

I touched 'em! Say, I'm a treasure ship on the Spanish Main, an' no pirates! I'm a travelin' bank, an' no cashier. See me unload! Look! Gold! Checks!—But where do the railroads get on? What's the good of chargin' a hundred dollars, and payin' back fifty? Why not charge fifty to begin, and save bookkeepin'?"

"S's'h!" says the Chief Clerk, says he. "Quiet is the lay! You are a bright boy, Junior, to notice it. Now mark my words, and I'll put you on. You see the railroads are bound to pay this rebate to all shippers; but it's only one or two of the big ones that know it. The Standfast Oil twigg'd it, asks for it, and gets it." And he winked two times at the Junior Clerk, for it's only the head of a firm that's required to be pious. "I suppose," said the Chief Clerk, dreamily, "I suppose there's no one knows how many millions are now a layin' up in the rebate fund of the railroads—uncalled-for rebates, nobody to claim 'em," says the Chief Clerk pathetically. "You saw yourself how willin' the railroads are to pay 'em, when asked. Go to dinner!" says the Chief Clerk.

Then the Junior Clerk went to dinner to a stool and ten cents' worth of coffee and sinkers.

"It's \$12.50 I'm a gettin', and me able to touch the railroads that way. It won't last," says the Junior Clerk. "Maybe I won't use a tip like that?"

So the Junior Clerk hied him to a lawyer who built trusts, and he says: "Build me a corporation with lots of stock; build her wide and deep; call her the Columbian Collection Company of America; and don't spare expense, for I've more money in sight than a federal treasury."

"All right," says the lawyer, "come again in two days and sign the papers."

Then the Junior Clerk came and signed, and the lawyer asked him his line of collection, and the Junior Clerk told him of the navy-yard heaps of rebate-gold that the railroads had laid away.

"My company will pay a shipper, say ten dollars, take an assignment of all rebates—the shipper knows of none—and for ten, we'll collect thousands."

Then the lawyer looked cross-eyed at himself for a minute, and says: "It's a great scheme. You don't happen to have five dollars about your clothes to help this thing along, do you?"

And the Junior Clerk said that in a week it would be no object to him; and he went out haughty and a little

unsteady, for he was already lame carryin' the money he expected to make.

Then the lawyer said to his book-keeper: "Try to remember the features of that young man, if you are interested, for we shall never see him again. He has a scheme for gettin' rich off the rebates that John P. Rockefeller didn't get away with, and John is a barber who, when he shaved a pumpkin, never left any whiskers, or I miss my guess. Charge the account to profit and loss, for as we sow it's only once in several times we reap," said the lawyer.

But the next day he got a letter from the Junior Clerk: "Here's five dollars, and wipe the slate. Drop the corporation, for I'm too young to go into business by myself in a town of this size," wrote the Junior Clerk.

And the lawyer who tells it says that he'll stand on a stack of bibles as high as you choose to pile 'em, and say, any day, that the only words in this yarn that are untrue are the names of the people and corporations mentioned; and these he'll never give away, so help him.

UNCLE SAM.

P. S.—This is a true story, as the books of subscription, etc., will testify. It may not be of general interest. U. S.

WHAT CAN RHODE ISLANDERS DO?

An article written by Lincoln Steffens for the first issue (dated June 27) of *The State*, Rhode Island's able new paper, published weekly at Providence in the interests of "a better and greater Rhode Island." Citizens of other States may profit by this article.

The first thing Rhode Islanders could do, they have done: They have found their public opinion, they have expressed it and they have shown that it is a force. The next thing to do is to make it "the" force. Rhode Islanders have to put their public opinion into politics and—keep it there.

How? There is no one way. There are many ways, and no man, be he insider or be he outsider, can tell a people just which course is the best for that people. Nor does the method matter much. The effort is the point. That makes good citizenship. Even where it fails, the effort for reform produces—character. See, for example, what the patient, earnest, honest devotion of ex-Gov. Garvin has done for Dr. Garvin; it has made him one of the finest men in this broad land. Well, that is what we are after, I take it; good government is not an end in itself. A good King, a great Czar or a wise boss could give us good government. But we Americans set out

some hundred and odd years ago to give ourselves a good, representative government, which is a very different thing. The end of such a democratic republic is a race of good men and strong; and of good women and true. Now we are not producing such a race—not by a long shot. The flower of "our" modern System is John D. Rockefeller, and the brightest blossom of "your" Rhode Island System is your Marsden J. Perry. And as for the root and branch, your country people whose citizenship is purchasable at from \$2 to \$20 a head, suggests what you are at bottom. And that is what is the matter with Rhode Island. For the reason your State is what it is—a disgrace to the name "American"—is not that Senator Aldrich is selfish, nor that Marsden J. Perry is treacherous and unscrupulous, nor yet that Boss Brayton is corrupt and generous and "keeps his word." They are all that, those representative Rhode Islanders, but they are what they are because the people of Rhode Island have been out for themselves, have betrayed their trusts and have sold their votes. If the voters in the Rhode Island towns were not corruptible, and cheap; if the manufacturers and their "labor" would not, for the price of "protection" betray their State to their party; if financiers and business men and lawyers would not, for the sake of "good business," sacrifice "good government"—if, in brief, the people had not been selfish, treacherous and corrupt, then Aldrich and Perry and Brayton could not be so. I have spoken of Aldrich and Perry and Brayton as your representative men. I mean it. They have not, indeed, represented the best interests of your State, but they have represented the civic character of your people. Rhode Island has been a State for sale because the Rhode Islanders were a people for sale.

"But," you say, "Rhode Island is no worse than other States." If there is any comfort in that, take it. It is true. But to me it only explains why Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, Cincinnati and Ohio, New York, city and State—why the United States itself is not a government of the people, by the people, for the people. The American people have not been true enough to themselves or loyal enough to their government to rise above the petty and private advantages of business profit or personal comfort.

So, I say, the greatest good that can come from a reform movement for "good government" will be not the re-

forms achieved, but the character developed in trying to get them; not good government, but good citizenship. You may begin by making some men drop their "swag," but Rhode Islanders cannot go far without making sacrifices themselves, all along the line. The towns will have to give up some of the benefits of disproportionate representation; the country voters will have to lose the price of their votes; the manufacturers will have to risk their tariff for the sake of putting their "grand old party" through the discipline of defeat; the financiers will have to put up with proper regulations of their banks and with franchises granted on terms that consider the public weal. This will be hard, but, I, for one, thank God that we selfish Americans can't get reform by simply reforming the other fellow. I rejoice in the truth that we cannot get any essential betterment in our political condition except by becoming better people ourselves—all of us.

But the other fellow is the man to begin on. A corrupt government represents the sources of its corruption. The government of Rhode Island represents the public utility companies, including the railroad; the dominant financial institutions and groups; and vice. In other words, it is a government of the people, by the politicians, for the men who want to make special laws or break general laws. The thing for Rhode Islanders to do, then, is to make the government represent the common interests of all the people in the State. How? By organizing the public opinion of all the men in the State who want out of the State nothing but "a square deal." Now, I do not mean by "organization" the creation of a "third party." Really I don't mean "organization" at all. The development of some sort of community feeling, with a leadership, is all that is necessary, and a community feeling is nothing but a constant public opinion. But public opinion, to be a steady force in politics, has to be informed, expressed and guided to community of action—at the polls.

It is all very well, in emergencies, for committees of well-meaning men to march up to the State House and by a demonstration there of numbers, standing and eloquence to ask legislators to represent the public will. But such processions are revolutionary; they are extra-legal, unconstitutional; they are generally humiliating to a free people; they are late. Those legislators were elected by a corrupt ring

to represent the campaign fund and the other sources of corruption of the State. No "honest grafter" has a right, after taking money to pay his campaign expenses with the understanding that he will represent graft, to turn around and represent the public. The people should have elected those legislators if the people wished to be represented by "their" legislature.

The only right left to a people, after a legislature is elected, is to present quietly a petition and to have an orderly hearing upon it. The legislature may grant or deny the petition. If, however, the petition is denied, the people are bound to wait till the next election to "kick," and then it is better to—vote. Thus the only thing to do now is to defeat those legislators for reelection; that is the next step for Rhode Islanders to take.

The whole country saw your committees present your petition to "your" legislature. We saw "your" legislature deny or ignore your prayer. We saw, as you must have seen then, that "your" legislature did not represent you. You looked like a lot of poor Russians approaching your Czar, unwilling to believe that the "Little Father" would turn you away. Their "Little Father" sent out his Cossacks to shoot down his people. Your boss didn't order you shot down. He didn't have to. He sent his lobbyists to your "representatives," and they sold you out. They showed you where their allegiance lay. Now you saw that, you Rhode Islanders, you great and good Americans of Rhode Island, and you ask: "What are we going to do about it?"

Some ingenious, patent remedy is what you are looking for. I have none. I have heard of some, but they are complicated and untried; or, worse still, they are "radical." I think most of them are quack. Mine is simple, natural, and it has never failed to cure.

It is—vote. Go quietly to the polls at the next election and vote. Vote, first, against the party responsible for your humiliation, and mine; for an insult by your government to you is a demonstration that my government can snub me. Vote the other party ticket. "That is just as bad," you say? It is worse, probably. I find almost everywhere that the minority party is worse than the majority party; it is more meanly corrupt, hungrier and less well organized, is less capable of orderly grafting. But that does not

matter. Reform will not come in a day, nor a year, nor with one election, nor ten. You are not voting for the "Democratic Party," not yet. You are voting for yourselves and your State. You are voting *against* the Republican Party. You are teaching your own party, perhaps, a lesson. You are saying to its leaders: "Since you don't stand for me, I won't stand for you."

"Reform should go on within the party." If you believe that, then go into your party and reform it. But if you won't do that; if you "can't afford the time" to do political work all the year around, then let the politicians do it, but, if you leave party politics to the party politicians—do your work outside of your party. And the only "safe" and "easy" way to do that is to beat your party because it is "your" party. If your party does not represent you, vote against it or—your party and your State government and your United States Senators and the United States will go on representing what they represent now—graft.

This wholesale method is the party method; this will produce "good government" by representative parties. There is another method, and the two can be worked together. Certainly they both should be applied in Rhode Island this year. Besides teaching the Republicans a lesson, Rhode Islanders have examples to make of those legislators, individually, who betrayed or ignored them. These misrepresentatives must be defeated this fall. You—and I mean *you*—have, first, to beat the legislators who went to the State House from your district—if they failed you. And, for the sake of driving the moral well home, if there is any doubt about the man, give yourselves, give the State, give us self-respecting Americans everywhere, the benefit of that doubt. Throw out any man whose conduct was not conspicuously and positively high above suspicion.

This is beginning reform at home. After that, however, there is one more thing Rhode Islanders can do. They can beat the members from the rotten boroughs. How? By a petition to the people. Go out into the country and ask the country people to vote against *their* traitors. Go as committees of citizens, and go humbly. Go from town to town, and from district to district, explaining the situation. Explain what it means to sell a vote; admit that you have sold your vote, not for cash, but for comfort, or "protection" or something just as bad as money; promise to forego your bribe

profits and beg them to forego their "pay for time lost in going to the polls." Explain what it means to sell out a community; admit that you have submitted to the betrayal of the State for advantages to Providence or Newport or Pawtucket, and promise to think of Rhode Island and vote for the common good, if they will not be bribed wholesale by some special legislation for their town. Explain how the United States is concerned; how, because they sell out, Rhode Island sends to Washington to sell the rest of us out—your United States Senators Nelson W. Aldrich and that other one. What's his name? But no matter about them now. The point is that you ask the country citizens of Rhode Island to stand by you this year and help you, as one people, to clear out your State House. "No use?" I believe that such an appeal, earnestly made, and very plainly put, without oratorical display, vituperation or exaggeration, would arouse those country voters to a broader patriotism than your own. So much of an optimist am I. But, succeed or fail, the experiment should be made, for we Americans ought to know our own people. We want to know if, with \$15 cash per head on the one hand and the worth, whatever it is, of our institutions on the other, the plain American people will choose the dollars, as our captains of industry do. For perhaps democracy is impossible. If it is, if the great American experiment is a failure, let's find it out and—all go in for graft or whatever is the object of life.

If the people respond to a petition from the people, there remains to be done only the same thing over and over and over again. Watch the next legislature and all its creatures. Demand of it a revised constitution, a Republican form of government and everything else that you want. Watch what the organization of the legislature does to your bills. If it buries them in committee, hold the party in power responsible, and lick that party at the next election. If the organization lets your bills come to a vote, watch that vote and beat every legislator that votes against you. Take no excuses. Take results, vote on them and vote to kill.

It won't take long to restore representative government by this process, but it will take forever and ever to maintain representative government when you have got it. But that is the beauty of this scheme. It is a scheme

for self-government. It is self-government. It may not produce very good government, not at first. But, man to man, American to American, I tell you, it will produce good men, good Americans.

But, who is to do this watching and reporting? Who is to inform and express and guide this public opinion? Your State paper, The State. Committees do it in Chicago, the Voters' Leagues, Municipal and Legislative. But they have newspapers to carry their reports, enforce them and support their decisions. Rhode Island is as poor in representative newspapers as it is in representative government. The same false interests that control your State, control your leading presses. The State of Rhode Island needs The State, and you can lead Rhode Islanders out of their present slough of corruption and humiliation, if you proceed in the right spirit. Now, I know the spirit in which you are starting your little weekly. It is earnest, modest, patriotic and democratic. You hope only to voice the public opinion that has found itself in Rhode Island. If you do that long enough, that and no more, if you do not try to lead it too far or too fast; if you will stand now and always simply for a representative government that represents the people, all the people, all the time, you can do your job. And your job, as I conceive it, is to watch your representatives, tell how they vote and act on important bills and policies, and advise the others how to vote all together when these representatives appear for reelection. Don't try to prove bribery or corruption; don't try to guess motives; judge all men by what they do. If they stand by the State, urge the State to stand by them; if they go back on the State, advise the State to go back on them. You will make mistakes. If you do, confess them. Mistakes don't count. If you try to be fair, you will appear fair, and fair dealing will win, I believe. But there is one mistake that you cannot survive—because it is unfair. Don't blame the rascals too much, blame the people; don't ask the rascals to reform, ask the people to reform them—at the polls. That will reform the people, and that is where reform must begin in Rhode Island, in Missouri, in New York, in Pennsylvania—in the United States, and that is where it should end—in the good of a good people.

I believe in woman suffrage.—Phillips Brooks.

LOBSTERS I HAVE MET.

For The Public.

Bound for Australia we were at anchor off Samoa. The natives came swimming out to greet us, and we threw coins into the water for them. They can do most anything in the water. It made no difference where we threw the coins, those black fellows always got them.

Among the passengers was an American named Hutchins, who had quit the ministry to become a promoter; and also a good fellow named Sullivan. If there was anything on, Sullivan started it. Some of the natives rowed us ashore. They could row some, too.

It was awful hot. About a dozen of us started up street. The natives gathered about us like flies around a pie wagon. They all had something to sell. We were curious to know what was in the shops. We went first to a place where they "kept" hardware. Sullivan estimated they had about a hundred dollars' worth. The next was a dry goods store. They kept three hundred dollars' worth. Then came a general store. They had about two hundred dollars' worth; nothing doing. Aside from another place where they sold curios, these were all the shops for 30,000 people to trade at.

The people work one day a week, every Friday. On this day they cultivate their patch of taro. Taro looks like a half grown cabbage. It can be boiled, fried, baked or eaten raw. Aside from bananas, cocoanuts, and a few native fruits, taro is the chief food.

The next place of interest was the king's "palace." The King, Malletoa, was seated in the front yard, and as he saw us coming, got up to greet us. He was a fine looking old fellow, with gray hair and mustache, about six feet tall, and built like an athlete. He invited us in. After we were seated his guard did a native dance for us. It was a peach of a dance—regular rough-house. After it was over the King ordered a round of cava. Cava is a native dope that tastes like a dash of gasoline with a monkey wrench in it. The inclination is to regret it. I came near regretting mine, but I was so taken with the hospitality of the King I determined to hold it down.

"Fine country you have here," observed Sullivan, struggling to speak.

"Yes," answered the King, "good place to spend summer."

"It seems to me you don't have much else to spend."

"We don't need much else."

"Have you any aldermen here?"

"No, sir. No use for them."