

THE RATE OF HUMAN PROGRESS.

The great scientists, Haeckel and Wallace, have given especial emphasis to the difference in the rate of progress between the natural sciences and their application to life, on the one hand, and the political and social sciences and their application to life, on the other. The physical aspects of our civilization have been revolutionized in a few generations; and now the discovery of a new truth in the scientific or technical field finds almost immediate acceptance thruout the world and its benefits are spread as widely as the social order allows. In view of this it is often almost discouraging for those who are working unselfishly for the common good to note how slowly each step in the application of well-founded social truths is made, in the face of caste and privilege. For instance, the slightest pretence to honesty of purpose would seem to demand immediate action, when the fact is published that the post-office is compelled to pay, as yearly rent for a mail car, practically the entire cost of the car.

But the rate of progress in the scientific and technical field has not, even in the nineteenth century, been advanced without a struggle. A document has recently been published in the German journal *Prometheus*, which should be of interest in this connection. It is an article against street illumination, appearing in the *Koelnische Zeitung* of March 28, 1819, in which street illumination of any sort was opposed in all earnestness: (1) from *theological* reasons, since it would mean an interfering with the divine order, an attempt to alter the plan of the universe, of which the darkness of night is a part; (2) from *legal* reasons, since it would be unjust that the cost of such illumination, raised by taxes, should be borne by those who have not the slightest interest in such an arrangement, whose interests rather oppose it; (3) from *medical* reasons, since the fumes of the gas are detrimental to health, and since, furthermore, the tarrying on the streets in the night air, which would be furthered by illumination, would favor taking colds; (4) from *moral* reasons, since illumination would drive away the fear of darkness, which keeps the weak from many a sin, and since drunkenness and immorality would be furthered by the lighted streets; (5) from *police* reasons, since the light would make thieves bold and horses shy; (6) from *economic* reasons, since great sums would yearly go to foreign countries for the illuminating materials; and finally, (7) from *national* reasons, since the impression of festive illuminations

which have the purpose of arousing and raising patriotism would be weakened by the regular evening "quasi-illuminations." These ridiculous arguments, which a great newspaper in Cologne as late as the year 1819 deemed worthy of printing, are no more ridiculous than a great part of the objections daily raised in conservative journals against social and political reforms, which are only the application of demonstrated truths.

The restrictions which well-meaning conservative men think necessary in the introduction of the referendum, for example, remind one forcibly of the provision in the charter of the first German railway, that a high fence must be erected on both sides of the track to avoid the mental disorders which would be caused by the sight of a rapidly moving train.

Altho the rate of progress towards social justice has undoubtedly been much accelerated in the last two decades, it still has some similarity with the rate of progress in anatomy, when it was considered impious to dissect the human body, which must remain intact for the resurrection of the last day (other disturbing influences, of course, not considered). The science of the anatomy and physiology of the body politic has made enormous strides, partly from dissecting the cadavers of nations, but the sick patients of today still distrust the new knowledge.

C. J. K.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Wednesday, Feb. 20, 1907.

The Chicago Election.

Democratic primaries for the April election in Chicago (p. 1087) will be held on February 21, and the nominating convention on February 23. These primaries are under the political bosses' primary law, and fears are expressed that by means of chicanery the strong popular sentiment which all concede to be for the renomination of Mayor Dunne may be baffled by ward bosses. The indications are, however, that Dunne's renomination cannot be prevented.

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Since our last report, the Hearst papers have come to the support of Mayor Dunne. The attitude of Roger Sullivan, more important at the primaries than

at the election, was uncertain until the 16th, when Mayor Harrison called a meeting at which Mr. Sullivan was expected to declare himself, either for Harrison by attending or against him by remaining away. He remained away. From that moment Mr. Harrison's chances for the nomination were regarded as hopeless. Then the Victor Lawson papers (Daily News and Record-Herald), which had worked for Harrison's nomination in order to be able to support him for election against the candidate of their own party, Mr. Harrison being Mr. Lawson's Democratic favorite as Gov. Deneen is his Republican—these papers asked Mayor Harrison to withdraw and concentrate upon a "dark horse". Mr. Harrison refused, declaring that the contest is between himself and Mayor Dunne, and began an aggressive campaign for the nomination; whereupon the Daily News started a "boom" for Mr. Sullivan as the Democratic candidate, and followed it with an intimation of an effort to push Walter L. Fisher in the Republican convention against Mr. Busse. Mayor Dunne's managers claim the election of unanimous Dunne delegations from 18 of the 35 wards, and in addition numerous delegates from divided ward delegations.

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The Chicago Traction Referendum.

Opposing organizations are forming for the referendum contest on the traction ordinances (p. 1086) to occur at the mayoralty election in April. They are nicknamed "the automobilers" and "the straphangers," the former being for and the latter against the ordinances. The nicknames are explained upon the supposition that "the straphangers" use the street cars and want good service, whereas "the automobilers" only want good dividends. The "automobilers" are organized under the auspices of the Chicago Commercial Association and the Real Estate Board; the "straphangers" under the auspices of the labor organizations and a joint committee of referendum and municipal ownership bodies. Commenting upon the former organization, Mayor Dunne said: "Well, if I remember right, the same organizations a few weeks ago came out in about the same order as they are now against the referendum petition. Yet the petitions were signed by over 300,000 voters. . . . Let the public think this out for itself. As for the ordinances, I feel quite certain they will be rejected at the polls. My mail is growing larger every day, many people writing me in praise of my stand. I got more than twenty letters yesterday and probably forty to-day. I think the ordinances will be beaten decisively." The Federation of Labor on the 17th denounced the ordinances and urged its constituents to vote against them.

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Efforts to Abolish the Chicago Referendum.

Efforts are under way in the Chicago City Council to procure such amendments to the "public policy law," under which advisory referendums are held, including the pending traction referendum, as will make the law so impracticable as to be inoperative. Without reducing the enormous number of signatures required to bring a referendum question to vote—25 per cent. of the voters, which is equal to from 80,000 to 120,000 signatures,—it is proposed to hedge in the

petitions with conditions ostensibly for the purpose of preventing fraud but obviously for the purpose of making the getting of petitions difficult if not impossible. It requires, among other things, that voters classify themselves by wards and precincts, and that each signature to be verified under oath. The proposed amendments are now under consideration in the Council committee on State legislation.

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The Referendum in the Chicago Charter Convention.

The Chicago charter convention (p. 942), created by appointment and not by election, to formulate a home rule charter under the Constitutional amendment of Illinois, which allows special legislation for Chicago, is approaching the end of its work. It has struck out all provisions for the initiative and referendum except on the question of revising ward boundaries and on franchise grants by the Council. When a franchise grant to a private corporation is made by a majority of the Council, its operation is to be in abeyance 60 days, and if in that time a referendum petition is filed it remains in abeyance until it is sustained at the polls. If defeated at the polls it is dead. But the number of signatures to the petition must equal 20 per cent. of the registered voters (about 80,000), and each sheet must be verified by the affidavit of a registered voter to the effect that he personally saw all the signatures on that sheet affixed by the identical persons, as he is informed and believes, whose signatures they purport to be. These conditions would make the getting of a legal petition in 60 days impossible; and the franchise, no matter how bad in itself and how corruptly obtained, would become operative by default.

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Woman Suffrage in the Chicago Charter Convention.

Another subject of importance and national interest which the Chicago charter convention has for the present disposed of, is that of municipal suffrage for women. At the preliminary session of the convention (p. 937) the abstract proposition was voted down by 28 to 17. When the draft charter came before the convention on the 16th, a motion was made to incorporate a specification of the existing qualifications for suffrage, but for all "citizens" instead of "male citizens" as the present law reads. Some members objected to making this question a charter issue, and it was believed that it would get larger support if proposed as a separate bill to be recommended to the legislature by the convention. Accordingly the proposed amendment to the charter was withdrawn in order that a resolution for recommending a separate bill, offered by Graham Taylor, might be voted upon. This resolution was defeated by the following vote:

Yeas—Brosseau, Brown, Cole, Dever, Dixon (G. W.), Eckhart (B. A.), Eckhart (J. W.), Fisher, Greenacre, Guerin, Kittleman, Linehan, MacMillan, McGoorty, McKinley, O'Donnell, Owens, Pendarvis, Post, Rainey, Rinaker, Robins, Shanahan, Taylor, Walker, Werno, Wilkins—27.

Nays—Beebe, Bellfus, Bennett, Burke, Church, Eldman, Erickson, Gansberger, Harrison, Hill, Hoyne, Hunter, Jones, Lathrop, Lundberg, Merriam, Michaels, Paulin, Raymer, Rosenthal, Shedd, Shepard, Snow, Swift, Vo-picka, Young, Zimmer, and the president, Mr. Foreman.—28.