in active politics than investigating and reporting on candidates for city and county offices. Its work has been very effective, and the league in the future must be reckoned with by political parties.

Pittsburgh has suffered much from machine rule, but from the recent mayoralty election it is apparent that the honest voters of the community have discovered that they can elect their own officers. For the future it is believed that no machine will be able to entrench itself so substantially that it cannot be dislodged.

NEW ORLEANS

a CITIZENS' PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION.

b CITIZENS' LEAGUE.

By JAMES J. McLOUGHLIN, New Orleans, La.

The reform element in municipal elections in New Orleans has been spasmodic in its manifestations. The city being overwhelmingly Democratic in its politics, of course all reform movements to be successful must be within the party, and whenever they have succeeded, they have worked in line with the principles of the national Democratic party.

In 1888 the first reform movement of any consequence began; it was organized under the name of the "Young Men's Democratic Association," was formed within the party, and was composed principally of citizens of means and influence. Their organization was throughout the entire city, and was in a sense semi-military in this, that armed guards were used at all polls where trouble was anticipated, to ensure an honest count of the votes. The election was won by the reformers, and their government controlled the city for four years. This "Young Men's Democratic Association" was purely a local affair, taking no part in state or national politics, and during the four years of its office-holding it lost most of its virility through inaction on the part of the better element of citizens of the city, and in 1892 one of the worst municipal tickets ever known was put before the people by the regular party and was elected.

This administration had not been in office very long before rumors of corruption were in the air. A franchise was granted to a railroad company to run its tracks through one of the most aristocratic residence avenues of the city. The franchise was of enormous value and covered some of the most valuable and influential sections of the city. The people were aroused at this grant on the part of the Council, and demands were made for the repeal of the ordinance. Immediately the "Citizens' Protective Association" took the matter up, and almost the entire Council was indicted, some of them being sent to the penitentiary. The Mayor was impeached before the court, but the court acquitted him on the ground that what he had done was done upon the advice of his counsel. The association, which was formed primarily

to punish these corrupt officials, grew in numbers, and was converted into the "Citizens' League," which led the next reform movement, in 1896.

It was carefully organized, with a central body and branches in each ward. Wealthy citizens contributed large sums of money, and as the months passed by it was seen that this association had gotten control of many of the wards of the city. The evidence of corruption brought out in the trials of the Councilmen and Mayor no doubt contributed largely to the success of the "Citizens' League."

In the election of 1896 the league elected twenty-seven of the thirty City Councilmen and all of its usual ticket.

Its plan of organization was, while nominally independent of both parties, still to retain the support of both. In this election of 1896 the "Citizens' League" carried the city of New Orleans for the Legislature, and its members in the Legislature secured a new city charter, which was a vast improvement upon the old one. As the state election was a close one, the Republican candidates coming within a few thousand votes (some say even closer than that) of being elected, the independents sought to elect a United States Senator, and came within one vote of electing their man to the United States Senate. This was their greatest achievement outside of the municipal government.

They controlled the city for four years, from 1896 to 1900, and it is agreed by all parties that the "Citizens' League" administration was the best ever known in the history of New Orleans. This administration carried into execution the sewerage and drainage scheme, by which the city of New Orleans will spend \$16,000,000 under a non-partisan board for sewerage and water.

An attempt was made to make this "Citizens' League" a permanent independent movement. The league was incorporated; but towards the end of its administration politics began to creep in, and the leader of the league, who successfully led it through a victorious campaign, deserted its colors, and, with a number of followers, went over to the regular Democratic party. This, and a widespread belief amongst a large number of people that the "Citizens' League" Mayor was in sympathy with certain corporations, contributed materially to the defeat of the league in 1900. Again, in 1904, an independent movement, including some of the old reform element, took up the municipal campaign, but the regular party was so well organized, and the people were so generally apathetic, that the result was a complete victory for the regulars. Since then nothing has been done to organize a distinct reform movement, although several suggestions have been made by various prominent citizens.

One peculiarity of the local situation which makes it difficult to organize a successful reform movement is our poll tax law. Under the laws of Louisiana no one can vote unless he has paid poll taxes for the two preceding years. In other words, in order to take part in the elections of 1906, he must have paid his poll taxes for 1904 and 1905 during those two years; he cannot pay them after the last day of the year for which they are levied.

Consequently, citizens have to prepare themselves two years in advance in order to be legal voters. Many of our most prominent citizens neglect to pay this poll tax and, consequently, are disqualified from voting. The president of the cotton exchange the other day was pronounced ineligible for election to a State Financial Board because he had not paid his poll tax for 1904. The result of this is that when some great popular movement arises, the citizens who compose it find themselves in a position where they cannot vote, because they neglected to pay their poll tax.

At present the great era of material prosperity which seems to prevail in New Orleans has taken possession of the better element of the city, and they take little part in politics, and the regular ward politicians have no opposition to their schemes of government.

Nevertheless, and beyond it all, I believe that our present municipal government is less corrupt than that of almost any of the large cities, and, as for actual bribery, I think that has passed away with the great victory of the "Citizens' League" when it drove out of office, and to the penitentiary, the corrupt officials of that day.

Our present City Council, while not to be compared with the "Citizens' League" government of eight years ago, is nevertheless a fairly good working one, and I think it is doing all it can, hampered as it is by its traditions and the manner in which it was chosen, to give the people of New Orleans a fairly good system of municipal rule.

MINNEAPOLIS

VOTERS' LEAGUE.

By S. P. JONES, Secretary Voters' League, Minneapolis, Minn.

Only one civic organization participated in the last municipal election in Minneapolis, that of 1904—the Minneapolis Voters' League.

This is an organization enlisted for practical and permanent effort for good municipal government in Minneapolis and Hennepin county. It works along exclusively non-partisan lines and confines its activities to the election of members of the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners, limiting its work chiefly to the investigation of the records and qualifications of candidates and publication of the same to the world through the local papers. The league co-operates with all existing party organizations, endorsing and supporting for nomination and election the men who, regardless of their party affiliations, are, in its judgment, best qualified for public service.

The Voters' League is a strongly centralized organization. Its immediate sponsors were sixty-five prominent business and professional men of Minneapolis. From this number an executive committee of seven was selected to shape the policy and to direct the details of the work. This committee is self-perpetuating and wholly independent of all direction from any source.

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