

for his unceasing devotion to it for almost a quarter of a century. In his death that movement loses another of its faithful and useful supporters—one who got back from it through the latter part of his long life much of the inspiration and cheerfulness that endeared him to a multitude of friends. Without pain or fear, peacefully and happily, his intellect undimmed, his sympathies unchilled, his faith in the democracy of human brotherhood unquenched, he died the normal death of old age at the end of a useful life.

* *

Business Principles.

President Taft doubtless thinks he stands firmly on business principles when he says that the government will take the product of a certain steel works if it is up to contract and won't if it isn't, without regard to its labor controversies. But is that necessarily in harmony with sound business principles? Suppose we were back in the '50's and Mr. Taft were in James Buchanan's place, would he say that the government of the country when it buys supplies is concerned only with the quality of the goods and not at all with the humane treatment of the slaves engaged in doing the work? Why, no decent slaveowner would have considered it "business" to do that, even as a business man. He would have revolted at buying the best possible goods from a manufacturer who resorted to cruelty with his slaves to produce them, just as he would if they had been stolen goods. Should a people's government be less scrupulous? To be sure the steel workers are not chattel slaves; but what is the difference between inhumanity to men who have to work for you on your terms or be flogged, and men who have to do that or starve? So long as government maintains economic conditions that keep freedom of choice out of the labor market, can its highest official be applauded for advising any such easy policy of purchase as that of buying with reference only to product and not at all to the working conditions under which the product is made?

* *

The Chicago Election.

One pronounced victory for democratic Democracy was achieved at the municipal elections in Chicago last week. This was the re-election of William E. Dever. He was opposed by the raw grafters and the whisky ring, and the personnel of the voters of his district has so changed during his long service in the Council, as to make his struggle for re-election harder. Yet he has won again. Mr. Dever is one of the real leaders in city poli-

tics. He is a good government man but not a "goo-goo," a politician but neither a low degree nor a high degree grafter, a Democrat who is democratic, and an official to whom public office is a public trust and not a private snap. One man of the same type, Alderman Finn, was defeated; but several new men who are well vouched for to begin with, have been elected. George C. Sikes, among the very best of the candidates, was defeated, probably for that reason; but Alderman Thompson, an insurgent Republican, was re-elected with a large plurality well-earned. Although the elements in the Council are better on the whole than before, the body itself is evidently under the thumb of the Interests. This would at least appear to be so from the chairmanships of committees having the interests of the Interests in hand.

* * *

SOCIALISTIC MILWAUKEE.

One need not be a Socialist to rejoice heartily and sincerely over the great victory of the Social-Democratic party at the municipal election last week in Milwaukee.

For genuine democracy it is the most hopeful event in many a long day.

More than any other recent occurrence in American politics, this victory is significant of the possible passing of the old order and the coming on of the new. It suggests with strong emphasis, at any rate, the breaking down of traditional party lines under pressure of democratic impulses.

*

This is not to say that Socialism has triumphed, or is about to triumph, in the United States or in Wisconsin or even in Milwaukee. The Socialist who shall think so after the first flush of victory has left a calm in his mind, will mark himself down a poor observer of American politics and a poor judge of the resources of plutocracy, besides piling up for himself mountains of sadness from disappointed expectations.

The Socialist party is indeed in power in Milwaukee, as completely as any party can be in any American municipality under our written constitutions and with hostile courts to interpret them. But it did not get into power through, nor can it stay in power by, the grace of Socialist votes alone. No special expertness in reading election returns is necessary to establish the conclusion that the Socialist candidates in Milwaukee were elected by democratic Democrats and insurgent Republicans, who are not now and but few of whom are ever likely to become strict party Socialists.

But let us be understood. We do not agree with those newspapers which attribute the result in Milwaukee merely to popular disgust with the two old party machines. The time is not far back when no possible degree of popular disgust with those machines would have given a victory to the Socialist party. Disgusted voters might have swung from one of the old parties to the other, as they often do, but they would have cut off their right hands rather than vote Socialist; so intensely did they fear Socialism, so heartily did they despise Socialists. Now, however, they have voted Socialist in droves. And if this victory was not won with Socialist votes, then by that very token it was won with the votes of citizens who, without being Socialists, no longer fear Socialism or despise Socialists. What of it if they have voted Socialist only once? What of it if they have done this only in revolt against their own parties? What of all that, if they should like the Socialistic sample after a two years' trial?

+

Yet Socialists may find it wise not to place too much confidence in the continued support of the vote which insurgents of the old parties gave them last week. It was doubtless for the most part a floating vote.

In future elections it may fall back into the old parties whence it came, as did the Greenback vote of the Middle West in the '70's, the Labor vote of New York City in the '80's, and the Populist vote of Kansas and Nebraska in the '90's. Or it may go to fill the ranks of a new party yet to spring spontaneously, as slightly indicated by the present twist in the Republican politics of Indiana, out of the national situation. Or it may continue to supplement the Socialist vote from outside that party, by voting independently for Socialist candidates on their merits as municipal managers.

The last is the least probable forecast of any.

Experience goes to show that American voters cannot be depended upon in large numbers to support continuously a party to which they do not regard themselves as belonging, and the Socialist party is so organized that no one can belong to it, even though they wish to, without subscribing to its creed even to the furthestmost dogma thereof.

+

The important consideration of the moment, however, is not so much the future political fortunes, locally or nationally, of the Socialist party in consequence of its Milwaukee victory. The most important consideration is the present fact

that this party is actually in control of one of the great American municipalities.

That consideration presents itself in four principal aspects. One is with reference to the quality of Socialist leadership in Milwaukee. Another refers to the local program to which the party there is committed by the election. The third involves the possibility of its carrying that program out. The fourth relates to the encouragement and support it should receive from genuine democrats of all parties.

+

With reference to the first of those aspects, it can be confidently said that better leadership could not be desired in behalf of democracy than the leadership within the Social-Democratic party of Milwaukee, which has now been advanced to municipal leadership.

Among so many able and devoted men (and there are women too), it would be invidious to mention names were it not that the reputation of one whom we shall mention, Victor Berger, is national, and that the other, Emil Seidel, is the newly elected mayor.

Through this leadership the Socialist party in Milwaukee has adapted itself to local circumstances and to the immediate present. While identified with the Socialist philosophy, Socialist ideals, and the international Socialist organization, it has made itself in one American city somewhat as Edward Bernstein, the German Socialist, would have the Socialist party make itself everywhere. This attitude is strongly marked in the words of the Socialist Mayor-elect, and of Mr. Berger, which are quoted in our News Narrative this week.

+

As to the local program to which the Socialist regime of Milwaukee for the next two years is committed, while in some respects it is only ameliorative and open to the objection academically of not being democratic in principle, it would in other respects carry municipal government a long way in the direction of a democracy under which the merely ameliorative features of the program would be unnecessary and uncalled for.

Democracy is not to be attained by standing for its ideals stiff and stern in all circumstances, yielding nothing to temporary needs for relief and thereby giving aid and comfort to its enemies in every contest short of the ultimate and perfect one. And after all, nobody need fear the little inconsistencies in legislation and administration that the struggle for democracy leads democracy to

father, so long as the general policy is toward the democratic goal. For as that goal is approached those inconsistencies, no longer even seeming to serve a purpose, are sure to become obsolete.

What if "widows who do washing for the support of families" are to be given free water in Milwaukee as a special privilege? This is inconsistent with ideal democracy, to be sure; but though there may still be widows as we approach ideal democracy, there will be none "who do washing for the support of families." Ameliorative privileges like that will die off in a natural way as fast as democracy slays the great plundering privileges.

+

The third consideration, which involves the possibility of their realizing their municipal program, raises the most serious problem for the Socialists of Milwaukee to solve and their sympathizers to consider.

As to some of its items they will need the help of the State legislature, and this they may not get.

As to some they may be confronted with hostile judges, and sympathetic judges may be confronted with hostile precedents in the law books.

They may fail in ways that the voters who elected them will not understand, and make mistakes that may not be excused.

And through the city, and in and out among her people, there will glide the serpents of plutocracy, poison-fanged, hissing, coiling, crushing, clinging, their appearance transformed sometimes from devouring dragons into angels of light.

Big Business men may cry out to frighten little ones, churches may subtly coerce the superstitious, or confiding workmen may be panic stricken.

Milwaukee under Socialist rule may find herself near the lair of Judge Lindsey's "Beast," the moment her Socialist officials threaten its jungle. Whilom supporters of the Socialist candidates outside of the party—and even inside it—may thrill with a secret joy at the caressing touch of its velvet foot and tremble at the sight of its glistening teeth or the half playful scratch of its threatening claw.

All that and more like it or worse, the Socialist officials of Milwaukee may be expected to encounter. And if they make any progress at all in their program, the "Beast" may swell into national proportions, as it did when Mayor Johnson in Cleveland and Mayor Dunne in Chicago touched it on the raw in connection with the street car system.

Though this be the "Beast's" first encounter

with Socialism in power, it is not its first encounter with other enemies in power; and if in due time a majority of the voters of Milwaukee go over to the "Beast" and turn the Socialists out of office, no one need be surprised.

Novel methods may be necessary to enable the "Beast" to cope with its new adversary, but the "Beast," besides having the shrewdest advisers ready at call, is itself not unresourceful.

+

Those three considerations bring us to the fourth, which is that in meeting the responsibilities that have fallen upon it in Milwaukee, the Social Democratic party of that city should be encouraged by genuine democrats of every party and everywhere.

There is no question of joining the Socialist party; that is essentially unimportant.

There is no question of becoming a Socialist in the sense of accepting the Socialistic philosophy; that makes no practical difference at present.

The only question is whether those of us who are at one with Socialists in their purpose of abolishing the exploitation of labor—and this means all of us who are genuine democrats,—shall by hostility or indifference to them give aid and comfort to the common enemy, or shall encourage and support the Milwaukee Socialists in the democratic work that has come their way.

+

It is a gratifying fact that democratic Democrats and insurgent Republicans in Milwaukee made the Socialist victory of last week possible. It will be more gratifying if the same voters, though outside the Social-Democratic party, keep the Social-Democrats in municipal power in Milwaukee as long as they are faithful to their democratic program and efficient in advancing its realization. Voters of similar sympathies elsewhere may help along by refusing to be misinformed by newspaper misrepresentation.

+ + +

CATHERINE HELEN SPENCE— PROPHET OF THE EFFECTIVE VOTE.*

Catherine Helen Spence was born on October 31, 1825, in the beautiful Scottish village of Melrose on the silver Tweed. The historic Abbey met her childish gaze, and among her earliest recollections was seeing the long procession of mourners that

*Catherine Helen Spence of South Australia died at Adelaide (p. 322) on the 3d of April, 1910, at the age of 84 years, 5 months, and 3 days.