

while Judge Hanford's defense is being newspaperized industriously, his reported explanation of his cancellation of a Socialist's citizenship papers being as follows:

The naturalization law confers upon the court power to cancel citizenship papers when obtained by perjury or fraud.

The merits of that defense depend upon the application thereof. What was the perjury, what the fraud, for which Hanford cancelled that Socialist's citizenship papers? The Socialist had sworn that he would support and defend the Constitution of the United States; but, being a Socialist, he intended to use his citizenship papers for the purpose of so voting as to bring about amendments to the Constitution with reference to government and property. It was for "concealing" or failing to avow this perfectly lawful intention, that the Socialist was held by Judge Hanford to have committed perjury and fraud and consequently to have forfeited his citizenship! If such a judge is immune from impeachment, the judicial Recall might be regarded as an excessively mild method of guarding against the dangers of judicial usurpation.



"Cutting a Watermelon."

Just what watermelon is ripening in connection with a certain official deal with the Illinois Central Railroad regarding Lake-shore real estate at Chicago, nobody seems very definitely to know. That there is a watermelon, a huge and luscious one, seems evident enough; also that highly respectable citizens are intending to cut it in an irreproachably respectable fashion. Indications are not lacking, either, that other respectable citizens have been overlooked in the invitations. But what the watermelon is and how its refreshing slices have been assigned is as yet something which "no fellow can find out." Light is not thrown upon this mystery by the personnel on either side; for citizens of genuine public spirit are fighting one another, and so are citizens who have never been known to be public-spirited except for private ends. Of course the appeal on both sides is "the public good," which may be ambiguous. Time, that great revealer of mysteries, may yet explain this mystery; but the revelation may not come until after the sacred rite known as "cutting a watermelon" is complete.



Financial Concentration.

Five men control the New York Clearing House, and the New York Clearing House con-

trols the financial interests of this country. That was the purport of testimony given by William Sherer, manager of the New York Clearing House, in his testimony before the Pujo Congressional committee last week. Mr. Sherer did not look upon the situation with much concern. But is it a small matter that the intricate mechanism of the exchanges of nearly 100,000,000 people are subject to the control of 5, and they with no wider responsibility than that of the executive committee of a local and private social club? The remedy for this dangerous lodgment of power is at the moment another question, but what of the power itself? Shall it continue as, and what, and where it is? Shall it be made more menacing than ever by the Aldrich scheme, which is set to spring out of its box and through Congress next winter? Or is there a way of getting rid of financial leeches and adjusting exchanges in the common interest? Now that Junior Wall Street is fighting Senior Wall Street, a thorough-going investigation by the Congressional committee should secure revelations resulting in general benefit.



Woman Suffrage in Ohio.

The number of the Woman's Suffrage clause on the Ohio ballot for the special election set for the 3rd of next September, would have been portentous ten years ago. It is "23." But the "twenty-three" superstition has passed away; and even if it had not, perhaps the portent might as well be dreaded by the "antis" as by the "pros." Ill omens in conflicts do come true—to one side or the other. At any rate "23" is the number of the Woman's Suffrage amendment to the Ohio Constitution which the Constitutional Convention has submitted to the people of Ohio for their decision at the polls on September 3rd. Whoever puts his cross opposite "Yes" at "23" of the long ballot on that day in Ohio will vote for woman suffrage, no matter what other numbers he votes for or against; and if the number of affirmative votes at "23" shall exceed the number of negative votes at the same number, the Woman Suffrage amendment will have been adopted, no matter what happens to the amendments identified on the same ballot by other numbers.



The proposed amendment is in these words:

Article V. Sec. 1.—Every citizen of the United States, of the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been a resident of the State one year next preceding the election, and of the county, township or ward in which he or she resides such time as may be

provided by law, shall have the qualifications of an elector and be entitled to vote at all elections.

If "23" on the September 3rd ballot receives more "Yes" than "No" votes, that clause will, from the 1st day of January, 1913, but not before, take the place of the corresponding clause in the present Constitution. Ohio men who vote against this amendment may be perfect husbands and fathers, but they will thereby prove themselves defective democrats; Ohio women who to escape the responsibilities of their citizenship urge Ohio men to vote against it, should be regarded as poor citizens though they be the best of wives and mothers.



The Boston Strike.

As with every other local labor disturbance in the United States, it is impossible to obtain trustworthy information of the merits of the traction strike in Boston. The Boston strikers are said to have been unusually well treated by the traction interests, and this is very likely true as employers usually understand good treatment of employees. Whether it be a result of that treatment or of the Boston atmosphere, the men are accounted the most courteous and considerate to be found anywhere, in their behavior toward passengers. Of the service, it is reputed to be efficient except in the rush hours, when there are not as many cars as there ought to be and could be were the management as considerate as their striking employees have been of the rights and comfort of passengers. This inefficiency, however, goes without rebuke, because the monopoly interests in control manage to avoid too severe an inspection by the Railroad Commission and know how to keep the local newspapers quiet. It is their skill with the newspapers that also makes the merits of the strike a mystery. Whether the strike is justified or not nobody except the combatants knows, for it is impossible to reconcile opposing partisan statements, and the local newspapers haven't the enterprise and honesty to make an exhaustive investigation and then report the truth. Between their fears of injuring circulation by offending organized labor, and their servile timidity (or worse) with reference to monopolistic interests, the Boston newspapers are running a neck-and-neck race in bad journalism with the newspapers at every other local field of action in the class war.



Lives of delegates remind us
That we cannot be sublime
If we let instructions bind us
To vote one way all the time.

—Chicago Record-Herald, June 11.

POLITICAL ACTION OR VIOLENCE?

At the Indianapolis convention of the Socialist party in May* an unemphasized and not very generally understood decision of the convention was its adoption by a vote of 191 to 90, of the following proposed amendment to the party's constitution:

Section 6. Any member of the party who opposes political action or advocates sabotage or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class to aid in its emancipation shall be expelled from membership of the party. Political action shall be construed to mean participation in elections for public office and practical legislative and administrative work along the lines of the Socialist party platform.

The adoption of this amendment by the Socialist convention does not complete its adoption by the Socialist party. A favorable referendum vote of the entire membership of the party throughout the United States is necessary for that; and it is at this referendum that the intra-party bitterness which oozes out through Socialist organs and leaders, and is but barely indicated to outsiders by the proposed amendment, may force a line-up of irreconcilable factions.

The vote at the convention is on all sides regarded as having failed to indicate the party sentiment. By one side the adverse vote of 90, nearly a third of the whole, is said to have been swelled by delegates who, while out of sympathy with the movement assailed, were for various reasons opposed to giving it official party attention. By the other side it is intimated that recent accessions of party membership are largely of persons sympathetic with the movement which that amendment is intended to ostracise. There is reason to believe, too, that Socialist party growth from the same sources may shift control of the Socialist party to advocates of lawless policies and force a split upon the party.

Whatever the outcome may be, the controversy is of interest, very serious interest, outside as well as inside the Socialist party in which it is raging with extreme intensity of feeling.



To understand the bearing of the amendment on which that controversy now hinges, the notion that Socialism is a proposal to abolish competition by governmentalizing social industries upon a basis of common ownership, and only this, must be discarded.

That Socialists make such proposals is true, but it is usually as policies of a labor nation yet to be established, not as reforms of existing political systems. That they advocate advances in those

*See The Public, current volume, pages 484, 487, 515.