

graded into a confused and scuffling bustle of local agency."

The civil servants, who constitute from ten per cent to twelve per cent of the adult male population in a community in which from twenty-five per cent to forty per cent of the voters regularly fail to vote, and are banded together in powerful civil service unions, thus far having secured for themselves a scale of pay entirely beyond the reach of those not fortunate enough to be in the state's employment. Organized labor, acting through the powerful trades-unions of the overgrown capital cities, year in and year out, forces government expenditure upon public works in order that work may be made for skilled labor and unskilled at minimum rates of wages for the day of eight hours. Local governing bodies that have borrowed money from the state for the purpose of building water works, irrigation works, and tramways, bring pressure on the government and prevent the latter from collecting overdue interest payments and sinking fund payments. Speculators in country and urban land, use the public credit to ward off financial crisis. For example, Sir George Dibbs, treasurer of New South Wales, in 1883, floated a loan of £3,000,000 in London, for the purpose of affording relief to the Sidney money market, which was tight in consequence of overspeculations in land. And the politics of Victoria from 1890 to 1892 are unintelligible, unless interpreted as an effort of the Munro government and the Shiels government to use the public credit for the purpose of arresting an impending financial crisis. Turning to New Zealand for an illustration of the matter here under discussion, one finds that the trade unions, aided by the machine politicians, in 1893 brought about the repeal of the railways act of 1888, which had been passed in order that the railways might be taken out of politics. The "non-political" officers who had been put in charge of the railways in 1888, in 1890 had mortally offended the trade unions by defeating the attempt made to tie up the railways in furtherance of the great maritime strike of 1890.

To repeat, the development of the state in Australasia into an institution whose expenditures affect, directly and indirectly, every section and class, has turned parliamentary or representative government in Australasia into constituency government. The representative in parliament to an alarming degree has been reduced to an agent whose business it is to obtain for his constituency a share in the public expenditure. More than that, the representative must secure the modification or suspension of administrative regulations that conflict with the private interests of classes or of individual constituents of influence. Witness the inability of governments to collect interest and sinking fund payments on loans to local bodies, the in-

ability of the railway departments to enforce the discipline and insist on the high standards of efficiency that prevail in private employment. Again, witness the fact that in Victoria, and to a considerable extent in New South Wales and the other Australasian colonies, it is inexpedient for governments to enforce penalties against contractors. Contractors have a way of getting parliamentary boards of inquiry appointed, with power to award damages, and those boards are "very careless of the interests of the state." In short, the control over the public purse, as well as the administration of the various departments of state, is being taken out of the hands of the ministry of the day and turned over to the popular branch of parliament. The members of parliament, on the other hand, tend to deem themselves the mere mouthpieces of their constituencies, to do whatever they are bid, and to throw the responsibility for their actions back on their constituents. Thus the control over the public purse and the administration of the departments of state, tends to fall into the hands of the constituencies, or of aggressive groups of voters who have a personal or class incentive to exceptional political activity. And in order to appreciate what that means one must remember the degree of political apathy indicated in the fact that from twenty-five to forty per cent of the electors regularly fail to vote. When it comes to electing the members of the upper houses, who have no share in the distribution of the public moneys, it is impossible to bring out more than fifty per cent of the vote.

This tendency to the displacement of representative government by constituency government extends also to the work of framing legislation. Government by a ministry responsible to the popular branch of parliament, as practiced in Great Britain, limits the right to initiate important legislation to the cabinet. The British House of Commons may amend legislative proposals in minor matters, but when it comes to

important ones it must either accept them or reject them. If it elects to reject a measure of consequence, it does so at the cost of a change of ministry, and sometimes at the risk of a dissolution. In other words, the government leads and the house follows. When the commons will no longer follow there is a change of government; but until that point is reached the ministry holds the reins. In Australasia on the other hand, ministries tend to abandon the position of leaders of the popular chamber, and to assume that of advisers to it. They did not hesitate to accept amendments which really constitute a reversal of policy. Again, it is not an uncommon occurrence for a government to hold a caucus, not only of its followers but of the whole popular chamber, and to adjust its policy to the opinions in caucus opposed.—Hugo R. Meyer, instructor in political economy, Harvard University, in Boston Transcript.

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