

firm in the delusion that the voters can be bamboozled forever, to let the election take care of itself.

In the light of what has happened in the past few years to awaken public sentiment and to enlighten public intelligence, is it possible that such a scheme can succeed—even at the next election?

D. K. L.

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

### THE NEW PITTSBURGH.

Two years ago John Z. White came to Pittsburgh, under the auspices of "The Henry George Lecture Association", and delivered a series of lectures on Direct Legislation. Perhaps not more than two dozen—and they were single taxers—were interested in hearing those lectures; but they worked hard to induce influential men to hear Mr. White, and now note one of the results. Last Tuesday a special train took 240 citizens, representing every civic body in the city, every board of trade, the church, and organized labor, to Harrisburg for the purpose of demanding from the legislature direct legislation as part of the new "Pittsburgh plan" of city government.\*

Briefly, the "Pittsburgh plan" provides for a council of only 9 and elected at large, instead of 67, as at present, elected from wards; the Initiative, the Referendum and the Recall; a non-partisan ballot, and nominations by petition. This plan has been discussed for over a year. It has the indorsement of every one of the seventeen civic organizations in the city. It is approved by the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce without a dissenting vote. In advocacy of it 203 meetings, aggregating 20,000 people, have been addressed; and 35,000 Pittsburghers have sent communications to the legislators at Harrisburg petitioning for it. The hearing at Harrisburg was before the Senate committee of municipal affairs and the House committee of municipal corporations.

A Pennsylvania Railroad official remarked to a member of the delegation: "This is the largest and most representative body that our road has ever carried from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg." A delegation of 120 came from Scranton and joined the Pittsburghers on their arrival. Headed by a brass band, both delegations, bearing numerous banners, moved on the Capitol.

For four hours the legislators listened to a veritable fusillade of oratory in behalf of direct legislation for cities of the second class. G. W. Wallace of Pittsburgh, the first speaker, asking for the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, said: "Certain men in Pennsylvania, who are either ignorant themselves or rely upon the ignorance of the public, are condemning these measures on the ground that they are novel, revolutionary, untried and a product of the States which produce alfalfa and long whiskers. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While the particular forms are adapted to modern conditions, the principle involved, namely, the direct vote of the

people on questions of importance, is as old as Anglo-Saxon institutions. . . . This great inheritance of our fathers we have to some extent lost in this country, and we have suffered for it. We are suffering for it now. In advocating it we are not advocating anything new or untried. Surely if the people of the city of Pittsburgh have brains and character enough to elect their public officials, they ought to have brains and character enough to determine when those public officials have betrayed their trust and should be retired from public service."

Every speaker, both from Pittsburgh and Scranton, talked in terms that could not be misunderstood. For example: "When you were candidates for office you promised to serve us, now we give you the opportunity"; "If you don't serve us now, others will hear us in the next legislature"; "This time we present a request, next time it will be a demand"; "You are our servants, why do you refuse to give us what we want?" "If we err in our request, we, not you, will shoulder the responsibility." Such words, coming from ex-Mayor Guthrie, from the President of the Chamber of Commerce (once termed "the white-vested millionaires of Pittsburgh"), from the President of the Amalgamated Association of Labor, from Bishop Whitehead and from Rabbi Levi, made it clear that they were spokesmen for an aroused people determined to rule their own city.

When John Z. White is again in Pittsburgh he will marvel at the changed attitude of its people toward the principles he advocated here two years ago. Instead of a few dozen advocates he will find a populace explaining, discussing and demanding direct legislation. They no longer call it the "doctrine from the West"; it has become a part of them. And this in the East, in Pennsylvania, in wealthy, boss-ridden, machine-ruled Pittsburgh.

BERNARD B. MCGINNIS.

## INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

### LETTERS FROM CHINA—III.

Peking, Jan. 25, 1911.

The Tzucheng Yuan.

I went a little while ago, before its adjournment, to see the National Assembly\* in session. It is, as I have said, not the full parliament, but only the upper house of the future parliament.

In the deliberation I understood one word—rather two words, taking them together. I knew beforehand what subjects were to be discussed, but this did not help me much. One of the Imperial Princes presided. The Minister of Education spoke. The most striking objects in the hall were the ink-wells—quite large blue boxes (4 or 5 inches long)—one on each member's desk. They give a general indigo effect to the whole scene. But the costumes of the members were almost equally striking; they were dressed, some of them, in brilliant silks that would do very well for ladies on parade at a great social function. My small nephews will be able to tell their children fifty years from now that their uncle was present at a scene as impressive in the history

\*See The Public, vol. xiii, p. 794.

\*See last week's Public, page 295.

of Constitutional Government as the signing of Magna Charta.

### The Imperial Government.

One of the things that strikes me as interesting here is the attitude of the central government, in theory the Emperor, now an infant of five years, represented by one of the Princes as Regent. Yet it is said that the H. I. H.—Her Imperial Highness the Empress Dowager—gives verbal instructions to the Regent. I am quoting from the report of the Peking Daily News (English Edition), which I read religiously and minutely every day.

Every manner of detail is covered by the Imperial edicts. Let me give you a sample set, those announced on Jan. 2, being the 2d day, 12th Moon, 2d Year, Hsuant'ung (the Emperor), since the Chinese years are named from the reigning Emperor. They cover: 1, Appointments of the "Mongol Deputy Lieutenant General of the Bordered Blue Banner" and other officers; 2, Instructions that the Emperor shall not perform ceremonies on New Year's Day, nor need Ladies and Princesses residing outside the Palace enter it to perform ceremonies; 3, Announcement that We (the Emperor) will not appear in the Palace to receive congratulations. Memorials were presented by various officers on the same day suggesting the abolition of certain offices in the province of Tunyan; reporting on measures for relief of flood sufferers in the Hsuehou prefecture, and that the name of a certain relief association had been changed; that students who have completed their course of study in the Hupeh School of Languages be rewarded; that 88,486 patients have received treatment in Peking hospitals during the last year; requesting that a certain officer be prosecuted for receiving booty from robbers; asking for a Provincial Governor permission to borrow from a bank in order to make remittance to the government; asking that certain able and efficient officials be presented for Imperial audience and granted responsible positions.

The edicts of the Emperor are quaint and full of hints as to the spirit of government. Take, for instance, the following, as reported in translation:

A short while ago when the three month session of the Tzucheng Yuan expired, We ordered an extension of ten days to enable it to complete the discussion of affairs. As the extension of time has now expired, We command that the meeting be closed today. The opening of the Tzucheng Yuan is only a tentative measure with a view to gradual improvement. You members and other officers of the Assembly should stimulate yourselves in loyally carrying out your duties, increase your knowledge, attain farsightedness in regard to the state of affairs and study tacitly the public sentiment. It is the knowledge and experience acquired in former days that enable one to combine theory with practice in their proposals. We hereby admonish you members to encourage yourselves on this point.

Side by side with this paternal centralization, as we should view it, there is in other matters a large independence of the provinces in many respects. The Viceroy and Governors carry on the affairs of their provinces and districts in their own fashion. Thus a recent memorial suggests that the administration of provincial telegraphs be placed under the control of the Ministry.

An interesting side light on governmental methods is found in a memorial of one of the Censors, sug-

gesting that the line between judicial and administrative officers should be defined. Evidently here, as among the Romans, and in all save the modern civilized nations, the judicial office is but an appendage of the administrator.

### The Opium Question.

The opium question is one much discussed here, that is the question of its prohibition, ordered by an edict of Sept. 20, 1906.\* This in substance provided that (1) New ground should not be planted to poppies and the old should be diminished by 10 per cent each year; (2) that users must register and obtain licenses. If under 60 they must reduce their use by 20 per cent each year till it is totally abandoned. After 5 years if still using the drug they must wear a badge as users. (3) All civil officials and officers of army and navy must abandon use at once, all students and teachers within one year. Dealers must take out licenses, must decrease 20 per cent per year and be out of business in five years. Violations of law to be punished by imprisonment and confiscation of goods. Finally, dispensaries to cure the habit are to be established by the government.

Meantime there has been an agreement with England by which importation is likewise to be diminished and finally cease. Reports in the papers and to the Assembly show that in most places the law is being well enforced and the growth and use of opium steadily diminish. There have been edicts removing certain officials who are reported as not having been able to cure themselves of the opium habit.

### Advance of Chinese Women.

I must mention the presence of women, even of the higher classes, at a meeting of the Anti-Opium League—at which, a still more surprising fact, they even made speeches. In many other respects also the change in the status of women is becoming noticeable. I note that a normal school for females has been established in Hunan and a school for women detectives—who are to be forty years of age or over—in Hupeh. At the reception recently given at the American Legation there were present a number of Chinese ladies and even a Princess or two. The papers contain cards announcing that certain Chinese ladies will be at home on days stated, quite an European fashion. And the anti-foot binding societies are supported by many influential people. All of which are but instances out of innumerable ones which show that the progressive movement in China has reached women as well as men.

W. M. E.

\*See The Public, vol. ix, pp. 537, 610; vol. x, p. 1020; vol. xii, p. 15; and this Public, p. 323.

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We are spending at the present \$3,500,000 per day, \$1,000,095,000 per year, to maintain prison institutions, and that in a democratic country,—a sum almost as large as the combined output of wheat, valued at \$750,000,000 and the output of coal, valued at \$350,000,000. Professor Bushnell of Washington, D. C., estimates the cost of prisons at \$6,000,000,000 annually, and Dr. G. Frank Lydston, an eminent American writer on crime, gives \$5,000,000,000 annually