

ventions. In Ohio the Democrats decided to confine this year's fight to local issues. But because their platform made declarations on national issues, yet was silent about Bryan and the Kansas City platform, the plutocratic reorganizers, echoed by the Republicans, shouted joyously, pointing to this omission as evidence that the party was swinging back into the embraces of its old leaders. In Pennsylvania, also, the Democrats decided to confine this year's fight to local issues; and, mindful of the misrepresentation to which the Ohio action had been subjected by the plutocrats, they were careful to say nothing at all about national issues except to waive them. But that made no difference to the plutocratic press. It promptly pointed now to Pennsylvania as well as to Ohio, for indications that Bryanism was being repudiated. Next came Iowa. For days before the convention the plutocratic press described it also as certain to reject Bryanism. Had the reactionaries kept quiet, they might now have had as much color for saying that the Iowa convention repudiates Bryan as they had for saying that Ohio and Pennsylvania did so; for in Iowa, too, the only issue this year is local—the question of taxing railroad property equally with other taxable property—and national declarations might properly have been left out of the platform, as they were in Pennsylvania, to avoid antagonizing Republicans who are with the Democrats on state issues. But after what the plutocratic Democrats said as to the silence of the Ohio and the Pennsylvania platforms with reference to the Kansas City platform, the democratic Democrats of Iowa could not afford to make their platform also silent in that respect. Nor have they made it so. Though the reorganizers did influence the committee on resolutions sufficiently to furnish the plutocrats with their coveted opportunity to name Iowa as another state which had thrown Bryanism overboard, the minority brought the question squarely before

the convention and it sustained Bryanism. This is the first occasion on which the "reorganizers'" issue has been tested. It was not tested at all in the Ohio and Pennsylvania conventions. Even in the Iowa convention many democratic Democrats voted with the "reorganizers" for local reasons, and so made the minority larger than it would have been on a perfectly definite test. But the Iowa convention did make a test; it did vote on the question of keeping the Democratic party in line with its democratic policy of the past two presidential campaigns. This is the first vote on that question that has been taken since the last presidential election, and upon this vote the reorganizing reactionaries were distinctly defeated.

The newspaper dispatches upon the faith of which we stated last week that "Mayor Jones, of Toledo, has announced his intention of supporting the democratic ticket," were somewhat in error. Mayor Jones writes that that was not his announcement, what he did announce being this:

As between Kilbourne and Nash, I am for the former; but shall probably vote for some republicans, some democrats, some socialists, some nonpartisans nominated by free petition; and for some offices I shall refrain from voting entirely.

One of the republican papers of Chicago—the Tribune—has collected statistics of the prices of vegetables, meats, butter, eggs, cheese and fruit in the Chicago market as they prevail now, and compared them with the prices of a year ago. The increase is phenomenal. It ranges from nine per cent. for butter to 800 per cent. for cabbage. Producers who get the benefit of these higher prices are doubtless grateful to President McKinley, who is understood to have caused the increase, but why should consumers be grateful? When Mr. McKinley increases the prices of commodities he ought in fairness to in-

crease the wages of consumers, but he appears to have neglected that.

A useful political work of no little importance has been undertaken by the Ohio State Board of Commerce, (353 Superior street, Cleveland), of which E. M. Thresher, of Dayton, is president, and Henry A. Griffin, of Cleveland, is secretary. The organization is one of long standing and of deserved influence in business circles. It begins the work to which we allude with an address to the citizens and business men of the state, in which it frankly and fully states its purposes, and invites financial assistance. It intends to make a non-partisan legislative campaign this fall, educational in character, in behalf of the following three civic measures, which it believes the next legislature can be induced to enact:

1. For a general law for the organization of villages and cities that will secure to each of them every desired power for municipal self-government and render special legislation as unnecessary as it is undesirable.
2. For an amendment to the constitution to permit local option in taxation and a general simplification of our system of taxation by means of which gains of great and permanent value to every business interest can be secured.
3. For a system of public accounting and auditing that shall be uniform throughout the state, designed to promote economy and efficiency in the administration of all branches and departments of public business.

The benefits of these measures, once they are fairly in operation, are simply incalculable. Uniformity of accounting would make every accounting unit in the state a check upon every other, and no corruption that bookkeeping can reveal would be practicable. Every chief accountant everywhere and all the time would have to be a party to the corrupt conspiracy or it would quickly be unmasked. A comparison of accounts, which any citizen might make, would instantly raise suspicion when reason for suspicion existed, and suspicion so excited would lead as quickly to exposure. Local self-government

needs no defense. If we are ever to have good government, we must begin with local government. Not local government superimposed, but local government locally planned and administered. This is the highway to good citizenship, and good citizenship alone can make good government. The idea that a people must learn to be self-governing from teachers who govern them, is as false as the notion that one can learn to write without writing, to speak without speaking, or to swim without going into the water. Speaking is learned by speaking, writing by writing, swimming by swimming, and self-government by self-governing. There is no other way. Local option in taxation is, of course, implied by local self-government. No community can govern itself unless it governs its system of taxation. By enactment of these three measures, then, as proposed by the Ohio State Board of Commerce, the people of the Buckeye state will serve themselves and become an example to the rest of the country.

The plan of campaign announced by the board is to put regularly into the hands of at least 100 constituents of each member of the legislature a copy of "Public Policy," an able weekly paper, edited by Allen Ripley Foote, who is a devoted advocate of the three principles of government enunciated above. In that and other ways it is designed not only to educate the legislators but also to assure them, and this is very important, of the encouragement and support of an intelligent body of their constituents.

Along the same lines of local government the State Bar association of Ohio has recently gone on record. At its annual meeting in July last it adopted the following important resolution:

Resolved, that the constitution of Ohio should be so amended as to completely separate state and local taxation; and that each county of the state be vested with the power of taxation for the purposes of such city or county, subject to the au-

thority of the legislature to limit local indebtedness, and fix the maximum rate of taxation which city or county may levy.

The principle of local option in taxation is rapidly gaining ground. Our readers are familiar with the particulars of the constitutional amendment movement to allow it in Colorado, the legislature there having by more than a two-thirds vote in each house submitted the amendment to popular vote. In New York, where the idea originated, it is becoming visibly more and more popular. Several weeks ago (p. 144) we described its strong beginning in New Jersey—the township of Franklin, Essex county, of which Nutley is the intellectual center, having voted for it in regular town meeting. This New Jersey movement has progressed from the Franklin township vote to the stage of the establishment of a state organization, "The New Jersey Tax Reform association," which has its headquarters at 294 Market street, Newark. That the local option tax system is now in extended and successful operation in New Zealand, where it first received legislative sanction, is a fact with which our readers are familiar.

Nothing could be more encouraging than the earnest efforts that are being made by officials in the southern states to stop the lynching of negro prisoners. A Georgia sheriff has the honor of having begun this reform. He proved that a loaded gun with a determined sheriff behind it would hold the cowardly mobs at bay. Now his example has been followed by a sheriff in Mississippi, assisted by the governor, and by one in Alabama. Southerners who abhor lawlessness are to be congratulated upon these hopeful signs. But the blind and brutal hostility of white mobs to negroes is not ended. Lynchings are reported from two or three southern points, and the mobbing of the negro inhabitants of a Missouri town make one of the most shameful stories

of the whole reign of anti-negro mob law.

Negro hatred is not confined to the South. Utterly without reason it is growing at the North, and not among workingmen, but among the rich. What is to be said, for instance, of the American snobs who have formally protested against the admission to the London hotel in which they are stopping, of several American gentlemen, clergymen in attendance upon a religious council to be held in London, for no other reason than that the objecting snobs happen to be white and the clerical gentlemen happen to be colored? Perhaps nothing need be said, the hotel proprietor having said all that was necessary. This mere subject of a monarchy rebuked these enlightened citizens of a free and equal republic, with the following remarks:

I could not think of offering an insult to such men as Bishop Derrick, of New York; Bishop Janner, of Philadelphia; Bishop Gaines, of Atlanta, and Bishop Arnett. I told the Americans that when the Indian princes were here no one objected to meet them and I do not propose to make any distinction at the expense of Africans.

Prosecutions of trusts have recently been instituted both in the state courts of Ohio and in the federal courts, under the professional direction of F. S. Monett, the Ohio attorney general who fought the Standard Oil trust in that state until the Republican convention came to the rescue, and put him out of the fight by nominating another man for attorney general. Mr. Monett expresses confidence in these prosecutions. They are maintained at the instance of the American Anti-Trust league, 1229 Pennsylvania avenue, Washington—the organization of which M. L. Lockwood is president—which has assumed the responsibility of raising the necessary funds. It is now soliciting contributions.

For once a set-back has been given to the stupid municipal system of compelling peddlers and showmen to