

terms injected into the tunnel ordinance which make that tunnel and its telephone equipment city property in about twenty-five years, without cost, and its freight-car equipment city property at the end of the same term at its value simply as machinery. But the more progressive managers of the Voters' League are held in check by the fatuous inertia of their conservative following. A similar observation may be made regarding the papers allied with the League. In many respects they are most satisfactorily democratic. The editorial rooms of both are saturated with a wholesome democratic sentiment which often leaks out into the editorial columns. But these papers, like the League, are held in check at critical times by an ultra-conservative constituency.

Depending, as does the League, largely upon the support of a class of business men who wish to destroy the minor graft that offends and robs them, but halt at attacking the major kind of graft with which their interests are more or less interwoven, these newspapers busied themselves throughout the campaign in drawing the red herring of "bad government" possibilities across the trail of the municipal ownership issue. Whether they did so in genuine panic, or with an appearance of panic for the purpose of aiding to retain in possession of Chicago's streets the great grafting corporations that have corrupted Chicago officials in the past, may be doubted. We go no further than to express a belief that the impulse was that of the powerful interests upon which these papers and the League depend for a following; and not the impulse of the principal officers and managers of the League, and the editors of the papers, whom we regard as being as progressive as their followings will tolerate. But the plain fact is that both these papers, and the League, not only pettifogged with and for Harlan on the fraction question, but advocated for aldermen those

candidates who were identified with the franchise-grafting ring. Nor were they content with preferring such candidates to the so-called "gray wolves," where "gray wolves" were in the field; they also preferred them to municipal-ownership candidates against whose character and ability they themselves could find no objection. These preferences were made on the theory of devotion, above everything else, to "good government"—meaning by "good government" the election of men to office who are conventionally reputable.

Our good "good government" friends would do well to read Lincoln Steffens's article in the April McClure's on New Jersey. His previous article on Rhode Island would be good preparatory reading. Evidently Mr. Steffens's studies in American politics are revealing to him with increasing clearness the fact that it is not the disreputable grafters of the slums who make government corrupt, but the reputable grafters of directors' rooms, many of whom contribute to the support of voters' leagues and other reform agencies which may be utilized for diverting public attention from corporate and other business graft to the comparatively unimportant graft of the ward boss. To quote his own language, Mr. Steffens seems to have come to the sound conclusion that what is needed in American politics is "representative government," and "not good government, not reforms, not privileges, not advantages over one another, but fair play all around, and, before the law, equality."

"Good government," in the goody-goody sense of most reform organizations influenced by those business interests which are themselves dependent upon certain kinds of bad government, is vividly and truly described by Mr. Steffens in his New Jersey article in these pointed terms:

Good government is the falsest beacon in American politics. I have seen

the cities sail by it and I know. New Jersey has sailed by it since 1895, and I think I can show in the next, concluding article on the State, that the "passing evils" Jersey men speak of in their counties are the vestiges of the wreck of their citizenship; and that the good they point to with pride in their State is their share of their plunder of our business pirates who buy, cheap, the letters of marque to prey not only on American business, but on American character.

Shameless grafting of the minor kind is what Mr. Steffens describes, in this opening exposure of respectable graft in New Jersey, as the thing "your average citizen means by 'bad government.'" He acutely adds: "It is disgusting, but it isn't dangerous; it is no more dangerous in a State than in a city, and, as I have often remarked before, even Tammany in New York has seen that theft and police blackmail are bad politics." The really dangerous kind of "bad government," as Mr. Steffens points out, with New Jersey for his object lesson, is that which does not disgust but allures. In New Jersey he found an illuminating example of a State where—

there is graft, of course; plenty of it; for the most part, however, the corruption is orderly, respectable, dignified "business." That is bad, but it is not "bad government." The Pennsylvania [railroad] rules and the government represents "the" road, the other roads, and some other interests; but the syndicate that runs the State for the foreign corporations gives Jersey men good government, or, at least, what they tell me is "pretty good government."

Mr. Steffens has also learned the interesting fact that "business" reserves such bad names as "politician," "demagogue" and "anarchist," for "men who are brave enough to challenge and able enough to beat bad business." We have had glittering examples of this in Chicago within a week.

Another article in McClure's for April competes with Steffens's in the interest of its material and the importance of its public lesson. This is the article by Benton J. Hendrick on "The Astor Fortune." That fortune, writes