon the judges themselves.

Thanking you for your kind consideration in the matter, we are,

Yours very truly,  
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New York, March 15, 1902.

Gentlemen:

Your letter of January 24th has just reached me. I am no longer president of our Bar Association. As an individual member of the bar and as a citizen I am not in favor of special costumes for any purpose whatever. There is always a sense of fitness and decency about dress which a man will correspond to so far as his situation permits. But after all it is the man under the clothes, and not the clothes,

\*We publish the final letter first, as it presents the point of view to which the longer letter is a reply.

which ought to be considered; and I am not in favor of diverting the people's attention from the fact that judges are but citizens and but men, nor do I believe it wholesome, under the guise of lending dignity to the position, and symbolizing the majesty of the law, to impress the people with the idea that the judges are a class superior to the people themselves. If, as you say, the custom of the bench's wearing gowns is growing, I am sorry for it, but am not surprised, as it is the usual course of development from all simple origins toward classes and distinction.

I am also very sorry to learn that the members of the bar are much in favor of the higher courts' wearing gowns. If the higher courts wear gowns I see no reason why each court should not wear its own gown; in fact, if it is good at all, it should be good as a whole system, even down to the justices of peace.

My own belief is that the popularity of this matter lies in so small a thing as human vanity, both among judges and lawyers. It pleases the judges to think that they are marked by robes which enable them to share, in the eyes of the people, the sacredness and dignity of the church, or at least, that they are something better than other men. I do not believe in symbolisms at all, in our day and among our people.

It would not, in my opinion, aid matters the slightest to have the court opened by a crier bearing the fasces before him and swinging incense from a censer, nor do I think a black silk gown, even though made by your capable firm, would lend any dignity whatever, which was not already conveyed by the person of the judge and by our own institutions.

To my mind, a gown, no matter what its cut, material or fashion, is of the same essential character as the horse hair wigs of the English judges. To me it is all mummery, all meaningless, all undemocratic, unrepugnant; and I think we need to impress the people a great deal more with the idea that they are themselves the sources of power and authority, rather than befooled them with wardrobes and costumes, however holy, however well made, whether made by your firm or imported from the best gown makers of London.

If our court decides to adopt the judicial robe I fear I cannot aid you to their custom, as I know of some very excellent old ladies' black silk petticoats which may be had, I am satisfied, at a discount.

Yours very truly,  
C. E. S. WOOD.



## STATE AND MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP IN SWEDEN.

### I. TELEPHONE SYSTEMS.

For The Public.

There is no country in the world, except possibly the United States, that has got a telephone system as universally used as Sweden. There were at the end of the year 1900 not less than 84,000 apparatuses in actual use in the country, and there were 29,000 in use in the city of Stockholm alone. At the same time the number of apparatuses in New York (Manhattan) was 27,000, making the average number of apparatuses per 100 inhabitants in Stockholm

9.6, and in New York 1.5. Even to the superficial observer it is very obvious that the actual need of telephones in a city like New York, with its enormous amount of trade and business, far exceeds the need in a city many times smaller in size, and with less developed facilities for mercantile pursuits. The fact that the latter city has a system so much larger is at once a proof that there must be some cause of great interest. And there is.

Since 1883 the Swedish government has owned part of the telephone systems of the country. Having operated its system so long, to great satisfaction, and with reasonable gain, it is easily understood that it is no wanton experiment. There were originally a number of local companies operating in the various cities of the country, but from time to time the government has acquired these systems, the payment usually having been determined by the reproduction cost of the plants and wires. However, the government did not in any way interfere with the local companies in the way of coercion. But it has done so in some places by means of competition. The influence of the state-owned telephone was not widely apprehended until the opening of the government's telephone lines between the larger cities, in establishing long-distance telephone service. The first line of great importance for length was between Stockholm and Gothenburg, about 350 miles. This line was opened in 1889, and since that time the system has so increased that the length of the lines combined was 70,000 miles in the year 1900.

The total length of all telephone lines in the country was in the same year 100,000 miles, and the proportion of the extent of the government's system and the private corporations is thus easily seen.

The cause for this enormous extent of the service is the price charged for the accommodation. For the unlimited use of a telephone, the price is \$13.50 a year, in which case the subscriber has the right to speak to all subscribers within a radius of about forty miles. For long-distance communications there is an additional fee, 4 cents for 70 miles, 8 cents for 160 miles, 13 cents for 400 miles, 20 cents for 600 miles, and for distances beyond 600 miles 27 cents.

What is now the financial result of this cheap service?

The gross income for a certain period amounted to \$5,400,000, while the operation cost for the same period amounted to \$2,650,000, besides interests amounting to \$430,000, leaving a pure profit of \$2,320,000. This surplus has been expended mostly for increase of the system, and the service is so satisfactory that foreigners when visiting the country have expressed their surprise that so perfect a service can be rendered for so slight a cost.

Of course, there is still in existence in Stockholm a private company, having a very extensive business in the city and its surroundings; but the competition with the government has brought this company to reasonable terms and the service is equally excellent and cheap.

For comparison it may be mentioned that the price for a telephone in 1880 varied from \$43 to \$75; in 1883, when the government went into the business, the price went down to a uniform rate of \$35, and has since then gradually gone down to its present figure.

It is true that labor is cheaper in Sweden, but the difference is not great enough to account for the difference in price for the accommodation of a telephone in Sweden and in the United States. If the Swedish government, charging so comparatively low rates, still can bring down the operation expense to less than half the gross income, it is pretty sure that large American municipalities could with profit to both its own finances and its citizens' comfort go into the telephone business in earnest. The Greater New York is nearly as large in population as Sweden. Its demand and necessity for telephones are very much greater. Telephones have become a necessity of life in large business centers. Necessities of this kind, monopolies involving such a taxing power, should not be left in the hands of private interests any longer, when the experience of other nations so plainly points out the practicability of government ownership of telephones.

ERIK OBERG.

### RICHARD F. GEORGE.

How a Son of the Late Henry George Discovered His True Vocation.

From Success for January, 1906.

In the sculpture of Richard George, one is struck by the life quality. After a few moments of scrutiny the sense of the material is lost; the marble or bronze seems to have turned to living flesh, with lips parting to speak. I asked Mr. George what school had given him this vitalizing power. He replied that his only school had been the rough world, and that, fortunately or unfortunately, he had no academic training whatever.

Mr. George struggled with a diversity of pursuits before he reached his true vocation. After his school days in Brooklyn he was successively amanuensis to his father, the late Henry George; clerk in a law office; employe of a street railway; and business manager of his father's weekly newspaper. He married at twenty-three years of age, and at twenty-six moved with his little family to Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where he took a position as draughtsman in a steel-rail plant. Here, owing to his acquaintance with the heads of the concern, many of his associates regarded him with such jealousy and suspicion that after three years' work he resigned. He then purchased a half interest in a photographic gallery, and, incongruously enough, in a coal mine. These he lost in the panic of 1893.

"My needs were pressing," he told me, "and prospects of work were slender. Swallowing my pride, I went again to the steel company in search of work. I saw the president. He referred me to the foreman, who, on account of the dull season, turned me down. I finally applied to the general manager.

"I am very sorry, Mr. George," he said, "but we are dropping men instead of taking them on. I can offer you nothing but a job as laborer."

"The words stunned me. But my needs were too great to refuse. I informed the manager that I would think the matter over, and then went home and told my wife of my glittering prospects.

"There is nothing demeaning in physical labor," she said; "have not many of our great men been laborers?"

"Talk like that gives me courage for anything,"