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CONTENTS.

| | |
|--|-----|
| EDITORIAL: | |
| The Norwegian Secession..... | 193 |
| Single Tax Agitation in Denmark..... | 193 |
| Juries in Criminal Trials..... | 194 |
| Hadley's Baccalaureate Address..... | 194 |
| Municipal Government in Ohio..... | 194 |
| The Merit System of Civil Service..... | 195 |
| Attacks upon the Teachers' Federation of Chicago..... | 195 |
| Official Contempt for Popular Suffrage..... | 196 |
| Heroes Without War..... | 196 |
| The Paradox of the Good (Dillard)..... | 196 |
| EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE: | |
| Johnstown (Beebe)..... | 197 |
| Australia (Bray)..... | 198 |
| NEWS NARRATIVE: | |
| Norway and Sweden..... | 198 |
| Possible Revolution in Russia..... | 198 |
| The Russian-Japanese War..... | 199 |
| American Politics..... | 200 |
| The Chicago Traction Question..... | 200 |
| The Chicago Teamsters' Strike..... | 201 |
| A New Labor Movement..... | 201 |
| News Notes..... | 202 |
| Press Opinions..... | 202 |
| MISCELLANY: | |
| Mental Arithmetic (verse)..... | 203 |
| Lincoln's Gettysburg Address..... | 203 |
| Wu Tingfang and John Smith..... | 203 |
| Mayor Johnson's Way..... | 204 |
| Jefferson and the Land Question..... | 204 |
| BOOKS: | |
| Henry George..... | 207 |
| Books Received..... | 208 |
| Pamphlets..... | 208 |
| Periodicals..... | 208 |
| CARTOON—(Bengough.) Labor's Corner; or, the Unequal Conditions of Bargaining..... | |
| | 208 |

For terms and other particulars of publication see cartoon page

EDITORIAL

The Norwegian Secession.

A great lesson in democratic government is probable from Norway and Sweden. All the hopeful lessons in government throughout history seem to have come, as this one promises, from the "little peoples." The "big peoples" have rushed the world along into the darkness and despair of imperialism and centralized power; only the "little peoples" have set the world examples of democracy triumphant. In ancient times it was little Rome that planted the seeds of liberty, and imperial Rome that brought on the blight of the dark ages; in more modern times it is little England that has lighted this darkness with inspiring examples of

democracy, and the British empire swaggering up and down the earth that has tried to snuff them out. If Sweden adopts the advice of her king and his ministry, then little Norway and little Sweden will have set an example in dissolving their imperial bonds, which, at this particular time, when the bigness and power of empire has not ceased to inflame the imagination, will be one of the best lessons in government the world has ever had.

Had the United States but set this good example half a century ago, American history would have been different and better. There would have been no fratricidal war with its horrors of destruction and its burden of debt. Slavery would have passed away, for it was already becoming unprofitable and would long ago have been economically impossible; but it would have passed away as it has in South American republics, where it was abolished by consent instead of conquest, and without leaving an inheritance of race hostility behind it. Imperialism would never have raised its head. Centralization of power would have been avoided. And yet all the advantages of union, plus the element of friendship, could have been secured by treaty federation. Of this outcome of a wiser course between our Northern and our Southern States, the course that Norway and Sweden are apparently about to pursue is highly significant.

Those two countries were bound together for certain purposes. As is always the case where inflexible bonds of union exist, the more aggressive country of the two began to acquire inordinate power over the other. The other gave notice of dissolution of the bonds, and made overtures for fraternal relations. When Norway did this, Sweden would, had she followed our example, have resolved upon force, and after plunging the two peoples into a

bloody war would have burdened them with an inheritance of hatred for generations to come. But Sweden's official advisers are wiser if not better. Declaring that a union without natural accord could bring no advantage to either people, they recommend acceptance of the fraternal overtures of Norway in the spirit in which they were made.

Out of the greater independence of both peoples that would result, a closer because freer union would almost certainly eventuate. By a defensive alliance of Sweden and Norway, with free trade between their peoples, the most perfect unity can be secured without prejudice to complete autonomy and without irritation. Should Denmark come into this alliance, which is not too much to expect eventually, a Scandinavian federation upon the basis of local autonomy would be effected, in comparison with which an imperial union maintained by coercion would be the last thing to be desired. In the first step towards this possible consummation, Norway is of course entitled to the credit of asserting her independence with dignity and in a spirit of fraternal good will; but Sweden, should she follow the advice of her king and his ministers, will have earned at least equal credit.

Single Tax Agitation in Denmark.

Slowly but all the more firmly for that reason, the central idea to which Henry George gave form and which has gained an influential position in the English speaking world, is making headway in the countries of other speech. To several instances (vol. vii, pp. 12, 28, 338, 346, 410, 618, 823; vol. viii, pp. 72, 103) we have heretofore called attention. Another is reported from Denmark. An excellent monthly magazine, "Ret" (Right) which comes to us from Slagelse, a city of about 20,000 inhabitants some 50 or 60 miles from Copenhagen, is the organ of the Henry George

association of that city. This association, of which nothing has heretofore been published in our country, was organized in 1902 with 24 members. In 1903 the membership had increased to 407 and in 1905 to 550. Its work has consisted in circulating literature, providing copy for the newspapers and magazines, and promoting single tax lectures. What must be even more encouraging to single taxers than the existence of so large a society in Denmark where the agitation is spontaneous, is the fact, for which "Ret" vouches, that the monthly magazines and weekly newspapers of Denmark open their columns readily and gladly to single tax contributions. The daily papers, however, are more cautious. Although they do not reject, they hesitate. The George idea seems so simple and plausible that they apparently harbor discreet fears that in some mysterious way it may be dangerously "loaded."

Juries in Criminal Trials.

Secretary Taft's attack upon the institution of trial by jury, in his address to the graduating class of the Yale law school on the 26th, affords another indication of the plutocratic drift away from popular government and toward government by judges and bureaucrats. True to that judicial instinct which found its most faithful exemplification in the career of Jeffreys, Mr. Taft regards "miscarriages of justice" and acquittals as synonymous terms. Jury trial, therefore, ranks with him as a fetish; and he condemns its adoption in Porto Rico and approves its exclusion from the Philippines. But jury trial in criminal cases is the palladium of personal liberty—and this is no parrot-like encomium. It is the palladium of popular liberties because it reserves to the people themselves, regardless of bribed legislators or class judges, the ultimate power of peaceable resistance to official repression. It operates as a referendum on the execution of every criminal statute. Let jury trial in criminal cases be abol-

ished, or the absolute rights of the jury be curtailed by judges, and personal liberty would soon depend, as it did in the past in similar circumstances, upon the grace of rulers or the mercy of judges.

Hadley's Baccalaureate Address.

Much better advice to young men going out into the world, than that of Mr. Taft to the law graduates at Yale, was that of President Hadley to the academic graduates. Dr. Hadley graphically distinguished the pharisee, who prides himself on his devotion to rules and observances, from the man who tries to govern his conduct by principles—him who keeps the letter of the law and kills the spirit from him who adapts the letter to the spirit. Noting the external fact that the breaking of one rule is demoralizing to the whole system of rules with those who place their trust in keeping the letter of the law, Dr. Hadley enlarged upon the vastly more important consideration of the dangers to character of adopting rules of conduct in stead of principles of life for guides. "Even if no emergencies or crises arise," he said, "which stretch our rules to the breaking point, there is another and more insidious series of dangers which beset the man whose morality and religion are matters of rule alone. The keeping of definite rules produces self-satisfaction; and self-satisfaction is but one step short of moral stagnation." There was in that baccalaureate address more human and civic and religious vitality than there could be in the whole college course without it. To absorb that vitality is not to choose what seems a flowery path to the hopeful but unsophisticated. As Dr. Hadley wisely explained, those who line up with principles of life instead of rules of conduct "will have to fight those who are opposed," and "sometimes be beaten, which is bad enough;" they will be "misunderstood by those who should be on" their side, "which is worse;" they will make mistakes of their own "in judging where the right

really lies, which is worst of all." But "through defeats and misunderstandings and mistakes," said he, "you will all the time be growing into something larger than you were before," whereas "if you choose the part of the pharisee, you will probably get something of the success which you desire, but in the very process of getting it you will become constantly narrower and meaner." How infinitely superior and more optimistic is that kind of admonition to the college graduate than the adjurations to strive for an ignoble success which in recent years have been the staple of college addresses.

Municipal Government in Ohio.

Another of Lincoln Steffens's exposures of civic corruption appears in McClure's for July. It bears this significant title: "Ohio: A Tale of Two Cities." No one need be told that the two cities are Cleveland and Cincinnati; nor will anyone familiar with the facts be surprised at the assurance that Cincinnati under Boss Cox is the worst, while Cleveland under Mayor Johnson is the best-governed city in the United States. Friends and imitators of Senator Hanna are outraged in their minds at Mr. Steffens's candor in dealing with the career of that "man of brains not of mind;" but the facts Mr. Steffens presents are indisputable and the inferences unevadable. There is no denying this pen portrait: "You can't understand the American people and the United States without seeing Hanna, as he was—good and bad, a delight and a danger, a business man in politics, a business man who dominated a city, became United States Senator and the boss of a State, became national head of the dominant national party and was the choice of big business and bad machine politics for the President of the United States." Boss Cox seems to be a worthy successor to Mr. Hanna as State boss of Ohio Republicans. Hanna's civic philosophy, as Mr. Steffens describes it, was "a government of the people