

any candidate "may make a voluntary payment of money, or a voluntary and unconditional promise of payment of money, to a political committee for the promotion of the principles of the party which the committee represents, and for the general purposes of the committee."

We regard this last quoted provision as the chief defect in the measure. Under it any candidate may give a large lump sum, which, though professedly given voluntarily, will really be the price which he will pay for his nomination. The law seems thus to sanction and legalize the "assessment" evil, which is one of the most objectionable in modern politics. To be sure, the report of the committee will show the exact amount of this contribution, and the exact uses to which it is put, but experience with the New York law has shown that candidates do not shrink from this exposure so far as it reveals the sums which they give. Candidates will be forced, not directly, but none the less surely, to pay the expenses of the campaign, and as no limit is placed upon these, it will follow under the new law, as under the old, that in many cases the man who pays the highest price for the nomination will be likely to get it.

The provision which permits candidates to incur personal expenses without including such in their returns is also susceptible of abuse. In striking at the corrupt uses of money in our elections we cannot do better than to follow the English statute, for that has accomplished completely what we are striving for—the annihilation of the evils. The English act compels the complete publication of every penny received and spent, personally or otherwise, in promoting an election, and it fixes a maximum limit in each case beyond which the total expenditure must not be carried. Until we carry our laws to the same extreme, we must be prepared to see them only partly successful in practice, merely restricting the evils somewhat, but not eradicating them.

Road-Building Exhibit at Chicago.¹

ALTHOUGH the advocates of good roads were unable to induce Congress at its last session to pass a bill appropriating one million dollars for a special building to be used for a comprehensive road-building exhibit at the World's Fair in Chicago, they are not discouraged. They propose to renew their request at the present session, and though they may not succeed in getting it granted, they declare their purpose of making an exhibit. If they cannot get a building, they will use tents, or some other inexpensive method of inclosure, and they will have a mile or more of roadways in various stages of construction.

This is a patriotic determination. That there is a great and steadily increasing interest in the subject of good roads was shown in a very striking manner by the memorial which the advocates of the proposed exhibit sent to Congress. It was a pamphlet of more than one hundred pages, and contained letters of approval from the President and several members of his cabinet, a large number of senators and congressmen, the governors of nearly all the States, the mayors of many

leading cities, prominent army officers, and the presidents of our leading colleges. All these persons expressed hearty sympathy with the movement, and declared their conviction that no more worthy or patriotic cause could be represented at the Fair. These letters, accompanied as they were by a great mass of favorable newspaper comment, gave most encouraging evidence that public sentiment in all parts of the country has been aroused to the pressing need of road reform, and to the importance of using the best means for bringing it about.

What the advocates of good roads propose is a comprehensive exhibit of all that is known of scientific road-building, which will serve as a school of instruction to the thousands of Americans who will visit the Fair. They will give sample sections of the best road-construction in this country and in Europe. They will have skilled workmen actually engaged in constructing sections of the various kinds of roads, the most expensive and the cheapest as well, and will have competent engineers and chemists in attendance to explain the process of building the roads, constructing artificial stone, and preparing cements. All machinery used in the work, and the various kinds of material, will be seen in daily practical operation. In short, the visitor who wishes to see not only what a scientific road is, but the exact way in which it is built, will have full opportunity of doing so.

It is scarcely necessary to comment upon the great public value of such an exhibit. Thousands of men in all parts of the land will have their interest in the subject not only aroused to fresh activity, but directed in intelligent channels toward the accomplishment of the most desirable results. Road-building will receive a truly national impulse, with the ultimate effect of incalculably increasing the happiness as well as the prosperity of the whole people. It is not improbable that the people of the United States, now slowly awaking to the fact that they are more than one hundred years behind other civilized countries in the science of road-building, may date the general beginning of their determination to catch up with the rest of the world in this matter from the World's Fair of 1893.

That we are far behind other nations in the construction of our highways no one denies, but few persons realize how long the older countries of the world have been engaged in the work of scientific road-building. In that delightful book, "Young's Travels in France," we come almost constantly upon such tributes to the roads of that country as the following, under date of June 9, 1787:

The immense view from the descent to Donzenac is equally magnificent. To all this is added the finest road in the world, everywhere formed in the most perfect manner, and kept in the highest preservation, like the well-ordered alley of a garden, without dust, sand, stones, or inequality, firm and level, of pounded granite, and traced with such a perpetual command of prospect, that had the engineer no other object in view, he could not have executed it with a more finished taste.

That was written over a hundred years ago about a road which had been built long before, yet it will stand to-day as a perfect description of the best road which modern science is able to construct. What a civilizing influence such a road must be in any country through which it runs!

¹ See also "Our Common Roads" in *THE CENTURY* for April, 1892.