

system, as Mr. Hooker describes the plans, are streets converging in greater or less number to form many "round" or "star" points, and a series of five roughly concentric boulevard or parkway circuits, the network as a whole effecting a vast saving of distance in travel and showing what a crude thing a mere rectangular street plan really is.

In connection with the improved street system, the plans indicate the importance of the city's acquiring for future street purposes the lawn sites along what are now important residential streets, so that when these streets pass into business uses this space may be added to the width of the street instead of being choked up with business structures.

The heart of the city is the "civic center." It is to be located at Congress and Halsted streets, which Mr. Hooker describes as "near the center of population, the center of industrial development, and the geographical center of the city." Here are to be assembled the municipal, the county, and the Federal buildings.

At the Lake terminus of Congress street (the broad way extending eastward from the civic center), and at the center of the water front recreation scheme, three monumental public buildings would stand—the Field Museum of Natural Science, the John Crerar Library, and the Art Institute.

Facing each other, therefore, about a mile apart and with a splendid boulevard connecting them, would be those two spectacular and significant groups of buildings; one group of three, standing on the Lake, would represent Science, Letters and Art; the other group of three, standing at the civic center, would represent National, State (the county subdivision) and Municipal administration.

Further describing this feature of the plans, Mr. Hooker says: "It is suggested that the former group, of which the chief member would be the Museum, might be bound together by corridors into one composition. The latter group, dominated by the Municipal building with its gigantic dome, would be separated from the others by the radial arteries, of which ten would converge upon the obelisk in the open square in front. The two axial thoroughfares, Congress street and Michigan avenue, are conceived of as natural sites for fine stores, theaters, hotels and other important structures. This great formal scheme at the heart of town, is counted upon to give attractiveness, dignity and interest to the city, and, in conjunction with the other improvements proposed, to insure its permanent prosperity."

Doubtless these plans for an Ideal Chicago are subject to just criticism. Mr. Hooker hints, indeed, though he merely sketches the salient elements of the plans regardless of their essential merits, at reasons for criticism which are certainly impressive.

It is not our purpose, however, to consider the plans with reference to actual or possible criticisms, further than to emphasize the fact that all criticism must fall into two classes with reference to the authority that should decide.

Criticism of technical details is for experts to pass upon; criticism of what in contradistinction to technical details may be called details of policy, is for the people to pass upon. But prior to the question of details of either class, comes the question of general policy, also a question for the people.

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On this point there seems to us to be no room for discussion.

Surely the city's area for the future should be considered upon a scale as expansive as that which the plans contemplate.

Surely the splendid natural advantages of its water front should be utilized in some such way as they propose.

Surely the city should have a civic center that would be an inspiration to its citizenship as well as an official convenience.

Surely its public utilities should be so extended, intensified and adjusted, as to realize the extremes of common convenience and comfort.

And can any public spirited citizen deny that its thoroughfares should conform to developing needs, its common resorts to educational and recreative demands, or its whole public service and private enterprises to physical and moral health?

Should not beauty go hand in hand with utility, and competent and reasonable supervision regulate the whole in the interest of municipal order and municipal growth?

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ROOSEVELT'S CHOICE EIGHT MONTHS AFTER.

Mr. Taft, as candidate for the Presidency, was practically friendless. The political world was hard and cold to him; the masses of the people, who liked Roosevelt because they largely mistook words for deeds and noise for activity, knew little of Taft and cared less; but he was Roosevelt's choice, and he was forced on a terrorized convention and subsequently elected—chiefly because he

was pledged to "clinch" and extend "the Roosevelt policies."

After so extraordinary a tour as Mr. Taft has just made, and after nearly nine months of office, it is not improper to inquire where we stand, or how far we have traveled on the road of reform and progress, with President Taft, the heir and disciple.

Mr. Taft's first task was "tariff revision downward." The people know what kind of tariff revision Taft, with the heroic aid of Aldrich, Hale, Smoot, Cannon, Dalzell and company has given them. If they do not know, or are not sure, Dolliver, Cummins, La Follette, Borah, Nelson and other Republican progressives have spoken and labored in vain, as have impartial students, experts, leading independent journals and intelligent manufacturers and merchants. The Taft tariff is a fraud on the public; there are no reductions in it that need cause, or have caused, the bloated, overprotected trusts the least concern. There are no reductions in it that can, or were intended to, lower prices, stimulate competition or handicap monopoly. There are increases in it which are shameful and wanton, increases which mean higher profits for the prosperous and heavier burdens for the mass of consumers.

This tariff Taft first apologized for as a "sincere effort" to redeem the pledge of downward revision—as if he and his party had promised "a sincere effort" and not definite results—and as "incomplete fulfillment." He must have known, limited as his intelligence is, that his much-advertised "test" of "legitimate protection" had not been applied, and could not have been applied to a single schedule or rate. Congress had depended on what Dolliver called "the existing tariff commission" the commission of lobbyists, greedy or timid manufacturers and glib liars, and had indignantly rejected information as to the cost of production abroad, foreign wages, etc. But, lame as the apology was, it was at least an apology. If we were to be robbed, insult, at least, was not to be piled on the injury.

On his tour, however, the "soft," amiable cheerful, ever-smiling Taft changed his tone as to the tariff. He had forgotten his apology and, in his clumsy, elephantine way, assumed the offensive. The tariff act was the best the party had ever passed; the Republican insurgents had acted so wickedly and treacherously that it was an exercise of charity to continue to treat them as Republicans; the figures—the stale, worthless Payne figures, mark—showed that the new tariff would save countless millions to the people!

This was ludicrous and absurd, of course, and proved "too strong" even for party organs and general sycophants. But the changed Taft, the aggressive Taft, the defender of the fraudulent tariff, was something of a psychological puzzle.

He would still, perhaps, be a psychological puzzle but for other exhibitions, performances and self-revelations made while touring the country, uttering platitudes, misquoting the Bible, assaulting English composition and neglecting the business he is liberally paid to attend to at Washington. The illumination afforded by these self-revelations enables us to solve the puzzle.

At Chicago, while discussing law reform, Mr. Taft advocated, as one of the remedies for the evils of delay and cost, an increase of the power of the judges. The tendency in constitutional and State legislation has been to limit the power of judges. Injunctions, "rebukes" of juries, arrogant annulment of laws on far-fetched "constitutional" grounds, account sufficiently for this tendency. But Taft, the bureaucrat and "tyrant" of the Philippines and Cuba, ignorant or heedless of popular sentiment in the United States, seriously proposes increase of the powers abused by the judges!

In the Far West Mr. Taft has repeatedly railed at and assailed the Oklahoma Constitution, which he called "a zoological garden of cranks." He cannot forgive the rejection of his advice to the Oklahomans to defeat that Constitution, and has neither dignity nor sense enough to remain silent. What he objects to in the Oklahoma Constitution is its alleged over-regulation of the legislature. The ideal constitution, he holds, is brief and very general—witness our Federal Constitution. To attempt to tie the hands of the legislature, especially in a new, undeveloped territory, is to hamper growth and adaptation of law to need. But the tendency to particularize and impose more and more limitations on the legislature is illustrated in all the recent constitutions and is itself the outcome of needs and conditions. The Oklahomans are in good company, and what they did, whether wise or unwise on the whole, they did in order to prevent abuses and evils they had observed in other States. Moreover, Mr. Taft does not seem to know that the limitations he complains of were aimed at the courts in many instances and intended to free the hands of the legislature and the people, rather than to tie them. Nullification of statutes on flimsy and absurd grounds has been carried so far that constitutional conventions have had to provide specifically that such and such legislation shall be within the pow-

er of the law-making authority and such powers withheld from the courts. The people may control legislatures by means of the referendum and the initiative; but how are they to shackle the ambitious and arrogant judges, how are they to prevent stretching and misconstruction of constitutions at the dictation of corporations and "interests," if not by means of "organic" limitations and specifications? Mr. Taft has been advising audiences who are better informed than himself and more "practical" in their theories and actions. He should sit at their feet and learn and not venture to teach, scold and condemn.

Mr. Taft has bespoken popular affection for Aldrich, "the leader of the Senate," the "ablest student of finance," etc., who is anxious to confer upon us the blessings of a central bank, a bank insulated and guarded against Wall street influences. Aldrich as a friend of the people, an advocate of anti-plutocratic legislation, is a picture which makes even a Rhode Island wooden Indian scream and roar. Aldrich does not represent anybody or anything in Rhode Island except a rotten borough system. The leading paper of the State has expressed amazement at the Taft word-painting of Aldrich.

Mr. Taft has advocated ship subsidies as a reform to which Congress might well devote the next session. The "reform" would take money out of the pockets of the poor, the struggling, industrious, self-denying millions, and put it into the pockets of wealthy syndicates; but, reasons the simple-minded Taft, doesn't the protective tariff do the same thing? Why hesitate at a subsidy gnat after swallowing the tariff camel and hugely enjoying the operation? Mr. Taft's "frankness" regarding the tariff would be laudable were it intended as frankness. But, representing, as it does, confusion, density and forgetfulness of sophistries previously exploited, we find little to commend in it. At any rate, Aldrich, the friend of the people, will be most happy to take the heir and disciple of Roosevelt at his word and devote the next Congressional session to subsidy legislation instead of to railroad regulation, labor measures or conservation of water-power. What "clinging" of the Roosevelt policies that would gloriously constitute! What a demonstration of sincerity, progressiveness and moral courage it would afford! How the plunderers and monopolists would rage and gnash their teeth!

Finally, Mr. Taft has permitted Knox, a trust attorney, to humiliate his own choice for Minister to China, a public-spirited, broad-minded, in-

dependent and generous citizen, Charles R. Crane of Chicago. No one has been deceived by Knox's pretext; no one believes that the trifling "indiscretion" that was made the excuse for the brutal dismissal of Mr. Crane ever gave Knox a moment's concern. The Crane appointment *was* remarkable and surprising, as The Public said at the time, since men like Taft and Knox do not seek the services, in high office, of men like Mr. Crane. But once made, honor and decency should have constrained the President to support his appointee, privately rebuke the insolent Knox and prevent the scandalous violation of every principle of propriety. It is immaterial whether Mr. Taft's unseemly part in the affair was the result of ignorance, flabbiness, timidity or a combination of these qualities. His responsibility is heavy and manifest.

But what is to be expected of a man whose notion of self-respect allows him to accept as a compliment the remark of a Western chairman that "we like him because Roosevelt liked him," who finds it compatible with Presidential dignity to advertise Aldrich's projected speech-making trip in the interest of a central bank; who cannot appreciate the gravity of deliberate insults aimed at a whole State and its population?

Mr. Taft may be a well-meaning "conservative-progressive," but nature was very unkind to him in the allotment of brain-stuff and backbone. If we ever get anything more from his administration than a "sincere effort" and a gold brick, a miracle will have happened.

S. R.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining 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 Tuesday, October 19, 1909.

The Execution of Ferrer Arouses Europe.

Professor Francisco Ferrer, scholar and founder of secular schools, condemned to death by court martial at Barcelona, Spain, on the 11th (p. 992), on the charge of complicity in the revolutionary uprisings of last summer, was stood up against a wall in the fortress of Montjuich on the morning of the 13th and shot. He is reported to have refused to kneel, and to have cried as the