

clearly. It would be the privilege of those whose incomes bore a high enough proportion to the number of their children. Those who fell below would go without; they would have no right to the elegancies of conjugal adaptation. Yet we might look at it a little less individualistically; we might treat it as a privilege, it is true, but as a privilege which all should share. A certain number of unhappy unions will occur; some divine actuary could after proper inquiry predict just how many there would be next year. There would be more disclosed, if divorce were free, but no more would exist. Some would be held together because one could not afford to break them; others one is rich enough to break—the pieces could have an independent life. Does it not suggest itself that the burden might be equalized? Might it not cost the rich enough to be divorced to help the poor who cannot now live apart? A tax based upon the incomes of the parties proposing divorce might be arranged which would go a long way towards allowing divorce to many to whom

society is right in denying it now. The same practical limitations upon separation which operate upon the poor, the rich would feel. All my better nature calls for a separation, but my living duty in dollars to my children, to my spouse, forbids.

All thought of fault would have to disappear; we should be obliged to face conjugal unhappiness as a misfortune, not a sin. That men and women should still believe that the mutilation of such a continued union is a goodly sacrifice to God, we must accept; men have always mutilated themselves in honor of their gods. But if the sacred taboos subside, and if we seek for our conduct its justification in our own development for happiness, not in our capacity to inflict pain on ourselves, then is not some such plan possible? Is it not a fair incident to a state which seeks a more equal division of those evils which human beings generate within themselves, as their bodies generate poisons? Is it not a kind of insurance?

ALDEN HARDEN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Michigan Progressives Again

SIR: Mr. Gustavus Pope writes you to explain why, in spite of the action of the Michigan Progressives, he voted to endorse Mr. Hughes. He admits that he wanted to find out what the Progressives wanted; that he called a meeting of the men who composed the delegation to the national convention, the men who composed the state committee and others—that about 60 came to the meeting; that this meeting passed a resolution against endorsing Mr. Hughes; and that he voted for endorsing Mr. Hughes. That is all that I stated in my statement or report.

I understand that the Progressives of Michigan have recalled Mr. Pope and elected a Mr. Hoffman in his place.

MATTHEW HALE.

Boston, Massachusetts.

A Reply from M. von Sternberg

SIR: My attention has just been called to two of your issues which did me the honor of discussing my work in connection with the two volumes of "Modern Russian Piano Music" published by the Oliver Ditson Company.

Ignorantly assailed in the issue of July 8th by a Mr. Moderwell and manfully defended in the next issue by a Mr. A. Walter Kramer, I am sorry, indeed, to be an absolute stranger to both; but to the latter gentleman I feel deeply grateful, not only for his graceful and generous recognition of my modest merits, but also for disproving Mr. Moderwell's unwarranted assertion that I am "neither modern nor Russian."

Mr. Moderwell has fully expressed his personal opinion of my work, for our Constitution allows the expression of opinion even to those who lack the equipment to form one;

and Mr. Moderwell plainly demonstrates that he belongs to this class by his careless statement of facts he cannot substantiate.

As Mr. Kramer correctly said, I was born and raised in St. Petersburg, now Petrograd; my family still lives there. From my correspondence with the late Balakireff and Rimsky-Korsakoff, with Glazounoff, and Caesar Cui, also with Messrs. Maykapar, Kasuli, Karpoff and others of the younger generation (some of whom have honored me with the dedication of compositions) it can be easily seen that at its base are very pleasant personal relations which had their beginning when two of my trios were played in Petrograd by the Chamber-music Society. By flinging out the statement that I am no Russian, Mr. Moderwell has evidently acted upon very loose information and this does not speak well for his reliability as a public informant, nor for his feeling of responsibility to his readers.

Whether I am or am not modern, is not left for him to decide; it has been affirmatively determined by men who enjoy general recognition because of their knowledge and judgment. Besides, upon what does Mr. Moderwell base his opinion of modernity? By what standard does he measure it? And if he should have a standard, by whom and where was it recognized? He evidently ignores the difference between "modernity" and its frenzied caricature "modernism," that conscious and rather vulgar effort at mere "newness." While there are some Russian compositions of this type they are cosmopolitan in spirit, not ethnical. What I endeavored to present to the public was music that expressed the national note and while I did not devote the two volumes entirely to composers of the younger generation, they occupy the bulk of the collection. I felt it to be my duty to give some consideration to the historical aspect of Russian music because the creations of their predecessors have a decided bearing upon the works of its present representatives.

If Mr. Moderwell is to assume the position of a critic of authority he must learn to subordinate his personal predilections to the ethical and critical principles that establish authority.

CONSTANTIN IVANOVITCH VON STERNBERG.
Winthrop, Massachusetts.

What the World Needs

SIR: I have just read the letter entitled "From Doubts to Views" in your issue of July 29th. R. C. B. thanks God that in *THE NEW REPUBLIC* the untrammelled mind may disport itself, and though I may not qualify for your pages I must tell you personally that I am mad. You see, we own a Ford, and we are poor but respectable, and we are Baptists (not Methodists, but still—you know!) and have been Bull Moose, and we have a flag-pole with a flag on it, and my husband was a scout-master, and is at present captain of a company of the New York National Guard which is fighting flies on the border—in other words, a "wife-deserting patriot." But I am not a "weeping woman." I am too proud of my husband, too much in sympathy with his patriotism. We were never so close together in spirit as we are now, when the width of the country our ancestors fought for lies between us.

I believe that a regiment of Methodist and Baptist missionaries could do more in Mexico than a regiment of soldiers. I imagine that R. C. B. and I might agree on many points and I hope we should not hate one another. But I submit that what this country needs, and what the world needs, more than armies, more than advanced thinkers, is folks who don't know how to sneer.

A. B. M.

Auburn, New York.

History of the Suffrage Planks

SIR: It was a great surprise to find an article in *THE NEW REPUBLIC* so full of misstatements as the article on "The Woman's Party," by Charles A. Beard, in your issue of July 29th. The most glaring of these misstatements is that the third and fourth achievements of the Woman's party and the Congressional Union were the planks in the Republican and Democratic platforms.

The facts in the case are these: At both Chicago and St. Louis the representatives of the Woman's party and the Congressional Union announced to the Republican and Democratic Resolutions Committees that they were not asking for planks. They emphasized the fact that they were asking distinctly for the endorsement of the Federal amendment—the one thing which the parties did not give.

Preceding these conventions members and officers of the Congressional Union issued frequent statements to the press and in their own organ, belittling the importance of planks and reiterating that the Congressional Union was not interested in them—that they sought action on behalf of the Federal amendment only. In view of this, I have no doubt that members of the Congressional Union and Woman's party were also amazed at the errors in Mr. Beard's article.

The National American Woman Suffrage Association for six months previous to these two conventions had conducted a campaign all over this country to secure planks in the platforms of the two dominant parties, such planks to embody an endorsement of the principle of woman suffrage. The two demonstrations—the parade in Chicago

and the "walkless parade" in St. Louis—were the work of the National Association.

The inclusion of the planks by the two parties was the direct result of this campaign on the part of the National Association and its branches in the forty-eight states in the Union. The Republican committee took the very wording of the plank submitted to them by the National Association, used it bodily, and then added the clause with reference to state action.

"By the records of the press and eye-witnesses" and in the judgment of the leading men of both parties and thousands of their cohorts, the inclusion of the suffrage planks in the platforms of the two dominant political parties constitute the greatest advance made by the suffrage movement this year.

The National Association first sponsored the Federal amendment and has consistently worked for its passage for many years, hence it is as much interested and perhaps more interested in its success than any other suffrage group or organization could be. Yet the policies and methods of the two organizations at present working for the amendment are so diametrically opposed that it is important that in any statement of suffrage history the true facts shall be given to the public. I feel sure that *THE NEW REPUBLIC* will want to furnish its readers with the actual history of the suffrage planks and the activities which led to their inclusion in the national platforms.

JENNIE BRADLEY ROESSING.

National American Woman Suffrage Association,
Washington, D. C.

Voting Geographically

SIR: Mr. Cleveland's article in a recent issue, "Why We Have a Pork Barrel" certainly brings out clearly the chief cause of the reckless and irresponsible appropriations of public money that flourish in Congress. It does not mention, however, one contributing cause that is of sufficient importance, I think, to be given thoughtful consideration: the fact that the members of the House are elected, for the most part, by single-member districts.

It is easy to see what must be the effect of having each member elected by *all* the voters, however much they may differ on political principles, who happen to live inside of a certain arbitrary line on the map. The candidate that carries the election in such a district is, of course, dependent for reelection on getting more votes than any other candidate from a body of voters who are united on one thing only—an interest in their district. Naturally a member who is at all doubtful about retaining his seat realizes that it behooves him to do something for that district whether the country at large is benefited or not.

To get rid of this contributing cause of the continuance of "pork barrel" methods of appropriation it is necessary only to have the members of the House elected in groups by the method known as proportional representation. For example, the eleven members elected at present by the eleven separate districts of Iowa might be elected at large, under the proportional system—but in such a way that the several political parties would each secure as many of the seats as its votes entitled it to. This change made, each member of the House from Iowa would be dependent for reelection on a constituency of genuine supporters within a territory so extensive that appropriations of benefit only to restricted localities would make no great appeal.

C. G. HOAG.

Tamworth, New Hampshire.

Books and Things

IT is obvious that those men in the British government upon whose decision Sir Roger Casement's fate depended, and who could if they chose have kept him from being hanged, did not enter a region of abstractions before trying to appraise his conduct. They must have done their best to consider all the known circumstances. Instead of stopping their imaginations short at their decision itself they must have sent them further, have encouraged them to run into the living consequences of hanging him or of commuting his sentence. Impossible to read Lord Robert Cecil's defense of the execution without feeling that these men, who refused to let political expediency influence them to clemency, must for days have been thinking of political expediency most of all. They must have acted on the very motive which Lord Robert Cecil said they rejected. It was not their anger or panic or vindictiveness which hanged Sir Roger Casement: it was political expediency, it was what these men deemed the good of the British Empire.

To hang him was both politically expedient and politically inexpedient, in the same sense that commutation of his sentence would have been both. In other words, it was partly a quantitative problem which those officials had to consider in whose hands his fate lay. They had to think of numbers, to estimate by the best light they had how many persons would be outraged if he were hanged, how many more or how many less would be outraged if his life were spared; and they had also to think not of numbers only, for the minority might easily be more powerful than the majority for good or harm to the empire. By their best light they had to consider these things, and their best light was weak and flickering. "There are many subjects," Santayana has said, "of which man is so ignorant that only mythical notions can seem to do them justice; such, for instance, are the minds of other men." Sir Roger Casement's fate was a political subject, and everybody who deals practically with a political subject is dealing with the minds of other men.

At one extreme were the minds of the men who say without qualification, and who think they believe without qualification, that every traitor ought to be hanged. Now it is true that since Sir Roger Casement was captured on the Irish Coast, and since the evidence against him was presented at his trial, no one has defined a traitor in words which would leave him out. Although he conceived Ireland as a separate country, his own, and as having a right to his exclusive allegiance, and although he conceived the giving of aid and comfort to Germany as a means, yet his plans if successful would have had the same result as though bettering Ireland had been only the means and helping Germany the single end he strove for.

No, it cannot be denied that Sir Roger Casement was a traitor. And yet, guessing as best we may at the minds of those in whose approval of his execution there is no conscious regret, we cannot help imagining that their approval would have been more wholesouled, more nearly absolute, if he had been a traitor without being also an Irish patriot, however wrongheaded, or if he had sold himself to Germany for the satisfaction of a personal spite or for money. If we imagine this, and take what we have imagined for truth, we see how even those who most unreservedly applaud Sir Roger Casement's execution are close to those who cannot wholly approve it.

Strange to think that the good of the British Empire, that political expediency, if measured by the numbers and the power of those who are outraged by his hanging, and

by the numbers and power of those who would have been outraged had he not been hanged, may conceivably have been affected little or not at all by his fate. Strange to think of this possibility, and infinitely disturbing even to one who had no hand in the decision.

At the other extreme from the men who are content to say that treason in every form should always be punished by death, but like them in judging the world by stripping every action to its bones, by ignoring the flesh and blood and color, are the men who oppose capital punishment everywhere and always. These men are often described as sentimentalists, they are accused of exaggerating the worth of human life, of exaggerating the importance of hastening that end which after all every life must have, of being men of weak nerves who sicken at the name of death. Of some among them this account is accurate; not of all. Some opponents of capital punishment can endure the idea of death by almost any other means. When angry enough or quickened by a high cause they can kill or be killed. Death in most of its forms has still the power to weaken in some of us a little of the old consoling faith taught us as children; some of us can still imagine death as saying, "Be not afraid; it is I," to the man who is **not afraid**. But when we think of capital punishment no old refuge is open to the imagination. Our attention is not upon the man who dies but upon the men who might have saved his life.

Perhaps we can make our feeling plain by magnifying its courses. Suppose the interval between Sir Roger Casement's sentence and his execution had been longer, perhaps a year, and suppose the officials who had the power of life and death over him had decided his case anew every day. There would be something monstrous, to nearly every imagination, in the thought of these men, for hour after hour of so many days, through a period long enough to cool passion and to deaden hatred, still keeping fast their determination to kill another man calmly, by due process of law, at the appointed time. "Now I might save him—and now—and now—and I will not." There would be something hateful to most of us in a cold righteousness so prolonged, and what most of us would feel in such a case many of us feel now.

I do not mean that all or most of the men who let Sir Roger Casement hang were coldly righteous. They were men whose imaginations no doubt differed widely. To some of them his death was such a natural, simple consequence of his treason that the choice before them was never real: they had no compunction. Others there must have been who sickened and could not sleep, who thought of the fine traits in Sir Roger Casement's character, of his proved capacity for pity and courage, whose own misery made them dwell on that element of cold waste from which their determination to hang him did not seem to them quite free.

These men had the power of life and death: in full consciousness of their responsibility they made the choice which they thought politically more expedient or less inexpedient. If one of them now finds peace of mind in telling himself that his sole object was to do some abstract thing he calls right, that he did not consider political expediency, that he only let the law take its course, I shall not grudge him his self-deception. What he did, if we consider only its nearer consequences, may have been the wiser thing. It is possible to believe this and still to believe that these British statesmen have sacrificed the future of their country to the present, that a later generation may see in Sir Roger Casement's execution proof of England's excessive fear that magnanimity is weakness.

P. L.