

lessening of the incentive of private profit to increase sales. The element of private profit is not, however, eliminated; for, although Massachusetts, better than any other State, keeps its corporations from issuing stock in excess of capital actually invested, nevertheless the fact that the proposed companies can declare five per cent. dividends on an investment almost as secure as Government bonds, and accumulate surplus profits equal to their capital stock, makes the investment an attractive one for idle capital. As compared with the recent South Carolina system, the proposed Norwegian plan neither prohibits the sale of liquor to be drunk on the premises nor prohibits its sale at night. It is not, therefore, to be regarded as an important step in advance. Mr. Thomas Moran, in an article in the "Charities Review," says that in Sweden the Gothenburg system came to be regarded as a means of revenue rather than of reform. There is danger that the same criticism will apply to the proposed system in Massachusetts. It is true that the law provides that the surplus profits, as in Norway, shall be devoted to charitable purposes not now supported by taxation. Yet the receipt of a large revenue for charities from the liquor traffic will make its suppression as difficult as the receipt of such revenue from lotteries has made their suppression difficult. Temperance reformers must be careful not to take a supposed first step in advance if the taking of this first step will hinder them in their further march. Unless the sale of liquor to be drunk on the premises can be prohibited to the proposed companies, we do not believe that temperance reformers ought to sanction their formation.

⊗

The inheritance-tax measure before the Massachusetts Legislature is hardly what the voters had a right to expect when both political parties pledged themselves in its favor. The rate proposed for direct inheritances is one per cent., and all real estate is exempt, as well as all estates valued at less than \$10,000. This last exemption is sound enough, since the income from \$10,000 is certainly no more than is needed to support a widow or provide for the education of the children. But the tax proposed upon such estates as are admittedly in excess of the demands of the comfort, culture, or character of the inheritors is justly criticised for its timidity by the Springfield "Republican," which contrasts it with the following rates proposed in the new British Budget:

Estates valued at:	Tax.
From \$500 to \$2,500.....	1 per cent.
From \$2,500 to \$5,000.....	2 per cent.
From \$5,000 to \$50,000.....	3 per cent.
From \$50,000 to \$250,000.....	4 per cent.
From \$250,000 to \$500,000.....	4½ to 5½ per cent.
From \$500,000 to \$5,000,000.....	6 to 7½ per cent.
Above \$5,000,000.....	8 per cent.

The rates in force in the Australian Colonies, as Sir William Harcourt pointed out in his Budget speech, are still more progressive than those proposed in Great Britain, and even the conservative English provinces in Canada have made the tax upon hurtfully large inheritances four times as heavy as that proposed in Massachusetts. It seems singular that these members of Greater Britain should have gone further than the United States in limiting the extent to which industrial power shall be hereditary. The protest of the Springfield "Republican" against the "timid and frail" proposition before the Massachusetts Legislature, though guarded, is, nevertheless, significant of the rapidly growing public sentiment which Dr. West's monograph on "The Inheritance Tax" and

Professor Seligman's on "Progressive Taxation" are bringing to the attention of the scientific world.

⊗

The New York Chamber of Commerce Rapid Transit Bill, with the referendum clause of the Trades-Union Bill incorporated, is now law. Governor Flower, in his statement of his reasons for signing the measure, points out that the powers given to the new Commissioners to contract, not only for a thirty-five years' lease of the new system, but for indefinite renewals of this lease, is a dangerous power; yet he urges very justly that the character of the Commissioners named, including such men as President Low, John H. Starin, and William Steinway, is sufficient guarantee that these powers will not be abused. Indeed, we can rely upon some of these men to stand firmly for the principle that the great public franchise involved shall remain the property of the public, to the end that it may confer the greatest possible public benefit rather than the greatest possible private profit. The only danger at this point is that the successors of these Commissioners may not be equally public-spirited. The objection to the new law, that it violates the State Constitution by providing that the proceeds of the city's bonds shall be loaned for thirty-five years to a private corporation, Governor Flower answers by urging that, inasmuch as the city is ultimately to own the road, it really issues its bonds to pay for the construction. This, of course, is a legal question, and, judging from the expressions of Mayor Gilroy, representing Tammany Hall, and Mr. Russell Sage, representing the Manhattan Elevated Railway Company, the courts are likely to be called upon to determine it. The portion of the bill to which the most objection has been raised in some quarters, the clause requiring a vote of the people before any contract is made, Governor Flower commends as not only constitutional but eminently sound. The question of municipal ownership or private ownership of the system which is to carry the people of New York City from their work to their homes is one that profoundly concerns them all, and in no way concerns the people of the rest of the State. It is, therefore, right that the voters of the city should determine it. Any other course would be inconsistent with the principle of local self-government; any other course would also be inconsistent with the principle of popular self-government.

⊗

From present appearances it is probable that the New York Constitutional Convention will need for its work all of the five months to which it is limited by law. The amendments and resolutions already introduced are numbered by the score, and the progress thus far made is small. Twenty-seven committees have been named. Among the most important are these: On the Judiciary (Elihu Root, Chairman); on Finances and Taxation (M. M. Acker, Chairman); on Corporations (C. A. Hawley, Chairman); on Suffrage (W. P. Goodelle, Chairman); on Cities (J. Johnson, Chairman); on Legislative Powers (C. P. Vedder, Chairman); on Railroads (J. C. Davies, Chairman). We believe that all the Chairmen of Committees are Republicans, as well as all the executive officers of the Convention. This organization on a political basis is not unnatural or without precedent. The hostile comment upon it from Democrats, as well as that upon the fact that the rules adopted give the political majority pretty sweeping power, would not have been so outspoken if it were not for some phrases in President Choate's opening address which had a non-partisan sound. It is safe to say that, were the other political party in a majority, precisely the same kind of organization (with a reversal of the partisanship) would

have been made. Thus far Mr. Choate has proved a most acceptable and capable presiding officer. The subjects which are expected to produce the warmest discussion, and which are most likely to result in amendments being framed for action by the people, are: universal suffrage, biennial legislative sessions, uniformity in city charters, the abolishing of State appropriations for sectarian schools, apportionment and taxation. Of these subjects, much the most prominent the past week has been that relating to the movement in favor of woman's suffrage. On Thursday Miss Susan B. Anthony made a plea before the Committee on Suffrage which was listened to with keen interest. Petitions signed by over 180,000 persons in favor of woman's suffrage were presented during the week; while, on the other hand, Mr. Johnson presented a volume containing the names of 6,000 or more women of Kings County who are opposed to the measure, and other similar petitions were laid before the Committee.

The investigation of the New York City Police Department continued last week before the Lexow Committee, with some sensational features, but without as yet reaching much that is definite and conclusive. Commissioner McClave submitted to a long and minute examination, the chief object of which seemed to be to prove a suspicious increase in his personal property since taking office. His defense was, first, that there was no such increase, and, secondly, that, if there were, it was not extraordinary, as he had been doing a lumber business amounting to several hundreds of thousands of dollars a year—two defenses not exactly consistent, but both difficult to disprove. Mr. McClave's son-in-law, Granger, swore directly that he had paid money to Mr. McClave's clerk to procure appointments to the police force, but as Granger did not dare to come before the Committee for cross-examination, and as Mr. McClave's statement that Granger was a confessed forger, thief, and swindler, whom he had tried for years to reclaim, was supported by strong evidence, while Granger's implication of two or three well-known men was promptly denied under oath by these men, the total effect of his "disclosures" was practically nothing. The rest of the testimony taken was singularly weak—an hour or more, for instance, was consumed in inducing an old Irish woman, mother of two police officers, to swear that she did not pay anything to bring about their appointment. Every one interested in good government is hoping for a thorough investigation of all suspicious points in our municipal affairs, and we must not be impatient if the results thus far seem rather disappointing. The difficulty of obtaining honest and truthful witnesses who have personal knowledge of corrupt transactions is, naturally, very great.

The Hon. Carroll D. Wright—whose continuance at the head of the National Labor Bureau is matter for public congratulation—has made Building and Loan Associations the subject of this year's report. These savings associations are now established in every State in the Union. Pennsylvania comes first, with over one thousand associations; Ohio second, with over seven hundred; and then in close succession follow Illinois, Indiana, New York, and Missouri. Even in the South these co-operative organizations have gained more than a foothold in all the States, being relatively stronger there than in New England. This, of course, is not due to the greater strength of the co-operative spirit among the people, but to the fact that in New England the savings banks—which are essentially co-operative—supply the need which has occasioned the rapid spread of building and loan associations in other

parts of the country. Of the six thousand associations in the country less than five hundred are more than fifteen years old. Yet the assets now aggregate \$450,000,000, and the Commissioner estimates that probably four hundred thousand homes have been built with the aid of these associations. This is a triumph of co-operation comparable with what has been achieved by the famous societies of Great Britain.

Everything connected with naval warfare is of intense interest, because in that field everything, both as regards construction, armament, and method, is in an experimental stage. In spite of the fact that enormous fleets of modern armed vessels have been built at an immense cost, nobody knows what would happen if a battle were to take place between two such fleets. So far, it is purely a matter of surmise. The fact that two torpedo-boats, the Cushing and the Stiletto, entered Newport Harbor one night not long ago under the full glare of a search-light without being detected, although their approach was expected, is likely, therefore, to attract a good deal of attention, because the torpedo is one of the most important and one of the most uncertain elements in the naval problem. The two torpedo-boats had been repainted in colors different from those which they had borne before, and they entered by an unusual course, and the force at the torpedo station, which was anxiously waiting for them and scanning the entire expanse of waters, failed to detect them. The test is not regarded as decisive, but it was sufficiently so as to raise the whole question of the value of the search-light. If the search-light cannot be trusted, the defense of a squadron against torpedo-boats must lie either in the use of other torpedo-boats or of the protective netting. The probability is that, when the great battle-ships put to sea in time of war, they will be provided with both the netting and a flotilla of torpedo-boats. Thus at every step the expense of naval warfare increases, and increases so rapidly as to raise the hope that, as General Hawley once said of our pension system, it will make war so expensive that it will do away with it altogether.

GENERAL NEWS.—The recent earthquakes in Venezuela are now thought to have destroyed several thousand lives; Los Andes is the State that has suffered most severely. —It is reported that Brazil has accepted the mediation of Great Britain in the dispute with Portugal. —Superintendents, teachers, and other employees of the Indian school service, as well as other friends of Indian education, and educated Indians, are to hold summer institutes and conferences in the interests of Indian education this summer at Chilocco, Oklahoma; Santa Fé, New Mexico; Salem, Oregon; Helena, Montana; and St. Paul, Minnesota. —Mr. James Bryce, author of "The American Commonwealth," has become President of the British Board of Trade. —Miss Agnes Irwin, of Philadelphia, is to be Dean of Radcliffe College (formerly called the Harvard Annex); Miss Irwin has a very high reputation as a teacher and as a woman of notable scholarly attainments. —Among the deaths of the week must be recorded those of Francis William Bird, of East Walpole, Mass., often called the "Sage of Walpole," at the age of eighty-five; Professor Jerome Allen, a widely known educator and writer on educational subjects, who was the chief mover in establishing the School of Pedagogy of the University of the City of New York; Ernest O. W. Mildner, Professor of German at Princeton; and Professor George J. Romanes, of Oxford, England, the famous writer and lecturer on natural history, physiology, and similar subjects. —The new cruiser Columbia, on her



deep-sea trial trip last week, made the remarkable record of 18½ knots an hour under natural draught.—The present Provisional Government of Hawaii has secured a good working majority in the Constitutional Convention.—Ex-Justice Kenneth F. Sutherland, of Gravesend, L. I., who fled after his conviction on charges of election fraud, has surrendered himself; eight new indictments, for forgery, have been found against him.—The National Municipal Reform League is holding a meeting in New York this week.—The Presbyterian General Assembly at Saratoga adjourned on Monday, to meet next year in the Third Presbyterian Church of Pittsburg, Pa.



## Dr. Henry P. Smith

Our front page contains the portrait of Dr. Henry Preserved Smith, whom accident rather than any conscious purpose of his own has made a National representative of liberty of prophesying in the Presbyterian Church. The circumstances of his trial are so extraordinary as to be well-nigh incredible. They are as follows:

In January, 1891, Dr. Briggs delivered his now famous inaugural address at Union Theological Seminary, on the Authority of the Holy Scripture. In February, before the address had been fully published, a resolution was introduced into the Cincinnati Presbytery, in effect calling on the General Assembly to veto Dr. Briggs's election. Dr. Evans and Dr. Smith, both of them at the time professors in Lane Theological Seminary, prepared papers discussing this resolution, in which they contended that the absolute inerrancy of the Scripture is not a doctrine taught either in Scripture or in the Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith. Dr. Smith also contributed two articles to the New York "Evangelist" discussing the whole subject of creed subscription and the latitude of belief allowed to one who has subscribed to the Confession. For this discussion of Dr. Briggs's theological positions and his responsibilities under the subscription, published before the General Assembly had passed upon the soundness of Dr. Briggs's views, Dr. Smith has now been condemned as a heretic and excluded from the Presbyterian pulpit. He was not accused of teaching in the Seminary chair doctrines contrary to the Confession, only of defending, before they had been condemned, doctrines whose soundness was on trial before the Court. The advocate is convicted of treason for defending before a tribunal one who has been accused of treason. The practical effect of the trial and conviction of Dr. Henry Preserved Smith is notice to all Presbyterian ministers that when any question arises in that Church, every minister who takes part in the discussion does so at the hazard of being turned out of the ministry for so doing, if, as the result of that discussion, the majority goes against him. This decision, if it be submitted to by the Presbyterian minority, is the end, not merely of freedom of teaching in Presbyterian theological seminaries and freedom of preaching in Presbyterian pulpits, but of freedom of debate in the constitutional judicatories of that Church. Dr. Smith's case differs radically from Dr. Briggs's case in two respects: First, in that he is not accused of holding that the reason and the Church are sources of authority as well as the Bible; and, secondly, in that he is not accused because of any teaching officially and in his ministry, but only of defending, before the courts of the Church, teaching the soundness of which was still under debate in the courts of the Church. It should be added that there is no suggestion that his spirit

has been provocative or polemical, or other than kind, courteous, and Christian throughout.

This is the gravamen of our condemnation of the Presbyterian General Assembly. It not only practically endeavors to decide what is truth by a majority vote in a mass-meeting, but it prohibits and punishes free debate exercised in the previous deliberative process. This is wholly un-American; for America decides action by majorities when co-operative action is necessary, but leaves opinion wholly free. This is wholly un-Protestant; for Protestantism teaches that every man has a right to read and study the Bible for himself, and to reach conclusions respecting it without let or hindrance from ecclesiastical courts, ancient or modern. The Presbyterian General Assembly will probably follow up this decision by securing such changes as will give it the control of the Presbyterian seminaries. Then, with power to control the teaching in its seminaries, power to dictate the teaching in the pulpit, and power to silence as a heretic any man who ever, in Presbytery, Synod, or Assembly, ventures to call its doctrines or methods in question for debate, it will have a system of absolutism surpassed only by that of Rome itself.

But to silence men requires more than a system; it requires men who can be silenced. We do not believe that the Presbyterian Church is composed of such men. Whether it is or not we shall soon see. Meanwhile liberty of thought remains in the Episcopal, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, and Reformed Churches. And in the Presbyterian Church Dr. Henry Preserved Smith takes his place among the men whom persecution has honored. How bravely yet quietly he has borne himself under this persecution any reader may see by obtaining from A. D. F. Randolph & Co., of New York City, the pamphlet edition of Dr. Smith's "Appeal and Argument."



## Municipal Reform

Hope for the future of our American cities is encouraged by the report of the Progress of Municipal Reform in the various cities of the Union, presented by Mr. Clinton R. Woodward on another page. This report is encouraging because it indicates a reform, where it is most needed, in what are called "our best citizens."

It is popular to charge all municipal corruption upon the criminal classes, or the rings and bosses, or the ignorant foreigners. It is convenient to have a scapegoat, and America has improved on Old Testament methods, for it furnishes three. But the real, radical vice is in "our best citizens." Some of them have combined to corrupt the municipality and seize upon its highways, paying a small bribe to the aldermen instead of a fair price for the franchise to the people. Others of them have combined to charge double price for gas of poor quality, as formerly for water with insufficient supply. Still others have winked at municipal corruption because it secured a fund which helped their party in State and National elections. More of them have been simply indifferent and apathetic; they have thought it cheaper to pay extravagant taxes for insufficient accommodation than to give the necessary thought and energy to secure a better administration. There has never been a time when the same ability which has organized and built up the magnificent private enterprises in our country might not have given us municipal administration as efficient, if that ability had been directed in municipal channels. What Mayor Pingree has accomplished for Detroit, what Mayor Low began to do in Brooklyn and Mayor Schieren is doing in Brooklyn, can be