

575 to 19,038, but in 1902 he was elected by 32,279 to 24,541, and in 1903 by 30,279 to 29,275, while at the recent election he was defeated by a vote of 33,821 to 32,965, a plurality for his opponent of 856. The meaning of these figures is that Governor Garvin has successfully fought the republican machine in his state, winning two elections, and, although defeated, scoring a great moral victory in the last election. He has accomplished this without money; with the organization of his party at times badly demoralized, and never working in harmony under his leadership, with his opponents, the republican state leaders in possession of all the offices, civil, military and judicial, and likewise provided with a superb organization, in command of one of the most astute political managers in the country—General Charles R. Brayton, with the leading newspaper in the state, the Providence Journal, constantly opposed to him, misrepresenting his position and villifying him personally while, in addition, the republican machine has had at its command unlimited amounts of money—having Senator Nelson W. Aldrich to call upon—which, to say the least, was expended freely, if not judiciously, in the state campaigns of 1903 and 1904.

During the two years he has been in office, 1903-1904, Governor Garvin has been entirely shorn of executive authority, neither having the appointing power, the right of veto, nor the power of approving legislative acts; but he has exercised, nevertheless, a greater influence on the conscience and intelligence of the state than any governor who has preceded him or than any public man in the previous history of the state. For sixteen years previous to his election as governor he was a member of the state legislature—elected as a democrat—and constantly agitated for political equality and for the rights of the people. As Rhode Island has always been backward in regard to these matters, he had a large field for agitation, but very little hope of success; consequently he was regarded for many years as a sort of political Don Quixote, whose antics were subjects for mirth and derision, but were not to be taken seriously. Gradually, however, it began to dawn upon the popular consciousness that the derided doctor, as he was called, was accomplishing something, and the credit of securing the extension of the suffrage to foreign-born citizens, in 1888, the passage of the ten-hour, weekly payment, and labor bureau laws, and a great deal of labor and other legislation were more largely due to his efforts than to those of any other man, or, indeed, group of men. As a result the common people and those of independent proclivities came to believe in him, with the consequence that when an opportunity came he was elected governor on his own personal record and character.

Handicapped as he was as governor, with no real power, Governor Garvin has during his two terms exerted a unique and telling influence. By special messages, by magazine and other articles for the press, but particularly by speeches delivered on every possible occasion, before church clubs, at society and organization dinners, at public school and college functions, he has, aided therein by the prestige of his office as governor kept up a constant and telling fight, which has resulted in making the political conditions of the state better known than ever before. These tactics worried the republican managers more than anything that ever happened before in the state, and they dreaded their continuance.

The strenuous efforts to defeat Governor Garvin in the elections of 1903 and 1904 were due largely to the determination on the part of the republicans to get rid of him at all costs as a state official, so as to minimize

the force of the blows he was dealing them. They attempted to make an issue against him in 1903 on the ground that he was "defaming the state," but although this shibboleth had some weight with the ignorant and unthinking, and those whose interests led them to take that view, it did not prevent his election in that year. When it is considered that the republicans are said on good authority to have spent in this campaign in the state \$200,000 in a variety of ways, uniforming marching clubs and for torchlight processions for political meeting; for control of certain sections of the foreign-born voters; for inducing liquor interests and the law and order interests to act with them; for the influence of all the "powers that prey;" for bringing about religious and race animosities that would help their cause for direct bribery of voters, and, last but not least for corrupting democratic leaders and democratic election officials—and that likewise the national ticket helped them—Governor Garvin's defeat by only 856 votes on November 8 was in reality, in view of all these circumstances, a great moral victory, which is not even surpassed by Folk in Missouri, La Follette in Wisconsin, Douglas in Massachusetts, Adams in Colorado, Toole in Montana or Johnson in Minnesota.

With an outward appearance of respectability Rhode Island is probably as corrupt politically as any state in the union. Tampering with the machinery of election has never in the past been conspicuous and glaring as in Pennsylvania, there has not been the palpable fraud in elections that has occurred in New York City, and there has been no wholesale boodling such as has taken place in St. Louis, Cincinnati and elsewhere, but Rhode Island has been absolutely in the control of a boss who by means of his political machine has been able to depose the people of all the public franchises and to pass any legislation he saw fit. There has been very little petty grafting, but the large results have been because these conditions obtained even more effectively than elsewhere. Consequently "Rhode Island is more thoroughly in the grasp of the capitalistic exploiters, whose aim is the control of government for their own enrichment by the securing of public franchises, than any state in the union."

In order to retain their power the Rhode Island republicans in the late election adopted all the objectionable tactics for corrupting the people and controlling elections that has prevailed elsewhere, so that even now the state can not boast that in these respects it is better than the worst of the politically corrupt, while the outlook for the future is ominous.

In Rhode Island American democratic ideas have never prevailed except in the early colonial history. The system of government has always been an aristocratic oligarchy, with a constant effort on the part of democracy to fight its way out, but thus far without permanent success. Neither manhood suffrage nor equality of representation in the legislature has ever existed in the state, and these facts explain the existing low political conditions. A property qualification for voting has always existed. In 1842, when the present state constitution was adopted in place of the King Charles the Second charter under which the colony and state had been governed from 1663, the property qualification was somewhat modified, to the extent that non-taxpaying citizens of native birth were given a limited right of suffrage, while foreign-born citizens were not allowed to vote unless they owned real estate. Through the efforts chiefly of Dr. Garvin this discrimination as to the foreign-born citizens was removed by an amendment to the state constitution passed in 1888. At present there are three classes of voters, real estate,

personal property and registry. The property voters can exercise the suffrage on all questions and for all officials, but the registry voters can not vote on any question involving the expenditure of money in any town or city nor for members of the city councils in any of the five cities in the state. One effect of this system is that while the cities elect democratic mayors they at the same time elect republican aldermen and councilmen.

Sometimes it has been assumed by writers on municipal reform that if the suffrage could be restricted to "those who have a stake in the community" we would have better government, but the examples of the Rhode Island cities do not bear out this theory. On the contrary, the city council of the city of Providence has been exceedingly recreant in caring for the city's interests, and has nearly always favored instead of opposing the public franchise exploiters.

The inequality of representation is the chief means by which the republican machine maintains itself in power. In the current discussion of state matters brought about by Governor Garvin's campaigns the past two years it has become common to refer to the small towns as "rotten boroughs." This is a very good characterization, as the Rhode Island constituencies so named exhibit the same phenomena as their English prototypes did previous to the passage of the reform bill—namely, representation given to a locality with a very small population equal to a locality with hundreds of times greater population. Every town and city in the state is given one senator, but as the city of Providence had a population in 1900 of 175,597, while the town (ship) of West Greenwich had only 606, the

inequality of the representation is very apparent. In 1902 twenty small towns, with a population of 36,672 and 8,934 enrolled voters, elected republican senators by a total of 3,855 votes, while the rest of the state elected the other nineteen senators. (In 1900 the state had a population of 428,556, and in 1902 the number of enrolled voters was 78,542, of whom 59,792 voted for candidates for governor.) The senate consists of thirty-nine members, and practically governs the state like an executive committee; consequently the twelfth part of the entire population, which resides in these sparsely settled country town (ships), is actually in control of the state government.

The Rhode Island legislature has always had executive powers. It elects the greater part of all civil and criminal officers, all commissioners, as well as the judges and clerks of the inferior and supreme courts; and its power of legislation is absolutely untrammelled, since the governor has no veto power over legislation, nor do legislative acts require his signature to be valid. Until 1901 the governor did have some appointing power, including the right to name some commissioners and a few department heads, but in that year a law was passed practically taking away all his appointing power. This law provides that the governor can "appoint" these officials, but if the senate fails to "advise and consent" within three days then the senate itself can proceed to elect. The only civil appointment left by this law wholly in the governor's own control was that of his private secretary. The senate only "confirmed" seven of Governor Garvin's appointments in 1903, of whom five were women serving without sal-

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