

politics. Among the demands of the platform are direct nominations, the initiative and referendum, the recall, public ownership of public utilities, local option as to subjects of taxation, trial by jury in labor injunction cases, and a city charter giving complete local control of local affairs. The essential political principle declared is the individual liberty of each person to pursue natural enjoyments so long as he does not interfere with the equal rights or liberties of others. It is fashionable to be contemptuous of labor movements; but the classes that hold such movements in contempt have yet to lay before the public a fairer and more American platform of political principle and purpose than this. Regarding political tactics, the new organization plans not to play at politics by getting off to one side of the currents of common thought with a cozy third party. Neither does it plan to go into the old parties with its votes, leaving to the party politicians the manipulation of the parties, the formulation of the platforms and the acquisition of the political power. It plans to use its voting strength at the primaries of the old parties, to name their delegates, their candidates and their policies, and to dictate their platforms. If its plans are promoted as successfully as they have been launched, a new order in American politics is not far away.

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The Colorado Conspiracy.

In connection with the kidnapping under legal forms, by a private detective, of three citizens of Colorado (vol. viii, p. 833), upon charges of having conspired to murder an ex-governor of Idaho, certain considerations should not be ignored, for corporation tools are endeavoring to build up a public sentiment hostile to the prisoners. We allude to the case of the officers of the miners' union who are now awaiting trial in Idaho upon the basis of alleged confessions of the self-confessed murderer. The accused are labor leaders; their prosecutors, the employers of the private detective who has constructed the case, are an inner circle of the Standard Oil crowd. The labor leaders in question were at the head of the recent strike in Colorado (vol. vii, p. 372), which grew out of the corrupt refusal of a legislature subsidized by the employing interests to obey an eight-hour-day amendment to the State constitution, and in connection with which the executive authority of Colorado was used against the strikers and others in a manner fundamentally lawless. The murder in question, that of ex-Gov. Steunenberg of Idaho, occurred long after his influence and personality had ceased to be of the slightest concern to any labor leader or organization. Now, under these circumstances, what are the probabilities as to who are the real conspirators to whom Steunenberg's murder should be attributed?

Motive is a primary consideration in determining guilt in criminal cases. But these labor leaders had no reasonable motive for murdering Steunenberg. On the other hand, the conspirators in the mine-owners' crowd had an obvious motive for his murder if thereby they might bring about the condemnation and execution of these labor leaders, and forestall criminal prosecutions of themselves upon an overturn in Colorado politics. Again, murderous tools do not hire themselves out for murderous exploits to persons powerless to protect them. The labor leaders could offer no immunity, even though willing to pay for the crime. But the other side were rich enough to pay far more liberally, and powerful enough to afford the murderer protection. According to the alleged confessions, the accused labor leaders were idiotic in their selection of a murderous tool, idiotic in their modes of payment for murder, without motive for the murder in question, and manifestly impotent to protect the murderer. Not so with the inner circle of the mine-owners' union, which comes into close relations with the Standard Oil crowd. They had a powerful motive, they could pay without stint, their tool could trust to their power for immunity, and the circumstances are precisely what they might be expected to have had the murderous conspiracy originated with them. This is a trail which should not be overlooked by the Idaho authorities if they are hunting the real murderers. If, however, they are engaged in helping the latter to consummate a conspiracy, they are following the correct course by diverting attention from all these significant probabilities.

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Cheap Gas.

In New York the people now have an 80-cent gas service. But in Chicago, thanks to the "good" men in the City Council (vol. viii, p. 796), they have a nominal rate of 85 cents, an actual rate of 95 cents unless payment is made with telephonic speed, and an actual rate of indefinite dimensions. What the "good" aldermen who "stood in" with the gas ring boasted of as a reduction, has proved in fact, so consumers report, to have been an increase. "Good" aldermen are what public service corporations regard, and not lightly nor always mistakenly, as "good things."

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OBSOLESCENCE OF THE "GOO GOO."

Most of us have read about the Tweed regime in New York, and some of us remember it. It marked the culmination of the corrupt and corrupting spoils system in municipal politics, as Grant's administration marked it in national politics.

Grant's administration was so offensively corrupt that the spoils system fell into national disre-

pute and the merit system of civil service got a foothold. A very absurd and inefficient system this is, in its angular schoolmastery details, but it is better than the one which it has in some measure displaced. Concurrently with that mild improvement in national affairs, the revival of municipal corruption soon after Tweed's spectacular downfall, inspired the so-called "good government" movement in municipalities. This had a purpose essentially similar to that of the movement for civil service reform. As the latter aimed to secure good men in public employment by appointment, so the former aimed to secure good men in public office by election.

In derision these similar and allied movements were in their earlier years nicknamed "Goo-goo," and their enthusiastic supporters were called "Goo-gos." The term was obviously suggested by the initial sounds of "good government," words which were perpetually on the tongues of the enthusiasts; but it alluded also to the unsophistication of most of those enthusiasts, implying that they were inarticulate infants in public life.

With lapse of time there are indications that this derisive term has in reality a serious though hitherto unobserved significance. It is suggestive less of the infantile state of the individuals to whom it was derisively applied, than to the infantile state of the good government movement, considered impersonally and simply as a movement.

The movement itself was childish. Not childish in the sense of frivolity, but in the sense of immaturity. If indulgence in metaphor be permitted, it was the beginning of the incarnation of a genuine spirit of good government which has ever since been advancing, as the individual man advances, from a period of infancy through youth to the maturity of its inherent powers. Like the individual infant, being unsophisticated and being inarticulate it reached out for the moon

it said "goo-goo!" A government infant is thrown off its clothes. No longer is it influenced in any degree merely by a childish yearning to effects. It is coming rapidly to a mature appreciation of the importance, and even to some understanding of the nature, of causes. To drop the personality metaphor, the good government movement has now advanced so far that its best leadership realizes that the putting of good men in office is hopeless in itself and would be ineffective for good government, so long as good men out of office are allowed to own public franchises as private property and to exercise public functions for business profit. The "goo goo" in American politics is obsolescent.

True, there are survivals of the "goo goo" spirit. The most notable examples are Theodore Roosevelt and William Travers Jerome. Mr. Roosevelt is a goo-goo "doer." As some one has said of him, "he is so busy 'doing things' that he has no time

to think." Mr. Jerome represents more distinctly the idea of "good men in office," being himself a shining example. Latterly he has added to the idea of putting good men in office the function of keeping good criminals out of jail. In addition to these notable examples, there are a large number of well-meaning survivals of the "goo-goo" era of civic development, who childishly reach out for the moon because it looks nice and they want it, and who utter "goo goo!" and again "goo goo!" because in every civic sense they are still inarticulate. In their childish way they think that with good men in office good government will come, and that public functions must be left to business greed until that millennial era.

But all this counts for little in comparison with the intellectual advances toward civic maturity which the good government movement itself is making in spite of its obsolescent elements. Its most active leaders and most thoughtful supporters have been forced by actual experience to the conclusion that bad men in office is an effect rather than a cause of bad government; they have been forced to the conclusion that the masses of the people are better to be trusted than any class, however assertive of its own superiority that class may be; they have been forced to the conclusion therefore that what the cause of good government needs most is more intense democracy, with easier methods of expressing popular opinion and putting it into law, and not harder ones; and they are beginning to appreciate the wholesome theory that that government is best which not only leaves all private functions to private enterprise, but exercises all public functions as a public responsibility.

Whether the prolonged infancy of the good government movement has disqualified even its best leaders for vigorously articulate politics of the higher order, remains to be seen. But their opportunities are before them, and the test of maturity is ability to recognize opportunity though disguised, and power to cope with its attendant difficulties.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for observing 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 Thursday, April 12.

Eruption of Vesuvius.

Seldom since the great catastrophe when Pompeii was buried in volcanic ashes, has the eruption of Mount Vesuvius been so terrible as at this moment.