

the Senate should not only give equal representation to the several States as such, but that it should also especially represent property. It was even suggested that the President should be worth not less than one hundred thousand dollars, a judge fifty thousand, and congressmen a proportionate sum. One member of the convention wished «the Senate to bear as strong a likeness as possible to the British House of Lords, and to consist of men distinguished for their rank in life and their weight of property.» This was not because of devotion to merely selfish property interests, but for the same reason that some of the fathers of the republic desired that the voters of the United States should be freeholders, believing that they would be «the best guardians of liberty.»

It was Benjamin Franklin who said, in opposition to the property qualification for members of the government: «If honesty is often the companion of wealth, and if poverty is exposed to peculiar temptation, the possession of property increases the desire for more. Some of the greatest rogues I was ever acquainted with were the richest rogues.» The property qualification was not adopted; but although there are probably not as many very rich men in the Senate as is popularly supposed, there has grown up, strangely enough, a property representation in the Senate, not at all in the interest of liberty and good government. There seems, indeed, to be color for the suspicion that the old method of corporations, capitalists, and speculators, in employing professional lobbyists or attorneys for either corrupt or legitimate legislative uses, has been in part, though not wholly, superseded in the State legislatures and in Congress. In the case of State legislatures it is well known that nowadays a great deal of «protection» is secured to corporate or large private interests by means of so-called political contributions (really blackmail) to the State bosses, whose creatures in the legislature can be relied upon for services in emergencies. A corporation magnate either has himself elected by a subservient legislature to the United States Senate, or he procures through local committees the election of senators who are sure to take a favorable view of legislation in which he and his friends are interested. There is probably much less bribery of the old-fashioned, brutal kind in Congress than there was thirty years or so ago; there is less corruption there in general. There are few men in the Senate who are under gross suspicion; but there are, in addition to these, senators whose conduct in relation to legislation in which they or their backers are interested may be said, in the language of moderation, to be indelicate; there are enough of both classes to create scandal, and largely to account for the wide and most unfortunate ill repute into which the Senate has fallen.

One of our leading and most thoughtful statesmen, still active in politics and affairs, said the other day that he had no desire to enter the Senate; he could do his work outside of it, and would not then be subject to the ill repute that attaches to that body. He thought the Senate deserved its present most unfortunate reputation—a reputation more unfortunate for the country and for our system of government than for the particular body or individuals affected.

We have no desire to overrate existing evils in the

Senate or elsewhere in our machinery of government. If one representative body in America is, for the time being, neither in its membership, methods, nor action what it should be, it is the fault more of the people than of the system, though a more popular system of electing senators may be desirable. As for the people, they are not fairly represented by the Senate as a whole only because they refuse to take political matters to heart, except in great emergencies. No one has a right to criticize the Senate, or anything else of which he thinks ill in national, State, or city government, unless he himself is doing his full duty as a citizen. Indifference, neglect, on the part of the voter account for most of our troubles. The people of the cities are beginning to take hold of local government more generally and with greater earnestness. Perhaps it is by this way that will come our deliverance from the evils of our national politics.

The Forest Commission's Great Public Service.

AT first glance it might seem that the action of Congress during the extra session, in suspending all but two of the Western forest reserves, proclaimed by President Cleveland on the 22d of February on the recommendation of the Forest Commission of the National Academy of Sciences, was a staggering defeat of this important cause. On closer consideration, we do not share this opinion. Mr. Cleveland's action was not only patriotic in itself, but, following upon the reserves previously proclaimed by himself and by Mr. Harrison, it sets a standard of progress which will be constantly in the mind of President McKinley, upon whose administration the responsibility now rests of dealing with this belated and critical problem. To the objection that the plan for the reserves was of too great extent (posterity will doubtless pronounce it blamable moderation) the reply is that some such large scheme was needed to arouse the public, and especially the West, to consider at all the need of a conservative policy toward the national forests. This objection was doubtless expected by the commission, in view of the fact that the lands are still unsurveyed, and the mere rectification of their frontiers would have disappointed nobody. The hardships upon the settler might easily have been repaired without suspending the reserves. That these hardships should have existed is an indictment of Congress in general for its long-continued neglect to enact a just administrative system for the reserves, and particularly of certain Western senators who have defeated it.

But if the Senate has not been convinced,—and again the House of Representatives has proved itself the more conservative body,—the country is being rapidly educated. The net result of the several debates in the two houses is that every community in the Northwest has been busy with the discussion of the subject; and while, for the most part, the drift of sentiment has been in opposition to the reserves, yet after the clamor of the small and noisy class of those who are for «the old flag and an appropriation,» has subsided, the good sense of the self-sustaining American will assert itself. It will then be discovered that, after all, the truest friends of the West are not the so-called «practical» men who are willing to draw upon her dwindling forest capital until it is exhausted, but the alleged «theorists» who wish to see it

securely cared for in a way that will yield interest for all time. In fact, the poor-settler argument, which was urged upon Congress with lacrymose sentimentality and a wordy sort of patriotism very like «flapdoodle,» should have fallen to the ground before the known willingness of the friends of the reserves to provide for all reasonable local needs.

For all agree that forests do not exist simply to give greater variety to a map. They are of use solely to minister to the needs of the people. What could be more «practical» or more liberal in its consideration of the settler and miner than the view of the province of these reserves as set forth by the «theorists» of the Forest Commission? We quote from their report to the Secretary of the Interior on May 1, 1897:

A study of the forest reserves in their relations to the general development and welfare of the country shows that the segregations of these great bodies of reserved lands cannot be withdrawn from all occupation and use, and that they must be made to perform their part in the economy of the nation. According to a strict interpretation of the rulings of the Department of the Interior, no one has a right to enter a forest reserve, to cut a single tree from its forests, or to examine its rocks in search of valuable minerals. Forty million acres of land are thus theoretically shut out from all human occupation or enjoyment. Such a condition of things should not continue, for unless the reserved lands of the public domain are made to contribute to the welfare and prosperity of the country, they should be thrown open to settlement and the whole system of reserved forests abandoned. Land more valuable for its mineral deposits, or for the production of agricultural crops, than for its timber, should be taken from the reservations and sold to miners and farmers, the mature timber should be cut and sold, settlers within or adjacent to the boundaries, unable to procure it in other ways, should be authorized to take such material from reserved forests as is necessary for their needs, and prospectors should be allowed to search them for minerals.

And yet, in the face of this declaration, which is embodied in the legislation adopted, an alliance of the West and the South succeeded in rallying twenty-five votes in favor of the total abolition of the reserves. This is all the more remarkable because the vote was taken at the very time when Congress was giving great attention to the relief of the sufferers by the Mississippi floods, the chief object to be attained by the reserves being the prevention of similar calamities. It was the blind leading the blind. Mr. Cable's remark that «a man may be depended upon to shoot away from the uniform he has on» seems to be in need of revision.

An even greater public service on the part of the commission is the thorough treatment of the forest problem in the report from which we have quoted. This is the first time, we believe, in the official history of the government when there has been anything like an adequate grappling with this question. The report covers succinctly the whole field, with significant reference to the costly experiments of other countries in retrieving calamities similar to those which are impending here, and sets forth with graphic detail the unceasing dangers which menace the forests from fire, nomadic sheep-husbandry, and the depredations of mines and lumber companies. This would, however, be of little value were it not supplemented by the proposal of a practical system of forest preservation, both temporary and permanent, carefully thought out by men whose business it has

been to make a study of this topic. The heart of this system is *control which rests on the moral and physical support of the army*. This was to have been expected: for, indeed, there can be no other conclusion when it is considered that the dangers to be provided for are those which largely involve in the rank and file intelligent police service, and in the administrative officers cultivated intelligence, firm adhesion to duty, and removal from temptations to corruption. All these qualities experience shows to be characteristic of the army. No progress can be made that is not based on the fundamental principle that local control of national interests is invariably had control. The system recommended by the commission, while it would admit of the enlistment of local forest guards, would insure a trained and intelligent supervision on the part of army officers—a desideratum, in our opinion, not to be obtained from any system of civil administration.

It is to be hoped that Congress will not consider that its duty to the forests ends with the suspension of the new reserves and the enactment of a system of temporary rules for the old. The question should be studied in exactly the spirit in which it has been studied by the commission, and it should be recognized that the problem is one of such enormous importance as to justify a prompt but careful working out in legislation of the principles recommended by the report. When it is remembered that the members of the commission—of whom Professor Charles S. Sargent is chairman—have given their eminent services without compensation, they should at least receive at the hands of Congress the gratitude and compliment of consideration for their ideas.

Meantime, as the subject is likely to be before the people from now until the 1st of next March, when the act of suspension is to terminate, we may renew our hope that it will receive also from the commercial and educational institutions of the country the attention commensurate with its importance. The report of the Forest Commission is to be obtained from the Secretary of the Interior, and it ought to be in the hands of every newspaper, board of trade, chamber of commerce, scientific body, and educational institution in the country.

Memorable Words.

MANY things combined to make the ceremonies connected with the unveiling of St. Gaudens's monument to Robert Gould Shaw on Memorial day, in Boston, an occasion of unusual significance and importance. As the readers of the *JUNE CENTURY* had special opportunity to learn, not only were the deed and the hero, or rather the heroes, well worthy of a splendid memorial, but the monument itself was well worthy of the persons and the action commemorated. The latter is a point often curiously neglected, it being apparently, in the opinion of many promoters of such memorials, an absolutely unimportant detail, as if one statue were as good as another. The general interest in, and universal praise of, so noble a work of art as this by St. Gaudens should be the means of setting a standard in the matter of public monuments which committees cannot disregard.

It was one of the felicities of the occasion that the sculptor was not overlooked, as is frequently the case. Again and again the heartiest acknowledgment was made of the evident fact that a masterpiece of modern