

said that the abolition of the Crown and the House of Lords was inevitable, that he expected the change would come within ten years. Twice ten years have been added to his ten, and to-day his prophecy would seem to many farther away from fulfillment than it seemed thirty years ago.

The last three decades have seen royalty, and its accompanying nobility, increase in pomp and pretension. They have seen a new imperialism arise and a recrudescence of royal functions. They have seen processions of state and the outward manifestations of imperial power increase in grandeur and gorgeousness.

And yet the teacher's prophecy will come true. However entrenched seems the hereditary idea of Crown and Lords, it is sure to fall. Its absurdity is sure to become manifest to modern thought and education. The schools, in spite of their conservatism, will do their work of widening the thoughts of men. Books like Morrison Davidson's, hardly noticed by the orthodox, yet selling by the thousands, will be found not to have been written in vain. The end must come to this absurdity of Crown and Lords, as it has come, or will come, to every other high farce that has paraded, or still parades, on the human stage.

Even now voices are not wanting. In the May number of the Westminster Review there is a brief but pithy editorial article entitled: Wanted—An Elective Executive. It is true that the writer is referring to the election of a Prime Minister by the House, and makes no mention of the King; but the very fact of electing an executive as the real representative of the popular will would have an influence in emphasizing the expensive uselessness of a royal figurehead.

The article reads in part as follows: "The House must control the Executive. And that result can best be attained by the adoption of the system known as the Elective Executive, under which all ministers would be directly elected by the House and directly and individually responsible to the House, while the initiation of legislation would rest, not with the Executive, but with the House.

Under this system, of course, such an anachronism as the House of Lords could not long survive. This chamber of hereditary wreckers would right speedily be swept aside, and its place would be taken by the Referendum."

This is brave talk, and apparently not without significance at the present stage of parliamentary agitation. The conservative ministry is hanging on to every nook and crook, fearing an appeal to the country, and terribly uncertain as to what new policies may be forced into the arena. Many seem to feel that the country is on the eve of some new turn, and conservatives naturally wish to postpone the crisis. We may be quite certain that feeling is running high when a leading review speaks of the upper chamber as an anachronism, calls their Graces by such an epithet as Hereditary Wreckers, and proposes that parliamentary bills be referred for approval not to them but to the people. Referendum instead of Lords, the people instead of dukes—what a world of difference. And it must come so. In spite of all reactions of royal parades and imperialism it has been inevitable since the Reform Bill of '32. It is the natural evolution of democracy.

J. H. DILLARD.

### EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

#### DIRECT LEGISLATION IN DELAWARE.

Wilmington, June 10.—Gov. Lee has signed the bill for submitting to the people of Delaware at the next general election the question of instituting a system of advisory initiative and referendum, the passage of which by the legislature was noted in *The Public* of April 1st (vol. vii., p. 823). The earlier part of the work for this reform was begun before I engaged in it. As near as I can tell, it was begun by the farmers in Kent County. But a little over a year ago a number of men, nearly all of whom were single tax men, met and advised that on account of experiences in endeavoring to promote the single tax cause in the State of Delaware in the past, we needed direct legislation. It was decided then to form an organization for the purpose of promoting direct legislation in some manner, and of this organization I was elected president. For a long time there was considerable difference of opinion and uncertainty as to the best method of procedure. Literature on the general

subject was distributed in every house in Wilmington, and to almost every house in Dover, and in other parts of the State, but not in a very thorough manner. A tentative canvass was made on a certain street which was considered to be a fair average sample of the city. This showed 30 per cent. of the voters willing to vote for direct legislation, even though they did not vote with their party. In addition, 20 per cent. favored it, but were not willing to vote outside of their own party. The rest either would not express an opinion or could not be reached for an interview. The canvass disclosed sufficient interest to make it worth while to go ahead.

So letters were written to the newspapers, and the editors were visited by persons capable of treating them in a friendly way and of making a good impression. All newspapers in the city of Wilmington were influenced in favor of the work.

The legal aspect of direct legislation was carefully examined, and it was found that the constitution of Delaware does not admit of anything of the kind, and an amendment would take nearly six years to become effective. On account of this, it was decided to make the attempt at having the constitution amended, but meantime to go ahead and do the best that could be done to awaken popular interest. It was thought that it would be better to get some measure passed by the legislature, even though the measure was not very effective, than to make a trial for an effective measure, and not have it passed; therefore, the bill offered to the legislature was merely one to submit to the voters at the next general election the question, Shall the General Assembly institute a system of advisory initiative and advisory referendum?

In case of the passage of such a bill, the next legislature would not be bound by it, i. e., they would not be compelled to establish the system, even though the voters wished it. The reason for this is that it has been well established in law that no legislature can do anything to bind another legislature. However, it was thought that a popular vote would have considerable moral force, and, besides this, the getting of any measure through the legislature would increase the respect of persons generally for those engaged in the movement, thereby insuring them a larger following than they might otherwise have.

A dinner was given, to which were invited a number of prominent people of Wilmington, the Mayor and the City Council being included. Mr. J. Z. White, of Chicago, was asked to explain the subject at this dinner. This he did very well, and the affair was considered a success. Many persons who did not expect to take

interest in it were convinced of the importance of direct legislation.

Questions were sent to the candidates asking them if elected whether they would vote for the proposed measure. Answers were received in the affirmative from 20 per cent. of the candidates, and the rest did not answer, except in one case where a candidate answered no. This candidate was not elected. During the heat of the election period little was done besides writing letters to the newspapers, which are thought to have produced considerable effect.

The measure was introduced in the Senate by a Republican. After its introduction Mr. J. Z. White was asked to make a special visit and address the members of the legislature on the subject. An appointment was made, and Mr. White addressed both Houses just after one of the sessions, making an address of about 15 minutes. All members seem to have been pleased with what he said, and many expressed regret that he did not speak longer.

Following this, the bill was brought to a vote. It passed the Senate by 11 yeas to 4 nays. One of the Representatives who was known to be favorable to the measure, also a Republican, was asked to look after the bill in the House. The bill was brought before the House and was passed unanimously. It may be said, however, that the best friend the measure had in the Senate, and, in fact, in the legislature, was one of the Democratic Senators, and it was at his suggestion that a Republican Senator was asked to introduce it. Care was taken all along not to make it a Democratic party measure.

The Governor having, much to his honor, signed the bill, what remains to be done is to create a sufficient interest in direct legislation between now and the next general election, about 18 months hence, to insure a general popular vote in its favor.

Ways and means of accomplishing this end have been carefully considered, but plans have not as yet been definitely formulated. In general, the following observations may be made. It is a mistake to assume that men of the leading classes are opposed to democratic ideas. Such an assumption frequently has the effect of making them oppose those ideas when under normal conditions they would not. It is very easy to associate democratic ideas with agitations distasteful to persons brought up as they are. As a rule, the great average of these people will adopt anything which is the fashion, and it is just as easy by proper management to make a democratic reform fashionable as not. At any rate it is well to repeat that it is altogether unnecessary and of no advantage whatever to excite their opposition.

When it came to the actual work to be done, it was found that the only persons who would go into it and do anything were single tax men, and perhaps one or two socialists. But contributions could be obtained from almost anyone with the usual difficulties.

F. I. DU PONT.

## NEWS NARRATIVE

Week ending Thursday, June 10.

### Norway and Sweden.

Since Norway's declaration dissolving her union with Sweden (p. 150), voluminous news dispatches have been cabled from both countries, but they have reported little but gossip and rumors. The future relations of the two countries are still unsettled and doubtful.

One specific event in furtherance of the dissolution occurred on the 9th. The Norwegians formally substituted for the union flag, the distinctive flag of Norway. At Akershus fort, Christiana, the ceremony of lowering the union flag which had floated there since 1814 and running up the Norwegian tri-color, was attended and applauded by 30,000 people, including the members of the Norwegian Storting.

Another event of significance was an informal declaration by the Swedish prime minister, published at Stockholm on the 12th, that the Swedish government will refuse to recognize the independence of Norway, and that motions to this effect will be submitted to the Swedish Diet when it meets in extraordinary session. This indication of the probable attitude of the Swedish government was confirmed on the 13th in a formal announcement by King Oscar in the nature of a defense, in which he said:

It remains for Sweden and for me as king of the union to decide whether the attack by Norway on the existing union shall lead to the legal dissolution of that union.

It was further confirmed by the publication, also on the 13th, of the following official circular which had been sent to all the Swedish and Norwegian consuls representing the union abroad:

After the Norwegian Storting had established a provisional government for Norway and in connection therewith declared the union with Sweden dissolved, the Swedish government decided not to recognize said provisional government. You are therefore instructed to continue the exercise of the functions constitutionally devolving on you as Swedish as well as Norwegian consuls, with this restriction, that you must not enter into communication with the illegal Norwegian government or obey its orders. In all emergencies you must apply to the ministry of foreign affairs for instructions.

Protests against recognition of Norway were filed by Sweden about the same date, with foreign nations. The King had already, on the 9th, refused to receive an official deputation from Norway. His telegraphic reply to the president of the Norwegian Storting was as follows:

As I do not recognize the revolutionary steps which the Storting in violation of the constitution and act of union and in revolt against its king has unfortunately taken, I decline to receive the deputation.

### Russia.

The Zemstvo congress in illegal session last week at Moscow (p. 151) has adopted an address to the Czar, which, though suppressed in the regular newspapers of Russia by orders of the police, has been privately circulated throughout Russia, and parts of it have gone abroad in news dispatches. It is said to be a long document, describing the danger of the present situation both in foreign and in domestic affairs, condemning the bureaucracy, warning the Czar that the police are preventing the truth from reaching him, and petitioning as follows:

Sire, before it is too late for the welfare of Russia, command a convocation of representatives of the nation, elected by equal franchise, and let these elected representatives decide with you the vital question of war or peace, thus transforming the war into a national one. Let them establish an agreement with you, a renovated national organization.

A deputation of ten delegates, headed by Count Hayden and Mr. Shipoff, was appointed by the congress to present the address to the Czar. No indication of its presentation has yet been reported, although some dispatches mentioned the 13th as the day on which the Czar had agreed to re-