

lawyer who takes a fee for making a misleading plea in a bad case, but in his client's name. A vast moral improvement this, over the older plan of buying editorial and news space and giving to the company's views editorial sanction. It doubtless has a tendency also to relieve the editorial conscience. Yet it does not diminish the paper's revenues, nor need it divert its support from the corporation that purchases it.

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A Legislative Watchdog.

Minnesota is blessed with a Citizens' League which devotes itself exclusively to publicity with reference to the official conduct of legislators. Without speculating upon influences or tendencies in the legislature, it lets committee actions and roll calls tell the story. The first report of this League has just appeared. It gives the vote by names on several roll calls of general interest. One of these was on a proposed rule to prevent the smothering of measures in committee. Another was on a bill to establish the initiative and referendum. Still another was on a bill to furnish copies of the journals to all Minnesota papers willing to pay the postage. They were defeated. The roll calls ought to make interesting reading to those citizens of Minnesota who think they are represented by their representatives.

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The League does not confine its work to formal or periodical reports. It keeps and furnishes to members a record of the vote of the legislature on all important bills; furnishes to members and newspapers the vote of any member on any measure or on all the important measures of the session; and keeps and furnishes the legislative history of every important measure. The civic value of such a service is beyond computation. It ought to be organized along similar lines in every State of the Union, and then federated, so as to provide like facilities for keeping tab on Congressmen, and subdivided so as to watch the various city councils and boards. The secretary of the Minnesota organization is Lynn Haines, 647 Endicott building, St. Paul, and it invites the co-operation of everybody interested in more complete legislative publicity. The name of S. M. Owen as a member of the executive committee is alone a guarantee throughout Minnesota of efficiency and good faith.

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An Important Inquiry.

A committee has been organized in the United States to inquire into the status of democracy.

That it is genuine is evident from its personnel, which includes such names as Delos F. Wilcox, Franklin H. Giddings, Robert Treat Paine, Jr., Elliott H. Pendleton, Jane Addams, Bishop Williams, Judge Lindsey, W. S. U'Ren, John Dewey, Jesse F. Orton, George E. Hooker, and Hamilton Holt. This committee purposes, by investigation and publicity, to apprise the country of "the constitutional, statutory, political and professional bulwarks of privilege," and "the causes leading to the perversion of representative government" and "the gradual entrenchment of an aristocracy of property in this country." Its first Circular, to be had of the secretary, Jesse F. Orton (123 Fifth street, Elmhurst, Borough of Queens, New York City) reproduces from the Independent of April 16 last, the remarkable article by President Hadley of Yale, on "The Constitutional Position of Property in America." This is the article in which President Hadley significantly said that "the fundamental division of powers in the Constitution of the United States is between the voters on the one hand and property owners on the other," a division under which democracy is constitutionally "bound to stop short of social democracy." In the same Circular the committee also reproduces the equally significant but more vigorous article by Delos F. Wilcox, from the Independent of October 22, on "The Issue Beyond Parties." Succeeding Circulars are to deal with "the public service corporation as the Negro's heir," "privileges confirmed and obligations cancelled," "the legal profession" in "the brains market," and "temptations of the judiciary." We trust that this committee may be encouraged without reserve. No work is more needed than that which it aims to do, and no other agency could do it better.

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A Glimmer of Light.

Under the leadership of J. Eads How, the National Brotherhood of the Unemployed have been holding Sunday conferences at Hull House, Chicago. The most significant thing they have suggested is that unused land shall be opened to them for use. They gave concreteness to this suggestion by proposing that a shut-down coal mine in Illinois should be opened to unemployed labor by means of a receivership. Of course that general suggestion and this specific proposition are joked about by the newspapers as a self-evident absurdity. But why is it absurd, the idea that unused land shall be opened up to the use of unemployed labor? Doesn't the self-evident absurdity run in the other direction? What could be quite