

REPRESENTATION IN THEORY AND IN FACT.

The student of politics is not infrequently confronted with a difficulty peculiar to that science. It is, to realize the identity of an institution described in the text-book with the real thing when studied at close range. Blackstone and John Adams each in his way befogged the students of political institutions for generations. Blackstone made current the idea that the British Constitution was a complicated maze of interrelated powers and forces into whose ultimate nature it were almost irreverent to peer. John Adams hopelessly misguided many a student of American Constitutional law by his juggling of "checks and balances." Not until Bagehot simply blew away the idea of "paper Constitutions," did we begin to see something of the reality of present-day politics. But the old method is less easily banished for good than temporarily exiled. Only contrast the "paper" theory of representation in some of the modern books on politics, with the actual situation as it appears to an intelligent person at Washington, provided he has never caught the infection of so-called political science.

The theory and the fact of representation will furnish a crucial illustration. If the traditional visitor from Mars were to make us a visit to study our system of government, we may imagine him providing himself, let us say, with Professor Jenks's "Principles of Politics." Under the title, "Representation," our Martian would first find the query propounded whether the M.C. or the M.P. should act as a representative, using his independent judgment on disputed issues, or as a delegate simply recording the preponderant view of the district for which he stands.

The alternative is commonly resolved in favor of the representative as against the delegate, though the ideal superiority of the first has never been put more forcibly than by Macaulay, whose verdict was that the electorate should choose wisely and then confide freely in their representative. After the ideal character of the legislator has been settled, the next issue raised concerns his allegiance—shall it be primarily to his constituents, or to the wider public, the country at large? Here the political doctors, Professor Jenks among them, resolve the *questio* in favor of

the wider area of allegiance—but with some reservations as to particular duties to specific constituencies. One more matter settled in advance, and our Martian is ready to buy a railway ticket to Washington. What is the ideal basis of representation? Shall it be on the numbers of the population solely, with the attendant danger of the gerrymander? Or ought particular interests, like the laboring class, the farming class, the professional and the trading class, to send from their own ranks avowed advocates of these special interests?

Thrice-armed with the knowledge of the schools, our celestial visitant, let us suppose, takes the night express for Washington with letters of introduction to those in actual touch with affairs. What chance is there that he could discover an M.C. who would even avow that his allegiance in tariff-making was primarily to the nation as a whole? There would doubtless be many eager to protest that they are fighting tooth and nail, each for his own district. But if the man from Mars should follow them up, and ask *how* they had discovered the interest of their own constituencies, he would infallibly ascertain that a few influential persons whose profits are primarily at stake were the sole exponents, or alleged exponents, of the wishes or interests of the various districts. The truth is that in tariff-making the M.C. can hardly be called a delegate, let alone a representative. He is practically the special agent of the vociferous industrial parasite that has fastened on the country, but lives in his bailiwick. The present situation, for example, is quite plain. The only person who pretends to represent the general interest is outside of Congress altogether. Congress is making an organized effort to betray the general interest, and is stopped only by the power and influence of the President of the United States.

So far as the idea of representation based on classes is concerned, it is nearer the truth to say that, instead of not having introduced it into this country, we do not know any other system. Of course, the facts are carefully concealed. The agents of the cotton interests, for example, are disguised as members of Congress from certain enumerated districts. They commonly wear masks of partisan principles, or goggles and false beards that are stamped with geograph-

ical labels. They are themselves even hypnotized into a real belief in their own personal rectitude and independence. But unless there were an obstacle to their power, they would mark cash deposits for their ultimate political creators with the regularity of a cash register.

If a realist were to etch the outlines of our system of representation, it might run somewhat as follows: Personal ambition, a certain grade of ability, and amenability to the party machine will secure a nomination for Congress. This selection of the machine will be ratified at a so-called popular election. When a tariff measure is under discussion, the large contributors to the machine pull the wires that jerk the elected member. The clash of interests arranges through Congressional committees, and finally through a conference committee, a treaty that is as satisfactory a division of plunder as circumstances permit. The cost is paid by the ultimate consumer, who is a "myth." Barring any opposition from the representative of the "myths," to wit, the President of the United States, the representative system works to enrich its manipulators by a wholesale betrayal of the country at large.

THE NEW PROSPERITY.

It needs not the assurances of financiers returning from vacation, to convince the American people that better times are ahead. The signs of rapid and large recovery from our two years' depression are unmistakable. The country has even left off waiting for the passage of the tariff bill to "give the signal." Customs duties do not make prosperity; they can neither keep it when we have got it, nor retard it when it is coming back. Natural law, combined with the moral qualities of personal saving, economies in manufacture, prudence, enterprise, is doing the business. Even European observers, as recent financial dispatches have been showing, are now convinced, after long skepticism, that the American outlook is extremely bright.

Prosperity is coming, but it will not be the old prosperity. We refer not to its outward form or bulk or duration, but to its spirit. The enlarged business which is before us, the new displays of energy, the further growth and achieve-

ments of capital fruitfully employed in corporations and otherwise, will be marked by other methods. We shall not easily drop back into the old style of conducting the great business of the country. It is necessary and timely to dwell upon this, because many have been persuading themselves that the excitements, the reforms, the painful inches of progress gained in the past few years, were all to go for nothing and that we should settle back with swinish complacency into the mire where we formerly wallowed. And the evidence that this is not to be is plainly angering many. "To be blunt," wrote a member of the Union League Club to the *Sun* the other day, "William Howard Taft is a great disappointment to a host of people who had been looking to March 4 for a material change from things past to things to come."

The implication of such complaints is obvious. Reckless financiers had felt themselves disagreeably checked in their operations. They had intensely disliked the publicity, the inspection, the regulation to which their proceedings had been subjected. And it was a flattering unction to lay to their souls that all of that would pass away with a change of Administration. But they ought to have been keen enough to perceive that no force is lost in the political and business world, any more than in the physical. The efforts recently made to render business cleaner, and to hold corporations to a stricter accountability, were often violent, frequently ill-judged, and sometimes were but a tool in the hand of political ambition; but their intent in the minds of the people was honest and their effects were wholesome. Those effects will abide with us. Business will soon be larger than before, but it will be managed more cautiously and with more integrity than before. The counsels which we have taken to heart in a period of adversity, will not be wholly ignored when prosperity returns. There will not be so many impudent flotations, so many secret manipulations of property, near the verge of the criminal law. Promoters may hate the new provisions for inquiry and publicity, but they will also dread them, and work under a salutary fear that they may be applied to their combinations at any moment. A saner spirit and sounder methods will be visible in our great entre-

preneurs and administrators of vast capital.

It was, in many respects, a very trying time which we were called upon to go through—a period of clamor, of wild and whirling words. But it was not entirely destructive. Out of the confusion have emerged certain large and clear principles, and they will remain in force. Public service corporations, for example, can never, not even by all the king's horses and all the king's men, be put back where they were before. If any of them hereafter are tempted to ask what the public has to do with their affairs, they will find that it has everything to do. And the same thing is true, to an extent, of every other kind of large business that touches our citizenship at a thousand points. A new attitude has come and it will persist. The ease with which the corporation tax is slipping through Congress, despite the intense opposition of powerful interests, is a clear proof that the popular temper is inclined to step forward rather than backward. No appeal by creatures of government, such as corporations are, against government "prying into our affairs," will longer avail. The answer is very like what Gov. Hughes is reported to have said last year when a delegation from the Stock Exchange urged him to commit himself against an investigation: "If your books are clean, you have no reason to fear an investigation; and if they are not clean, you ought to be investigated."

After investigation, the Stock Exchange found itself rather helped than hurt. And the assurance is given that the minor reforms urged by Gov. Hughes's Commission will be carried out in good faith. "Unlisted stocks," for example, are to be known no more in the Exchange, after April 1, 1910. Such a move for improvement in business methods is an admirable example of the way in which wise and far-sighted men will seek to adjust themselves to the new conditions. By holding fast to the good results worked out in our late troublous days, by accepting constructively the teachings of the dear school of experience, they will at once reassure the public, attract new confidence with new business, and cause the coming prosperity to be, in Oliver Cromwell's phrase, "without a worm in it."

FRANCE AND EUROPE.

M. Briand's Cabinet, the practical completion of which is announced, makes greater changes than were expected. Six Clemenceau men are left, six new men are coming in. As if to offset the presence of a former militant Socialist at the head of the Ministry, the other new members show a decided lurch to moderatism. M. Cochery, the new Minister of Finance, is more conservative than his predecessor, M. Caillaux. Millerand, who becomes Minister of Public Works, was once a terror to the bourgeoisie, but has long since grown tame. For the war and navy portfolios, M. Briand seems to have gone to professional men who are not so well known as Gen. Picquart and M. Picard, but who need not therefore be the less efficient.

Under Clemenceau, the French Republic was more than usually forward in the eye of the world. Its internal history for the period covers the epoch-making rupture of the connection between State and Church, the rise of a formidable revolutionary movement among the working classes, the appearance of the anti-militarist doctrine of the picturesque M. Hervé, and, in a narrower political sphere, the partial disintegration of the Republican *bloc* which since 1899 had ruled the country. Abroad, the Clemenceau Government had to weather a steady succession of crises in its relations with Germany, inherited from preceding Ministries; to carry on a difficult and dramatic campaign in Morocco; and to draw tighter the connection with England under stress of danger from beyond the Rhine. Where France was not directly a party to a quarrel, as in the Balkan crisis of 1908, she was nevertheless compelled to play an important part as the nucleus in a scheme of alliances and understandings which upheld the European balance of power against Germany and the Triple Alliance. Viewed in its broadest aspects, the Clemenceau régime was more than ordinarily successful. The Separation problem was solved, and the other internal questions we have mentioned were dealt with as ably as might be. The foreign prestige of France, Clemenceau left much higher than he found it.

Now that Briand has stepped into the Premiership, it is hardly conceivable that any sharp departure in policy will ensue. And this is not merely because Clemenceau's defeat is known to have