

do I know how I shall stand in their eyes hereafter for standing to-day in my present position. But I cannot look on passively, and I must urge my point. That point is this: that the commonwealth of Massachusetts is not a medical body, has no right to a medical opinion, and should not dare to take sides in a medical controversy. In the particular business of mental healing there can be no doubt that if the proposed law were really enforced it would stamp out and arrest the acquisition of that whole branch of medical experience. The mind-curers and their public return the scorn of the regular profession with an equal scorn, and will never come up for the examinations. Their movement is a religious or quasi-religious movement; personality is one condition of success there, and impressions and intuitions seem to accomplish more than chemical, anatomical or physiological information. These are the facts, gentlemen. You as legislators are not bound either to affirm or deny them yourselves, or in any way to judge them from a medical point of view, but simply, after ascertaining that thousands of intelligent citizens believe in them, decide whether to legislate or not. Do you feel called on, do you dare, to thrust the coarse machinery of criminal law into these vital mysteries, into these personal relations of doctor and patient, into these infinitely subtle operations of nature, and enact that a whole department of medical investigation (for such it is), together with the special conditions of freedom under which it flourishes, must cease to be? I venture to say that you dare not, gentlemen. You dare not convert the laws of this commonwealth into obstacles to the acquisition of truth. You are not to ask yourselves whether these mind-curers do really achieve the successes that are claimed. It is enough for you as legislators to ascertain that a large number of our citizens, persons as intelligent and well-educated as yourselves or I, persons whose number seems daily to increase, are convinced that they do achieve them. Here is a purely medical question, in which our general court, not being a well spring and source of medical virtue, must remain strictly neutral under penalty of making the confusion worse."

Professor James has thus been quoted at some length because it does not seem probable that the argument against legislative interference with mental healers will be more weightily put than he has put it. The subject is one of considerable current importance, and one in which Professor James—a physician by education and a psychologist by profession—ought to be peculiarly qualified to speak. He has looked into the various methods of mental healing, and thinks he has found in them germs of truth too valuable to be stamped out.

Yet he is disinterested. He said in his speech that if one single type of practitioner had to be singled out for license he would vote without hesitation for the Harvard medical school type, but he found no necessity for such exclusive selection.

There were many other addresses, and at the second hearing some instances were given of Christian Science cures.

On March 7 the committee reported against the bill.—Harper's Weekly.

THE PROGRESSIVES' VICTORY IN LONDON.

The London county council has been fighting for its life. The two programmes in the campaign just ended turned on its future power and functions. For ten years it has administered as a political unit the confusion of parishes and districts which made up the greater London. During the whole of this period the Progressive party has held the reins, and has taken hold of work formerly left to private initiative or performed for the public by private contractors. It has cleared away slums and built much-needed and profitable workmen's dwellings and lodging houses. It has constructed the (free) Blackwall tunnel under the Thames, demonstrating to the world the practicability of the underground electric railway system proposed by the Rapid Transit commission in New York city. Finally, it has protected the ratepayers against "rings" of builders by establishing a works department. This department was brought into existence when the builders were believed to have unduly inflated their tenders out of spite because trade union wages and conditions were rigidly enforced.

In the recent campaign the "Progressive" party appealed to the London voters for support on the ground of the administrative work performed in the past as well as that promised in the future. The future work outlined, however, was of the highest importance. The programme included municipal ownership and working of the street "trams"—which must in time be replaced by electric cars—and the municipalization of the water supply. London is supplied by eight water companies; their prices are high, and the water pressure is so low as to increase seriously the dangers of fires. But far more serious than either of these evils is the fact that the water is not satisfactory in point of purity.

The opposite party, who in the council termed themselves "Moderates," favored, at the instance of Lord Salisbury, giving up some of the great powers possessed by the council to small

municipalities to be created by future legislation. Lord Salisbury and the cabinet said they were in favor of dividing London into ten or a dozen municipalities, but that they would not finally draft the bill until they had heard the views of the people. Lord Salisbury urged every conservative and "unionist" elector to vote for the moderate candidates. As London is a conservative city, he hoped the "moderate" party would be sufficiently strong to induce the county council to curtail its powers. The extraordinary anxiety displayed by Lord Salisbury and his friends to persuade London to go contrary to the prevailing tendency of large centers of population, viz., toward unification, was believed to be mainly due to the following resolution passed by the county council in 1897 on the recommendation of their local government and taxation committee:

"That it is desirable that a new source of revenue should be obtained by means of some direct charge upon owners of site values."

Under a law that would not be tolerated in the worst-governed city in America, the ground landlords of London, wealthy owners like the Duke of Bedford and Lord Salisbury himself, do not directly contribute to the expense of London government. The renters pay all the taxes (or rates) for the public improvements which add to the value of the land. If the city should be broken up into independent districts, it was believed that the taxation of ground rents would be long postponed, and that even when this reform came, land in the richest districts could not be taxed for bettering the condition of the poorest. This, however, was not the only reason why the conservatives stood for decentralization. If the government could persuade the London county council practically to annihilate itself, the difficulty of municipalizing the tramways or the water supply would be greatly increased.

These, then, are the broad issues upon which the contest was fought. Lord Rosebery, as an ex-chairman of the London county council, appealed to London to preserve its unity. Mr. Bryce and other liberals of national influence supported him. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. A. J. Balfour, the great lieutenants of the unionist government, supported Lord Salisbury and attacked the "socialistic" tendency of previous county councils.

A noteworthy feature of the contests was, as usual, the fascination they had for peers of the realm. By an old law peers are forbidden under penalties to interfere in the people's free choice of their parliamentary representatives.

But in the county council elections peers are often candidates, and the last council included about a dozen. Although English voters are still influenced by men's rank, this influence counts for less as civilization advances and manhood ripens. At the recent elections a gratifying number of peers on both sides were defeated by commoners.

The result of the elections may be regarded as a crushing defeat of the "moderates," with the decentralization or disintegration of London as the main plank of their platform. The progressives have carried about three-fifths of the districts. This, of course, is a great relief to this party, whose working majority during the last three years has been but two, and at crucial moments has sometimes fallen to zero. The rate-payers of London have pronounced so decisively against any partition of their great city that the county council is not likely to be even asked to give up any of its powers. The city remains an organism, with the county council directing its energies of every kind to promote the well-being of the whole.—The Outlook.

HOW SHALL WE CONTROL THE POWER OF THE SPEAKER?

In the current *Cosmopolitan* John Brisben Walker makes a study of the dangerous power of the speaker of the house of representatives, and offers the following suggestions as to its curtailment:

Is there any simple way by which the speaker may be relieved of his now dangerous authority and the power re-confided to the representatives of the people? In the light shed upon the subject by the experience of other parliamentary bodies the matter does not seem impossible. The chief difficulties concern:

First. The appointment of the committees, in whose hands must rest those important investigations upon whose thoroughness and final accuracy the action of the houses must often depend.

Second. The power to advance legislation to a final vote.

Third. The relegation of all private business to properly constituted courts of claims.

Fourth. The confinement of the speaker's duties to the exercise of entirely impartial courtesy and the according of equal privileges to friend and foe.

The first of these may be met by the selection in caucus of a tactical committee by each of the parties — this tactical committee to be charged with the duty of selecting the representatives that its party shall have on each of the house committees. This would be less simple than selection by the

speaker, but the result would really represent the sanction of the members. Then the tactical committee representing the party in the majority would nominate the first name on each congressional committee, that of the minority the second, that of the majority the third, and so on, alternately.

The second difficulty, involving the selection of the legislation most important to the country, should be met by giving the tactical committees of the two parties the determination of the order in which legislation shall come before the house. After recognizing the appropriation bills as non-partisan, the party in the majority should be entitled to nominate that measure which shall have precedence over all others, except appropriation bills. The majority having selected what it regards as the vital measure of the session, the minority comes forward with its selection; then the majority nominates a second measure and the minority follows with its second, and so on alternately.

In this way the house would again become a legislative body acting as a committee of the whole on legislation of vital importance. The parties, knowing that they would be committed to the consideration of a measure after it had been nominated and posted by them, would select with the greatest caution, while the house itself would be compelled to give earnest attention to that important legislation which most nearly concerns national interests.

The third difficulty would be removed by modeling the speakership on that of the British house of commons. Of the English speaker, Bryce says:

"The note of the speaker of the British house of commons is his impartiality. He has indeed been chosen by a party, because a majority means in England a party. But on his way from his place on the benches to the chair he is expected to shake off and leave behind all party ties and sympathies. Once invested with the wig and gown of office he has no longer any political opinions, and must administer exactly the same treatment to his political friends and to those who have been hitherto his opponents, to the oldest or most powerful minister and to the youngest or least popular member. His duties are limited to the enforcement of the rules and generally to the maintenance of order and decorum in debate, including the selection, when several members rise at the same moment, of the one who is to carry on the discussion. These are duties of great importance, and his position one of great dignity, but neither the duties nor the position imply political power. It makes little difference to any English party in parliament whether the occupant of the chair has come from their own or from the hostile ranks. The speaker can lower or raise the tone

and efficiency of the house as a whole by the way he presides over it; but a custom as strong as law forbids him to render help to his own side even by private advice. Whatever information as to parliamentary law he may feel free to give must be equally at the disposal of every member."

The fourth difficulty concerns the immense private business which comes before the house of representatives and which should properly go before courts of claims. This burden has become each year more onerous. Its tendency is toward a complete paralysis of debate upon those measures which most concern the public. But so much of the personal influence of members is derived from the aid which they render to claimants that a proposal to relegate the business to special courts would doubtless be strongly opposed.

Nevertheless the question must soon be met. Wire-pulling and log-rolling have been in a large measure substituted for argument. It is a growing belief that the best results are to be obtained by keeping the time of the house free for debate. The business office of the member, with its littered desk, its coming and going clerks and pages, absorbing the attention of the occupant, must be swept from the floor of the house.

Truly representative government requires that the members must come to the hall for instruction and thought upon the chief matter in hand, rather than upon petty details which have no real bearing on public affairs. They must come to listen as well as to be heard. The courtesy of attention must be given at all times and must be expected. This would quickly do away with sham speeches and bring the debates up to a higher intellectual plane.

Under the existing conditions there is a strong tendency toward trades and combinations which would make of the congressman a smart log-roller rather than a thoughtful legislator. Some years of close observation gave me the impression that the intellectual level of the congressman in Washington was rather lower than the plane he had occupied at home. The atmosphere of high discussion, which he had expected to find, is missing, and he too often sinks into a man of petty trades, ready to wrest from the nation financial advantages for his constituents, at whatever sacrifice to the people at large.

He is kept so busy by the demands from office seekers, pensioners and general claimants that he has no time for proper study of the questions under debate, or even to keep up with the current literature of the subject. Were the floor of the house given up to carefully prepared discussions of important measures, he would not only have his mind equipped by that which he would hear, but he would be compelled himself to study carefully if he would exact