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CIVIC GOVERNMENT.

When the plan of government by commission was first applied to cities in the United States, its advocates, who embraced many earnest men who had given much time and attention to the study of civic government, were not loath to express the opinion that it would satisfactorily solve most civic problems. Whether they still hold this view, or whether they are experimenting with the idea of improving upon the system, is not known, but the fact remains that cities among the first and most ardent advocates of the original commission plan have modified their views. The result is interesting, if for no other reason than to show that the trend of thought is in the direction of the belief that a better and more businesslike method is possible of achievement.

As applied to St. John, there is probably considerable difference of opinion even at this day. Commission government has displayed no great weakness and on the contrary has shown improvement in some lines over the plan of government by a Mayor and a Common Council of such size as to make it unwieldy. Possibly the greatest argument in its favor is that it has resulted in placing the affairs of the city in the hands of a group of men generally more representative of the business community than was the case under the former system, and to a considerable extent has tended to centralize authority and responsibility.

Possibly proceeding along the line that if good results could be secured from a council of five salaried men, each with a definite responsibility for one department, it would be even a greater step in advance to give all the administrative authority of the city to one man, the city of Dayton, Ohio, a commission city, on January 1st last, adopted a new charter giving it the authority to appoint a city manager, who would be captain and crew of the civic bark. Into this gentleman's hands were thrust all the civic responsibilities, with instructions to go ahead and get results. While it is as yet too early to pass judgment on the idea, it is interesting to note that another Ohio city is considering a change in its form of government. Toledo plans to have a mayor with power to appoint all officials with the exception of members of the council, the latter to be elected by the ward system.

Commenting upon the Toledo plan, the Christian Science Monitor of Boston, which can hardly be accused of harboring political views or fads on civic matters, has this to say:

"The charter commission of Toledo, O., now goes on record as favoring what is known as the federal plan. It proposes a mayor with power to appoint all city officials other than members of the council. Under its plan the latter are to be elected according to the ward system. Its declarations, so far as they may be seen from the information at hand, are favorable in effect to a return to the form of municipal government that has come down from the centuries and that has been so recently in general disrepute. No consideration whatever seems to have been given the commission form or the city manager idea."

Massachusetts was among the first of the states to take up the Galveston plan. Haverhill, Gloucester, Chelsea and Taunton were early in the commission list. Satisfaction in these communities with changes made has not been complete. Boston, on the other hand, in adopting a modified form of the commission plan, has obtained some beneficial results. It is to be hoped Toledo is not taking a backward step in its proposed change."

EVENTS IN MEXICO

Developments in the case of the murder, in Mexico, of the Scottish rancher William S. Benton, by General Villa, the head of the Constitutionalist, cannot be said to increase respect amongst British people for the power of the United States. From the outset of the Mexican outrages President Woodrow Wilson, who had just about commenced to measure up to the popular expectation of what a president should be, has pursued a plan of action that is almost weak. Some of the most sane and thoughtful newspapers south of the border are now expressing the wish that the occupant of the White House had a mixture of Roosevelt's "ginger," with his own calm philosophical mind. While there may have been some features of the Roosevelt regime savouring of gallantry rather than sober administration of the affairs of a great nation, there is no gainsaying the fact that with "Theodore I." still at the head of affairs across the line Mexicans all and sundry would by this time realize that it is not safe to play with the liberty of the rights of American citizens.

Whatever may be the idea in Mr. Wilson's mind, it is not at all in accord with popular conceptions of the

British government that one of the King's subjects can be ruthlessly done to death without an explanation forthcoming. Apparently, however, the British diplomats in charge of the affair have hitherto been content to place their case in the hands of the authorities of Washington. A commission was appointed to investigate the circumstances of the killing, and so far they have failed to produce evidence to show that the death of Rancher Benton was anything more than murder.

Under the Monroe doctrine the people of the Republic deny to other nations the right to interfere in the squabbles of the Latin-American people on this continent and it would appear that this attitude now places directly upon the shoulders of the United States the duty of probing carefully all the facts connected with the most recent outrage. If Benton was put to death without good and sufficient cause the British government would be quite within its rights in demanding that the United States, as the self appointed monitor of the American republics, should call the Mexicans to account. It remains to be seen whether the Asquith brand of diplomacy will be equal to the task or whether the questions of Home Rule and Woman's Suffrage will completely engross their attention.

Canada is particularly interested in the situation in Mexico for the reason that many hundreds of dollars of Canadian money are invested in industries in the unhappy republic. In the absence of any semblance of stable government it seems as if the wisdom of the investors may well be questioned. Canadian farms would probably prove a more lucrative opening for our surplus cash. And there is never the possibility that a Canadian farmer may be haled from his turnip patch or his wheat field to stop bullets projected in his direction by unkempt fanatics who are fighting without any cogent idea as to what it is all about.

Viewed in the light of the recent Balkan struggles the Mexican activities constitute but opera bouffe war, but it is high time for prompt and drastic action to prevent a continuance of the events with which the whole world is nauseated. Mexicans of both parties should be given plain language to understand that the Benton affair is carrying their little dispute entirely too far afield.

THE PAVING BILL.

Few there are who will not agree that the City Commissioners in their decision to withhold, for the present, the proposed paving bill, acted in the course of wisdom. It may be that with the public mind brought to a higher state of understanding the bill will reveal commendatory features not apparent at first perusal. It requires no great amount of public education, however, to provide the knowledge that in its present form, and at the present time, the proposal proved decidedly unpopular, and to withdraw it under the circumstances was the reasonable and obvious course.

The measure, if adopted, would have "placed upon the few, special burdens for the benefit of the many," but the question may well be raised, if it would not ultimately be found that the many who received the benefit would also be called upon to pay the score. If a property owner were forced to pay for paving improvements in front of his property, is it not reasonable to believe that he, in turn, would pass the burden along to his tenant who, after all, bears the majority of all civic taxes in the guise of rentals?

It used to be said that living in St. John was cheap, because of the difference in rentals between this city and larger cities. The argument of other days is not so effective now, as any tenant can testify. To impose upon landlords an additional cost for street paving would only mean another advance in rents in the properties affected. This, in turn, would bear on all classes of the community. To withdraw the bill was a well advised action and the commissioners are to be congratulated upon taking that view of it.

MR. PUGSLEY'S RECOVERY.

That Mr. Pugsley may be able to resume his seat in parliament during the present session will be good news to his many friends. It should also prove most welcome tidings to the dispirited knot of men behind Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the House of Commons. Just how Mr. Pugsley, himself, will feel when he returns to the capital is a matter of conjecture. Last session he was one of the leading members in what Grit newspapers were pleased to term "a fighting opposition." This session he will notice a dismal change. The Liberal opposition at the present time resembles nothing so much as a number of friendly mild mannered old ladies gathered to sip afternoon tea and discuss the news of the neighborhood. If Mr. Pugsley can supply the "punch," and at the same time permit his lower judgment to save him from carrying the "fighting spirit of Liberalism" to the length of bear garden tactics he should be a welcome acquisition.

Diary of Events

THE HUMAN PROCESSION

BRAND WHITLOCK 43 TODAY.

Brand Whitlock, reformer, mayor of Toledo and political heir of "Golden Rule" Jones, was born in Urbana, O., forty-five years ago today.

The distinguished novelist, lawyer, city official, essayist, journalist, magazine writer, poet and diplomat was the son of a clergyman of the Methodist faith, the late Rev. Dr. Elias D. Whitlock, who died in Cleveland last December. He was educated in the public schools, and at the age of eighteen entered the Fourth Estate as a reporter on a newspaper in Toledo, where his father then occupied a Methodist pulpit. At twenty-one Mr. Whitlock received a call to the larger field of Chicago journalism, becoming a reporter and afterward political writer on the staff of the Chicago Herald. It was while engaged in covering politics for the Herald that he began to study the sociological and economic causes of the graft, corruption and dishonesty which he found in the political circles of the Cook county metropolis.

In Chicago Mr. Whitlock associated with a bunch of newspaper "boys" that included Finley Peter Dunne, George Ade, and many others destined for fame, and he was a member of the Immortal Club, a group of novel organizers of newspapermen, since deceased. In 1893 he became a clerk in the office of the Secretary of State of Illinois at Springfield, and there he became the close friend and admirer of John P. Altgeld, the German-American statesman and reformer who was then Governor of Illinois, and who has been so bitterly maligned because of his radical opinions and his pardon of the anarchists. Whitlock's tribute to Altgeld, and the right he gave to the world-famous as the "Golden Rule" mayor, who was the "gold Democrat" candidate for the presidency of the United States in 1896. It was in the Illinois capital, too, that he wrote his first short stories, and there he studied law under the tutelage of the same Altgeld.

In 1897 Mr. Whitlock returned to Toledo and hung out his legal shingle, and there he came under the influence of Samuel M. Jones, the world-famous as the "Golden Rule" mayor. He soon became Jones's right hand man, and fought side by side with him for many reforms, not the least of which was the creation of a separate court for juvenile offenders against the majesty of the law.

In 1902 Mr. Whitlock wrote his first novel, "The Thirteenth District," called by William Dean Howells the best novel of American political life ever written. In 1904 he published two other novels and ran for mayor of Toledo as an independent, antimachine candidate, and was elected. He was re-elected under the same conditions in 1907, 1909 and 1911, and might have become perpetual mayor of Toledo if he had desired. Mr. Whitlock's novel stories, essays and poems have been translated into many tongues, and the Toledo man has a multitude of admirers in all parts of the world. Mr. Whitlock's new diplomatic job at Brussels pays \$12,000 a year.

THE PASSING DAY

ROBERT EMMET'S BIRTHDAY.

Robert Emmet, whose birthday was celebrated today by Hibernians everywhere, was born March 4, 1778, in Molesworth street, Dublin. He was the son of a physician. By birth, social affiliations, education and religion the Emmet family had all to lose and nothing to gain from the revolution of 1798. Both parents died early, stricken down by adversity incident to their adoption of an unpopular cause, while Robert, then on the gallows and his brother Thomas spent many years in prison.

Robert Emmet's remarkable gifts as an orator were first displayed at Trinity College, where he advocated such principles that he was expelled. Soon after that he became acquainted with Sarah Curran, daughter of the celebrated barrister, and romance entered the life that was so soon doomed to extinction. Emmet's love affair has furnished inspiration to Moore, Keats and Washington Irving.

Emmet's natural ability soon made him the leader of the movement for the overthrow of English rule in Ireland. Military depots were established in Dublin, and plans were carefully laid, but an explosion in one of the secret ammunition depots revealed the plot and the long and bitter struggle of the Wicklow mountains, but the lure of the land, and the longing to hear sweet Sarah Curran's voice drew him back to Dublin, where he was discovered and arrested.

In a court martial, 1803, Emmet's immortal trial began. He was convicted of treason felony and sentenced to be hanged. His death speech ranks as the most remarkable ever delivered by a political prisoner under the shadow of the scaffold.

"I have but one request to ask at my departure of this world: it is the charge of silence. Let no man write my epitaph, for no man who knows my motives dare now vindicate them. Let not prejudice nor ignorance asperse them. Let death and me remain in obscurity and peace until other men and other times can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written."

THE CITY OF ST. PAUL.

The first settlement on the site of St. Paul was made in 1838, when a French Canadian built a rude cottage which soon served as the nucleus of the future capital of Minnesota. The city of St. Paul was incorporated sixty years ago today, March 4, 1854, paying its name from the first Catholic St. Paul, built in 1841 by Father Gaultier, a French-Canadian Catholic priest. In 1848 a convention was held at Jackson's store, in St. Paul, to petition for a separate territorial government for Minnesota, and in the following year the territory was created, with St. Paul as the capital. The first legislature met in the old Cotton House. St. Paul then had eighteen houses, but thenceforth its growth was rapid, although it has been outstripped in the race for supremacy by Minneapolis, which was incorporated in 1867.

Little Benny's Note Book

Yestiday aftir supper I stuck my fingers in the apple pie wien I thavt nobody was looking, pop looking without me doing it, and he sed verry lowd, Heer, heer.

Sir, I sed, flicking my fingers verry quick.

You will please remane in the house tonite, yung man, sed pop, presvry intanshins and ingasimints to the koontrary.

O pop I sed.

You herd my ultimatum, sed pop, go up in the settling room and do yure lessins.

I did my lessins, I sed.

Then do them agen, sed pop, a lessin twice dun is worth 2 in the book.

O, G, I sed, and went up in the settling room and opened my history book, thinking of the fellos insted of thinking of history. Aftir a wile pop calm up and startid to read the papir, and a few minutes aftir that there was a noise out in the street, and wat was it but my cuzin Artie yelling for me to kum out, saying, Hele, Benny, hele, Benny.

Aftir Artie had yelled, Hele Benny about 15 times pop rattlid his papir, and aftir Artie had yelled it about 30 times, pop sed, For the lay of peace and hominy, go to the frunt windo and tell that 90 horse powir enlin of noise you kant go out.

Wich I did, leaping out the end

story frunt windo and saying, I kant kum out, sed Artie, and I sed, O, no speashl resins.

Then I went back and startid looking at the history book agen, trying to authir page bekaus I was tired of looking at that page, and pritty soon there was anuthir noise out frunt and wat was it but Puds Simkins yelling for me, saying, O, Benny, O, Benny, keeping it up till pop sed, Kontownd it, was it this, a prearranged plot.

No sir, I sed, its Puds Simkins.

Well, let him yell his kant fron lungs out, sed pop, and startid to read agen and jest then Jonny Wilson, wich I good tell him by his voice, awa akkount of him having the lowdest voice of any of the fellos, startid to yell, oo hoo, Benny, oo hoo, Benny and Puds Simkins keep awa yelling, O, Benny, O, Benny, and both of them together mald a pritty lowd noise awl rife.

Aftir they had bin yelling 5 minutes, yelling lowdly echh minite, pop sed, Benny.

Sir, I sed.

He and tell that aggeragayhin of side barkers they are lunnerticks, and dont you dare to kum back agen, sed pop.

Yes sir, I sed, and got my cap fron undir the sofer and went out, and Puds Simkins sed, Are you deff or wat bin yelling out heer for about an hour, and I sed, Have you.

AND HE DID

GREAT GUNS! I'VE BEEN LEFT A MILLION DOLLARS! THIS MUST BE A DREAM—AND PRETTY SOON I'LL WAKE UP!

AND HE DID.

Charming Hostess.

"Did she make you feel at home?"

"No, but she made me wish I was."

—Brooklyn Life.

Quite Mechanical.

"Yes," said Mrs. Twickenbury, "my daughter has published several poems of her own."

—Christian Register.

Her Reason.

"Mummy, can I have that pear that was on the dining room sideboard this morning?"

"Because what?"

"Cos I've eaten it!"—Punch.

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