

taken again this Fall as described in Editorial Correspondence in another column, is an experiment well worth copying throughout the country, and we commend it to the favorable consideration of women citizens. While it may seem upon the surface like merely playing at voting, yet a succession of large votes by women through this method would speedily break down some of the most effective objections to the extension of legal suffrage to women.

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Secretary Shaw's Delusion.

Mr. Hearst may or may not be a Jefferson Democrat and a Lincoln Republican, but when Secretary Shaw, criticizing his claims to that double allegiance, says a man "might as well claim to be a John Wesley Arminian, and a John Knox Calvinist," Mr. Shaw shows that he knows more of obsolete theologies than of American politics. For nothing in American history is clearer than that Abraham Lincoln himself claimed again and again to be a Jefferson Democrat. In fact, the Republican party of the '50's was less a creation than a restoration. It restored the Jeffersonian principles of which the Democratic party had been divested by the slave power, pretty much as the Republican party has since been divested of its Jeffersonian principles by the money power.

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Is There Another Law for the Rich?

It is frequently said by working men that there is one law for them and another for the rich. This attitude of mind is deplored by leading newspapers. But unfortunately significant instances are not scarce. A recent one is that of the treatment of the Chicago Tribune last week by the grand jury. The Tribune had accused Mayor Dunne of packing the school board with boodlers. This was either true, or it was a wicked libel, for which any editor or publisher without riches or position would have been promptly indicted. But when the complaint was made against the Tribune, the grand jury wanted the Tribune to come forward with its witnesses, something unusual at best and seldom if ever done when poor men are complained of. The Tribune went into the grand jury room with witnesses and tried to prove the truth of its libelous charge. In this it failed utterly. Did the grand jury then indict the Tribune? Not at all. It censured the Tribune. Criminal indictments for the poor upon a mere prima facie case; only censures for the rich even when flagrant crime is proved and the defense breaks down: is this the rule, or has an exception been made in favor of the Chicago Tribune?

Corrupt Journalism.

The exposure of the respectable Cleveland newspapers by the Press of that city, mentioned in our Cleveland correspondence this week, is one of the most significant of all the exposures of grafting by so called decent men and papers that has yet occurred. Our correspondent explains the circumstances, and here is the contract which the Cleveland Press has unearthed:

The Hollenden. Thompson & Fox, Managers. Cleveland, October 15, 1906. The "Volnost," Mr. K. F. Tuma: This shall be your order to run the advertising of the Cleveland Electric Railway in your daily issues to the extent of one column of space, or its equivalent, in editorial matter, from Tuesday, Oct. 16, until otherwise instructed—for which the Cleveland Electric Railway agrees to pay you at the rate of \$6.00 (six dollars) per column, or thirty-six dollars (\$36.00) per week for six issues. The Cleveland Electric Railway, By W. K. Cochrane, Advertising Contractor.

The "Volnost," with which this contract was made, is a daily newspaper of Cleveland printed in the Bohemian language. W. H. Cochrane, whose signature is attached, is a "publicity" man imported by the monopoly traction people to write articles to be inserted in the Cleveland newspapers for pay. It would be well for newspaper readers everywhere to ask themselves, when interests of the Interests are at stake, how much of what they read in their favorite newspaper is "run" in its daily issue, "to the extent of one column of space or its equivalent in editorial matter," at so many dollars per column. Several important Cleveland papers, notably the Plain Dealer and the Leader, have been "running" pay matter like that bargained for above, but their contracts have not yet been disclosed to the public.

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THE POLITICAL ISSUE OF TO-DAY

Whenever two political forces, the one conservative and lacking ability to realize that the world is always moving onward, the other progressive and in every contingency alert to the demands of the day—whenever two such forces come face to face, representatives of the former always charge those of the latter with inconsistency. Nor is this charge necessarily insincere. To the conservative mind the progressive spirit is always inconsistent, because the details of the reform demanded to-day are not the details of the reform necessary, or conceived to have been necessary, yesterday. And beyond details, the conservative mind cannot see. That the spirit, the essence of the reform movement, is the same to-day as yesterday, it does not comprehend. Therefore the charge of incon-

sistency may be offered in good faith, may be perfectly sincere, and still be false.

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Such a condition we are facing to-day in American politics. And while we admit that there are exceptions, exceptions the existence of which we on the one hand rejoice to find and on the other hand deplore to meet with, we may as well recognize from the outset that the Republican party as a whole represents the conservative and often reactionary force, the Democratic party the liberal and progressive force. The reactionary Republican, knowing no other policy or principle than "standing pat," will naturally accuse the progressive party of inconsistency, of changing the issues, when it substitutes for the issue of imperialism that of control of the trusts and public ownership of public utilities. But the substance of the issue is not changed, even if the form is.

The substance of the issue is the same as that on which Lincoln was elected President. It is the realization of the rights of man. This issue may indeed take different forms at different times, but it is the same issue.

At present the greatest danger to free institutions and to true and genuine progress is suspected to lie in the enormous power of the few who control transportation facilities in this country. In fact, this danger is conceived to be greater than that of great monopolistic industrial combinations, inasmuch as those combinations could not possibly exert so great an influence if it were not for their ability to control the transportation monopoly. For this reason the progressive element in the Democratic party has proclaimed government ownership of railroads to be an issue in the political field.

There are two reasons why this issue is likely to become the paramount issue in the near future. In the first place, those in favor of the measure will realize its supreme importance and exert themselves to bring it to the front. In the second place, its opponents will try to make use of this issue, on account of its comparative unpopularity in certain circles, to bring about the defeat of the party in favor of it, much in the same way that the free silver question was made the paramount issue in a campaign where it in fact would have only occupied a secondary place had it not been for its apparent vulnerability. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that not only public ownership of railroads, but public ownership of all public utilities will within a short time become the one important issue in American politics.

This issue will most probably cause a revolution in party organization. For, while we probably shall retain the names of our great political parties unchanged, there will be a great number of dissenters on each side. The radical element in the Republican party will recognize its position, and the plutocratic faction in the Democratic party will find itself forced to seek other and more congenial quarters. Not till then can there be a truly sincere fight on the issue before the people.

It is not for us to say what the outcome of this fight will be, nor what the exact details of the issue are to be. But it is the duty of every true citizen, whether he be in favor of radical measures or not, to clearly define the issue at hand, to take nothing for granted unless it be based on evidences of experience or probability when carefully analyzed; and, above all, to retain his right of judgment in spite of all the "facts" and "semi-facts" which the opponents of the rights of the people will amply provide him with.

There is no need of asserting, not even to the most conservative, that the transportation companies have at times proven to possess an undue amount of power, and that they have used this power in opposition to the best interests of the Republic. But the railroads themselves are prone to tell us that such abuses are easily stifled by government control. Indeed, the advocates of government control have succeeded in persuading otherwise sensible and intelligent men that the interests of the country at large will be fully satisfied if the railroads are controlled by the government, it being of course optional with the railroads to arrange matters so that the government may be controlled by them.

Wherever government control has been tried it has been more of a failure than a success. And it is natural that such should be the case, for government control is a half-hearted proposition, without any logical foundation in itself. The railroads are either private enterprises, in which case the government has no right to mix itself up with their private business management; or they are public enterprises, in which case their operation for private gains and ends is inconsistent with all conceptions of governmental functions. It has never been possible to conduct successfully private and public business in common. A distinct line must be drawn between the two functions. And if we recognize the necessity of government control, we may as well be true to ourselves and admit the necessity of government ownership as well.

The political problems which have hitherto confronted America have usually been such as have not as yet been duplicated in the same form in the old world. This country has been left to itself and to its own experience and judgment in solving many a great problem in the past. In doing so, and in solving many of these problems in a manner creditable to the spirit of a young nation, a self-reliance has been developed, praiseworthy in itself, but liable to subtle dangers. For it has developed overconfidence in everything American, and created a public opinion which holds that we have nothing to learn from foreign nations; yes, that we have nothing to learn from history itself. In facing the issue of government ownership of public utilities, however, America is not compelled to work out this problem for herself. Here is a case where the past and present experiences of the most successful of European nations may be recorded. America, while having to work out the details for herself, can safely avail herself of the general solution as offered in the policies of the governments of any continental country in northern Europe. Proud as we may be of the past record and the achievements of this country, we should not be too proud to learn from our sister nations when they have a lesson to teach.

The lesson they teach is plain and simple. Not only does the experience of such countries as Germany, Sweden and Switzerland tell the story of the possibilities of public ownership, in some cases after an experience of more than half a century, but the present developments in Italy, where the government is now taking over some of the greatest of the private road systems, and in France and Great Britain, where the question of public ownership is becoming more and more pointed after a confessed attempt at government control—all these developments are indicative of what we can realize ourselves by a more painful experience than our present, if we do not profit by the experience of others.

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It is not possible in limited space to treat this issue in its details, nor is it necessary. If only at first we realize that it is an issue of utmost importance, the general discussion that will follow will give an opportunity for all the details to appear. But one objection to government ownership offered by those who disbelieve in American honesty in public affairs should be met at every step. It is claimed that public ownership would be a failure because public officials would not perform their duties honestly. This claim is an insult to every true American. It is an insult to the highest

conception of American manhood, and as such it should be met. Should we, as Americans, admit that as honest men could not be found among us as can be found among the individuals of our sister nations? Should we be so forgetful of the highest ideals of true citizenship as to be able to make such a statement without shame? Whenever Americans as a nation lose their faith in American honesty, then the word American will be meaningless. For the American nation is founded on conceptions of freedom, justice and honesty, and whenever these attributes shall be lost sight of the greatness of America and Americans will be a thing of the past, and the prophecy of half a century ago that republican government would prove to be a failure will come true.

But this prophecy shall never come true. Americans still have faith in American honesty, whatever may be the opinions of a few who have lost sight of the high ideals of Americanism. And although some of the leaders may prove faithless, the people shall learn to follow the right path. The issue before us is not the only one with which we must grapple, but at present it is the one calling for the closest attention of every true citizen; and step by step we shall, if united, establish an America where justice and sanity rule, and from which inequity shall disappear.

ERIK OBERG.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN NEW YORK.

New York City, Oct. 27, 1906.—The women of New York City are going to vote at the State election to be held next week. The opportunity to do so will be given them by the Harlem Equal Rights League, which will open a polling place for women at the Savigny, 2034 Fifth Ave., near 125th St., from 11 a. m. to 5 p. m., Tuesday, Nov. 6. The League invites all women who are native or naturalized citizens, residents of the State for one year, and of the counties within the limits of Greater New York for four months, to come and vote for their candidates on that day.

Our State election is being fought out over such issues as the trusts and their increasing encroachments upon the rights of the individual, a fair count of the ballot, and the labor question. Naturally women as well as men are interested in all these questions, have opinions upon them, and have a right to have their opinions counted. But under our present undemocratic State suffrage law we are supposed to be represented at the polls, on that day sacred to mankind, by our husbands, our fathers or any other man around the house. Political questions being so confused, and purposely confused as they are at present, small wonder it is that the dear man marches up to the polls and marches down again without thinking once as to how or for whom