

public the world ever saw is not ashamed to beg the necessities of life from its monopolist citizens. Who that cares for the nation's self-respect and independence can notice the way that representative bodies, church dignitaries, educational authorities, publicists and the people at large, fawn upon and coax these economic monstrosities without feeling that the manhood is going out of the American character? Would any self-respecting people allow Mr. Carnegie to choose their books, Mr. Rockefeller their teachers, or Mr. Baer to patronizingly undertake that they shall not have to pay more than five dollars a ton for their coal? Yet this is what we have come to.

Since when did this spirit of alms-taking and subserviency take root in the national character? It is obviously a recent growth; it has nothing in common with the fearless spirit of the men who revolted against foreign oppression and made it a thing of the past, or with the daring self-sufficient spirit of the pioneers who carried the torch of civilization westward and armed with an axe and an old gun compelled reluctant nature to yield them a living. It is the opposite of all this. It is the inevitable accompaniment of the social and economic forces which have in recent years dug the ground from under the American citizen and left him at the mercy of the monopolistic corporation. Even in old countries accustomed to the worship of rank and wealth there is no such toadying to wealth or such disposition to ignore the sources of its acquisition as is furnished by the present trend of events in this great Republic.

How would a really self-respecting Republic treat such gifts as those of Carnegie and Rockefeller? A New York clergyman speaking of such gifts recently said: "Let us take all the money we can from such sources." How like a clergyman, who preaches a Kingdom that is not of this world! And yet there are exceptions. Over in England, some years ago, a Mr. Hooley, a bubble-millionaire and company promoter made a magnificent present to St. Paul's Cathedral. Shortly afterwards, the Hooley smash came and then it was seen at whose expense he was enabled to be so gen-

erous. The clergy of St. Paul's had the decency to return the money to the estate. They did not think that paying Paul was a sufficient atonement for robbing Peter.

But charity we are told is "restitution." It is not restitution. It is, if rightfully interpreted, merely adding insult to injury, and it would be so regarded if men were as great sticklers for fair play in the game of life as they are in the game of football or cards. A man who plays foul when it is only the livelihoods of millions of people that are at stake, is honored and treated like a demigod, whereas if he had been detected using loaded dice or hiding an ace up his sleeve, he would be expelled from all honorable society. The man who, in order to grab more wealth than he can ever get through, sacrifices all considerations of public welfare, commercial morality, and even legal honesty, instead of being left, as he ought to be left, to stagger under the pile of filthy lucre as best he can, and to struggle unaided through the eye of the needle, is allowed to ease his back and his conscience through the channel of philanthropy.

That channel ought not to be open to anyone except those who were just before they became generous. That our tyrant monopolists are permitted to use it shows that the chains of economic slavery not only have crippled the body, but the spirit of the nation, and are sapping the foundations of its manly virtues. After that the descent is easy. Given an enslaved public opinion and there is no form of aggression upon popular liberty that will not, henceforth, be safe, easy and even popular.

T. SCANLON.

DIRECT LEGISLATION FOR LOS ANGELES.

"Ad astra per aspera." Literally, "to the stars through roughness;" freely, "expect difficulties if you want success." It is the counterpart of that good English proverb, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Either of these will describe how Los Angeles got direct legislation.

It only happened on December 1, 1902, that the people of that thriving Pacific city by a vote of 12,846 in favor, to 1,942 against, or more than

six to one, adopted a charter amendment for direct legislation. Really it is not fully assured yet, as the legislature must ratify or reject the amendment as a whole; but the legislature has never been known to reject a charter amendment that local feeling in a city wanted, and there is no probability that they will reject this one.

Three things are needed for a successful change in economic or political methods. First, an educated public sentiment; second, propitious circumstances; and third, a few determined and tactful men. The last is more than all the others put together; as the determined and tactful man, or men, educate the public and make propitious circumstances.

Los Angeles, the metropolis of southern California, the Mecca of the winter tourist, is inhabited by a people restless, energetic, pleasure-loving and open-minded. Its rapid growth has drawn the freer, more daring spirits to it. Its balmy climate, suitable for invalids and consumptives, has drawn many leisured rich to it, and there is about it an air of cultured ease contrasting strongly with its spirit of Western drive. This ample margin of time and money and the knowledge how to use the two is badly absent from many Western cities, and differentiates Los Angeles from them. Then the brilliant sunshine—they claim the sun shines 360 days out of the 365—and the crisp air, invigorating like champagne, have given a mercurial liveliness to the people of this city of Los Angeles, not seen elsewhere. Such is the soil.

The propitious circumstances were the fact that Los Angeles had long ago outgrown its charter and badly needed a new one, and secondly, that the constitution of California permits a city to make or amend its own charter, subject to ratification by the legislature. On the initiative petition signed by a certain number of the voters, the question of whether the city shall have a new charter is submitted to the voters. If they say Yes, a little later they elect a charter commission, which draws up the new charter or amendments to the old one, and after a suitable time for discussion, they are voted on by the people, and if accepted, go to the legislature, who cannot change but only accept or

reject as a whole. They always accept. Last, but by far the most important, are the men. Four, five, six years ago, efforts were made to get direct legislation, headed by Henry C. Dillon, Fred S. Baker, and others. I know of at least two determined efforts to get direct legislation into the city charter, and spoke to audiences in Los Angeles for these people. They were beaten, and at least one leader was so discouraged that he said Los Angeles was not fit to have direct legislation, and he retired from the work. He had worked hard and could see no results, but there were results. Every effort had produced an education of the public mind, which was needed for final success. The public were educated by defeats, and what some people called apathy was only a fit conservatism in taking up a new method. And this conservatism has justified itself. It has educated the leaders. The first charter amendments drawn up were crude and would have worked badly. The amendment just adopted is the best in any city—it is far stronger, clearer and better drawn than that adopted in San Francisco three or four years ago.

Among the men converted by the earlier movements and active in the one before this, was Dr. John R. Haynes, a wealthy, cultured, tactful, popular and very busy physician. He had been on the previous charter commission and had been defeated in his efforts to get direct legislation then. "Ad astra per aspera." "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." He did. He made the time among the multifarious duties and pleasures of a very busy and full life to write and speak for direct legislation, to gather friends around him, and to organize a local Direct Legislation League with the names of prominent bankers, clergymen, politicians, etc., on its list of officers; and some of the young men he enthused were most efficient writers and workers.

In this work he was greatly aided by Joseph Asbury Johnson, of the editorial staff of The Los Angeles Herald. Mr. Johnson was one of the committee of one hundred, which drew up the San Francisco charter, and he was the original direct legis-

lation man there. Of course he knew all about it. The editorial and news columns of the Herald give a full history of the movement. Thus, on

July 5th it said in part editorially:

The committee on charter revision have revived fresh interest in their work by the adoption of the principles of direct legislation, which, it will be recalled, were recommended by the last board of freeholders. Briefly, the principles recommended for embodiment in the new city charter, the instrument for which Los Angeles has so long been pining, are as follows:

The Initiative—Upon presentation of a petition signed by 15 per cent. of the voters, asking that an ordinance be submitted to the people at a special election, the council may pass the ordinance, or must call a special election within 15 days from the presentation of the petition. It will require a petition of only five per cent. for a request that an ordinance be submitted at the next municipal election.

The Referendum—No ordinance, except in certain contingencies duly provided for, shall go into effect before 30 days from the time of its final passage, and if during that interim a petition signed by seven per cent. of the voters be presented, the ordinance shall be suspended until repealed by the council or acted upon by the people at a special or general election, as the council may see fit.

The Recall—The holder of any elective office may be removed after a petition has been signed by 25 per cent. of electors by a special election held not less than 30 days after a certificate of the qualifications of the petitioner has been filed. In any such removal election the officer sought to be removed shall be a candidate to succeed himself, unless he requests otherwise, and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.

It is satisfactory to note that five out of the nine councilmen were present and voted in favor of the report. There is nothing in the proposed legislation as outlined that any honest official need fear or that any thoughtful citizen will seriously object to. The majority of the people are given the right to initiate reforms, to veto objectionable ordinances and to remove a dishonest official. If the people are given the responsibilities of a more direct hand in municipal affairs, they may be trusted to use it faithfully and wisely, and the result should be a much more satisfactory condition of city affairs.

But why go into the details of the petition, letters, newspaper articles, meetings, tracts and various forms of propaganda. There are numberless methods and many ought also to be mentioned, but space forbids.

Perhaps almost the best propaganda were the cartoons in the Herald. These struck the eye vividly and were remembered by the average man. They contain the best arguments for direct legislation.

"Ad astra per aspera." "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." "Go thou and do likewise."

ELTWEED POMEROY.

NEWS

Venezuela war news is confined this week chiefly to the diplomatic negotiations. Our last report on that phase of the war (p. 694) ended with the submission by Mr. Bowen to the blockading powers of what was virtually an ultimatum. Taking the ground that the question of preferring debts had come now to be the only issue (p. 695), and positively refusing a preferential arrangement, he proposed that the dispute be submitted to the international arbitration tribunal at The Hague. To this proposal replies were then (Feb 4th) hourly expected.

If they came they have not been published. It is possible, of course, that the news dispatches were in error, or merely gossip transmuted into news, and that no such formal ultimatum as was then reported had been made. At any rate it now appears that on the 5th Mr. Bowen submitted to the representatives of the blockading powers a series of proposals which are summarized by the Associated Press as follows:

(1) Venezuela to make a cash payment of \$27,500 to each of the three blockading powers. (2) The blockading powers to have preferential treatment for three months, in the division of 30 per cent. of the customs receipts of Puerto Cabello and La Guayra, after which all creditor powers to be on equal footing. (3) A number of mixed commissions to adjust the claims of the blockading and non-blockading powers. Each government interested to appoint a representative, the government of Venezuela to appoint the second, and if they are unable to agree the king of Spain, or President of France, to appoint the third member, who will act as umpire. (4) A protocol to be drafted in which all conditions will be included, and the blockade to be raised. (5) The king of Belgium to take charge of the customhouses at Puerto Cabello and La Guayra and administer the finances until all claims have been paid, if Venezuela fails to make payments as agreed.

Some unpleasant incident or other had meanwhile occurred. It is reported to have originated in a statement to the foreign representatives by Mr. Bowen, which he was accused of making public, wherein he broadly intimated that the powers were trying to force Venezuela into a position that would result in maintaining the Anglo-German alliance for years to come. This is said to have aroused