

centralization of authority. And in the majority of instances those persons who are afraid of a government by a strong man have avoided the difficulty by making a great many elective offices, thereby in effect putting the people themselves in a position to pass upon the various details of government. Fortunately our states have no foreign policies and can have no policies with each other save those provided in the federal constitution. Therefore, a weak and temporizing form of state government does not do as much harm as it might legitimately be expected to do, and as it certainly would do if applied to any state having international relations. The result is to punish only the people of each state for the sins of government permitted by that state.

The practical experience of the world has shown that that government is soundest which chooses its rulers most carefully and then expects them to rule.

Under the present disjointed system in the several states, there is a general rule that officers are elected wherein an excuse can be found for an election, and that the appointive office is rare and comparatively unimportant. This is especially true of offices created by a constitutional convention. Legislatures in creating offices quite frequently create appointive offices. But a constitutional convention seems to be constitutionally opposed to putting any power into the hands of a governor or other chief official which may, by any ingenuity, be vested elsewhere. As a result, in most of the states of the union, frequent elections are held at which are chosen a governor, a secretary of state, an auditor of public accounts, a state treasurer and state superintendent of schools, a sheriff for each of the several counties, a coroner for each of the several counties, a superintendent of schools and a raft of county officials for each county in the state, with a perfect swarm of elected officers for each city or town in the state. In addition to these

officers the public, charitable and penal institutions, and institutions of learning, are administered by various boards, some elected and some appointed. The result is a system of government which for complexity is the most baffling device the human mind can conceive. Let us assume that such a state is governed under a constitution based upon the lines of the federal constitution. There would then be elected a governor and a legislature, and in the several towns and cities a mayor and a city council. The desire of the people of the several counties of the state for local self-government, by which is meant, not

and controlled by the department of justice, at the head of which is the attorney general. If we had a like system in the state, an attorney general, instead of being elected, would be appointed by the governor, and there would be appointed subordinate to him a state's attorney or county prosecutor for each county in the state. The prosecution of criminals and the administration of justice would thereby be entirely removed from local influence, and the administration of the office depend entirely upon the law and not upon local sentiment. So, also, the various sheriffs throughout the counties would be appointed, and would be subject to the same authority, thus making the preservation of the public peace a matter not to be affected by the question of whether the next election would be a close one or not, or by the question of whether an avoidance of duty would bring more votes than its performance. So also in the matter of auditing public accounts, the examination of corporations, the school system and charitable and penal institutions, all would be administered at a comparatively slight expense and with a certainty of improved results if managed in proper departments, under responsible, experienced heads appointed by and responsible to the governor, who, in turn would be responsible to the people.

Americans are noticeably conservative



EDWIN A. MUNGER.

the choice of a local man for office, but the choice of a man who will respond to local influences, is simply a method for holding within the hands of the people of each county the power of saying whether they shall be observers of the law in its entirety or not.

Federal Division of Labor.

Under the federal constitution the several functions of government are exercised each under a cabinet official; thus all the vast machinery of the courts, marshal and district attorneys of the federal government is managed

in the matter of changes in the basic forms of local government and for this reason, among others, the errors of the first state governments which were made for country communities, live with us though their faults are increasingly more prominent in all our 20th century activity than ever before. The present systems of state and local governments are a burden to the people who sustain them. It admits of no doubt that this burden will be greatly lessened if not made imperceptible by following not some new or original scheme of government, but by applying those principles of poli-