

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 1905 ELECTIONS

The results of the recent elections indicate not only a disposition on the part of the American people to resent the impositions they have been required for so many years to bear, but, what is more important, a revival of the public conscience with respect to public affairs.

Without minimizing the great influence which Coxism and other local issues played in bringing about the good result in Ohio, it must not be forgotten that the railway rate issue contributed materially to that end. Even now some republicans are claiming—or admitting, as you please—that the democratic victory in Ohio must be accepted as an endorsement of Mr. Roosevelt's railway rate policy. Had the result been otherwise, every one knows the interpretation Senator Foraker and other of Mr. Roosevelt's opponents would have placed upon the result. What interpretation would Secretary Taft, who pleaded for Herrick votes, have given to a republican victory in Ohio? Mr. Foraker seems eager to place the blame upon Coxism and other local issues, but it may not be doubted that Mr. Roosevelt and his friends will yet find it convenient to point to the fact that the result in Ohio discredits Forakerism and sustains Mr. Roosevelt in his advocacy of what Mr. Foraker called "a democratic measure."

It will be observed that some of our republican friends are very ready to hold the democratic party responsible for the sins charged against Tammany, while they absolve the republican party from the sins charged against the republican machines in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Mr. Roosevelt did well to keep his official

family out of the Pennsylvania contest, and it would have been greatly to the credit of his administration had his cabinet officers refrained from interfering in the Ohio contest. It was not at all creditable to the administration that so conspicuous a spokesman as Secretary Taft should take the stump in an effort to defeat the only political party that had the courage to endorse the president's views on the railway rate question, and in behalf of a ticket nominated by a convention that deliberately refused to endorse those views, which ticket was supported by leaders who were openly hostile to them.

But the important fact to remember is that in Ohio, the only state where the railway rate question was a clear cut issue—made so by the two conventions and by the speeches of leaders on either side—the "democratic measure" to which Mr. Roosevelt has given his endorsement received formal approval by the people.

The crushing defeat which the republican machine met in Philadelphia's city election and in the Pennsylvania state election is the best news that the people of the Keystone state have heard for many a year. Although Pennsylvanians have long been mercilessly oppressed, they seemed to have been wedded to their idols, but there, as in other contests where an appeal was made to the conscience of men, the response was ready and unmistakable.

The elections of 1905 must give encouragement to those who would wage political battle along moral lines. The conscience controls human actions whenever it is awakened, and it is only awakened by a voice from another con-

science. If we would touch the consciences of others we may get evidence that our own consciences have been quickened. The great issue at this time is the issue between man and mammon, between democracy and plutocracy. All surface questions of national policy, of taxation, of regulation and of finance, are but phases of that century-long, that world-wide struggle between the common people and organized wealth.

To say that it does not pay a nation to violate the rights of the people of another nation involves so much of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division that many are lost in a maze of mathematics, but to say that the wages of sin is death is to give an epitome of history that accords with each person's experience. To say that taxation which confers immediate benefits upon the privileged few who secured the enactment of the law does not find its way back by indefinite and devious ways to the pockets of the many, may confuse the minds of some, but to say "Thou Shalt Not Steal," either by law or in defiance of it, can be easily understood. And so in dealing with principles, with finance, with labor problems and all the other questions at issue, we may view them from a moral standpoint and arraign every evil at the bar of public conscience.

Will it win? Nothing less can give permanent success. As the martyrs who, eighteen hundred years ago, kneeling in prayer while hungry beasts devoured them, invoked a power mightier than the legions of Rome, so today it is not only possible, but necessary to appeal to that moral sentiment of a nation which, when aroused, will prove more potent than the oppressor.

SENATOR KNOX ON RAILWAY RATES

United States Senator Philander C. Knox delivered an address on the railway rate question before the chamber of commerce banquet at Pittsburg on the evening of November 3. Senator Knox's remarks seemed largely to be directed to railroad managers whom he asked to submit cheerfully to the proposed legislation on the theory that, after all, it will not really be serious.

The important part of Senator Knox's address relates to his assurance that "no such law could be enacted that could prevent the court, if satisfied that injustice had been done the railroads, from staying the operations of the order upon terms until the court had passed upon the merits of the controversy."

Referring to the railroad claim that the fixing of railroad rates was a very difficult question and one to be determined only by experts, Senator Knox said that expert testimony would, of course, be taken by the commission "and it follows, of course, if the weight of reason is with the railroads, the complaints will be dismissed. To conjecture otherwise would be to assume that the commission could not understand or would not heed a sound defense."

In his references to railway rate legislation during his Ohio speech Secretary Taft seemed anxious to have the railroad managers understand that the legislation proposed was not after all, serious. As a member of the cabinet and personally, Secretary Taft stands close to the president, and Senator Knox's relations with the chief executive are likewise intimate. It is not, therefore, encouraging to hear such interpretations placed upon the proposed legislation by men intimately associated with Mr. Roosevelt. If the program as outlined, by intimation at least, in the speeches of Messrs. Taft and Knox is carried out, then Mr. Roosevelt's boasted campaign for railway rate legislation will terminate in a farce.

As the friends of railway rate legislation understand it, a program for the establishment of genuine reform means that the power will be lodged with the interstate commerce commission and that when that commission has found a given rate to be unreasonable and has made its order accordingly, the rate newly fixed by the commission will go immediately into effect and remain in effect until overruled in final adjudication of the contest.

The president himself in his speech at Raleigh said that the law's delays were proverbial, and what he said on that occasion, fairly interpreted, means that the only way to provide the public

with relief is to require the new rate to go immediately into effect.

Friends of railway regulation will prefer to base their hopes upon the straightforward policy outlined by Mr. Roosevelt at Raleigh rather than upon the ineffective plans suggested by Messrs. Taft and Knox. The evils from which the people suffer are real. They must be met by real reforms. The partisan preferences of the men who have for so many years violated the spirit of the laws are not to be considered. Executive and lawmaker owe no apology to these influential law-breakers. Their duty is to the public welfare, and now that the people have become thoroughly aroused on this important question public officials will be held strictly to account.

TURN ON THE SEARCHLIGHT

Election contests are not as a rule profitable either to the public or to the individuals immediately concerned. It has been generally found that where errors have been committed in the interests of the contestee, other errors were made in the interests of the contestant. But when accusations are made so serious as those brought against the Tammany machine in New York City public interests the country over, as well as public interests in the community directly interested, require a searching investigation, and a thorough prosecution of the men responsible for the wrongs.

Whatever criticisms have been made of the political machine behind Mr. McClellan, no one has questioned his high personal character; and it is inconceivable that he should be willing to profit through election frauds. Rather is it his duty, as every one will hope it will be his pleasure, to co-operate in the effort to ascertain whether his small plurality was made possible by fraud.

But whatever the preferences of individuals may be, the investigation will certainly be thorough. Men and newspapers that did not prefer Mr. Hearst for mayor have now gone to his support. In the investigation under way Mr. Hearst's own, and well known, energy will be no small factor in the proceedings.

When with an honest vote and a fair count the majority have erred, the error may in time be rectified and public interests may in the long run, through the experiences gained by the people, profit more than in the temporary losses sustained from the error. But there is no remedy for a fraudulently carried election other than the prompt unmasking of the men responsible for the frauds and the vigorous prosecution of the most eminent rascals who were parties to them.

It is to be hoped that no effort will be spared in turning the searchlight upon New York's municipal election.

A SPLENDID MONUMENT

Sir George Williams, the founder of the Young Men's Christian Association, died in London, England, on November 6, at the age of eighty-six. Sixty-five years ago, while yet a clerk in a London store, he inaugurated the movement which is known today as the "Y. M. C. A." In 1844 he called a few of his fellow clerks together and the first organization was formed. The intention was to confine it to clerks, but the movement soon outgrew its original bounds and in a few years was world wide in its scope. Today there are Y. M. C. A. organizations in every country on the globe, and in nearly every city in these countries. Mr. Williams was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1894 as a recognition of his work in the interests of young men.

It is impossible to conceive of the great work that the organization started by Sir George Williams sixty years ago has done for young men. It has been a wonderful influence for righteousness, and its worth has been recognized by great corporations, by individuals and by communities. Nearly every great railroad system supports a branch of the Y. M. C. A., and religious denominations are a unit in supporting the organization. No monument of brass or marble that may be erected above the remains of Sir George Williams will be as enduring as the greater monument that has been erected in the hearts of thousands of young men who have been directed to lives of usefulness by the great Christian organization he founded.

AND TAFT WAS IN IT

Prior to the recent election, the New York Press, a republican paper, referring to the Ohio campaign said:

It is a sickening farce for republican speakers to go out on the stump asking votes for a state ticket on the ground that votes against it will be votes against President Roosevelt—when the state platform tacitly says that a vote for it is a vote against the president in the matter of republican party policy which he holds nearest his heart.

The people of Ohio evidently recognized the farce, and it is indeed regrettable that members of Mr. Roosevelt's cabinet bore conspicuous part in the effort to hoodwink the people of Ohio.

COX AND FORAKER

Referring to the democratic landslide in Ohio, Senator Foraker says that Cox did it.

Cox might point to Senator Foraker's repeated declarations that railway rate regulation is a democratic measure and very reasonably insist that Senator Foraker was in part responsible for the good results.