

hands of honest law-enforcers and in making certain that there shall be no miscarriage of justice through the non-feasance of those whose sworn duty it is to administer justice. With funds sufficient to sustain this inquiry the duty of driving crooks and grafters out of public office is directly placed on

those who have sworn to do their duty by the public!"

Can the creators of political "machines" and their creatures ignore that challenge? And can the grafters continue confident that they will be given: "Immunity or absolution—which?"

## Can Chicago Clean Up?

### CONCLUSION.

Can Chicago clean up?

To the ultimate degree that Chicagoans wish it to be clean! To a degree measured only by the manner in which the men and women of Chicago and Cook county meet their responsibilities and exercise their rights as citizens to vote at all elections, and thus force the naming of honest and efficient officials.

Everything is comparative, especially in a city such as the Chicago of to-day, a city slowly and painfully cleansing itself of civic sores, that were fed from the cancer—graft. And so the things that were commonplace in the community one year ago must be contrasted with conditions as they are after six months of cleaning out the cesspools, if the cleanup is to continue.

Can Chicago clean up? Consider the results already accomplished by an aroused civic conscience and a powerful public opinion that to-day is standing solidly behind the man who means to enforce the law—Mayor Dever.

Out of a miasma of malfeasance, corruption and conscienceless evasion of duty by county, state and federal officials, there has come a clearcut challenge to the citizenship of Chicago, Cook county and Illinois from a courageous executive in the city hall, who recognizes a paramount public duty to enforce the law, regardless of personal preferences and political pressure.

### Law and Order Basis of Society.

Law and order are the substructure of society. On the security of life, property and person depends everything good in government, and in evasion and violation of the law are to be found retrogression and ruin.

Regardless of the rotten condition of the body politic proved to have existed in Chicago for years the writer is hopeful that there is a cure for the civic cancer—and that the cure is slowly but surely being effected. Chicago has not and will not go to "the dogs" so long as

a decent citizenship will support its servants in public office who put law enforcement and the discharge of their duty above political aggrandizement and personal interest.

Even in the Criminal court building, sharply contrasted with the conditions incidental to vice and graft investigations of which I have spoken in unsparring terms, there has been a remarkable record of results in the last two years as regards the prosecution and punishment of crime.

To the members of the state's attorney's trial staff headed by First Assistant Edgar A. Jonas as well as to the personnel of the Criminal court judiciary for the years 1922 and 1923 the writers desires again to acknowledge his recognition of a great public service. Untiringly that first assistant to the public prosecutor, Mr. Jonas, has labored to build up the energy and efficiency of an arm of the court without which any effective effort at law-enforcement through prosecution of crime would have been impossible.

### 2,745 Indictments in Year.

It is in the speedy trial of all criminal cases and the energetic enforcement of all law that any assurance of safety for the community must be found. During the year ended Aug. 1, 1923, there were 2,745 indictments disposed of in the Criminal court with a consequent reduction of pending criminal cases to the lowest level in twenty years—from 1,460 to 660. There were 1,227 defendants convicted, of whom 953 were sentenced to penal institutions, ten to death. There were 264 acquittals.

For the first time in many years it was possible to give any defendant who desired it, a trial within thirty days of indictment. That is the summarized story of one "cleanup" that came from the close co-operation between the judges of the Criminal court and the prosecuting staff.

Many times throughout the months since Chicago awoke to an understand-

ing of what was wrong with it internally I have asked myself the question: "What is needed most to bring about a cleanup of conditions?"

Can it be said that more law is needed—more agencies of government—more money to provide means of enforcing the law? Certainly not in a city such as Chicago where millions are at hand and there is more machinery of government than in any other American city except New York.

#### **Not All Due to "Politicians."**

In a community where common honesty and common sense among public officials have been conspicuously absent in the past it seems to me at least that the root of the evils of maladministration, waste and graft cannot honestly be said to spring solely from the original sins of "politicians."

It goes deeper than that in any American community of importance where there has been for years a rule over the majority by a minority of the voters—not alone through any debauchery of the election machinery but because of a surrender by so-called "good citizens" of their right to vote at all.

Good men and women in any city are overwhelmingly in the majority, I have found, in every instance where public opinion could be crystallized. The bad minority which has ruled, however, is always united and at all times energetic, shrewd and efficient in getting out its entire strength.

There are approximately 1,000,000 registered men and women voters in Chicago and Cook county, without taking into consideration the 200,000 or 300,000 unregistered voters of the "country towns" of the county. Yet there has seldom been a total vote to exceed 500,000 or 50 per cent of those qualified in Chicago alone. The condition is not peculiar to Chicago, for even at that record-breaking presidential election of 1920 there were only 26,654,866 votes cast out of 54,442,332 men and women of voting age in the United States. President Harding was elected by an 8,000,000 majority—yet his total vote was only one-third of the grand total of citizens who could have voted for their highest public official—but didn't.

#### **No "Cleanup" Except at Polls.**

In America no "cleanup" in civic affairs can come to a successful conclusion anywhere but at the ballot-box. Yet we find a vast, unorganized majority of the voters, uninformed as to the things that underlie local govern-

ment, acquiescing in anything that a mobile minority chooses to do.

Politics cannot be blamed exclusively for conditions which come upon a community through the failure of the majority of its "good citizens" to go to the polls and vote. The good citizen who is too good to take an interest in American politics is too good to be an American citizen.

We do not need new laws so much as we need the enforcement of those that are now on the statute books. There have been both too much law-making and too much law-breaking in Chicago and Illinois as well as the nation. The national tendency has been to legislative "cure-alls" for any and every condition of community life as well as the regulation and restriction of every habit of individual life.

Still it must be recognized that the restriction of "personal liberty" has come because we have had too many citizens who have taken liberties with that liberty. All laws look "blue" to the individuals who break them and there can be no piecemeal enforcement of law and order. Easy nullification of the law—of any law—is perhaps the greatest of modern evils in a community such as Chicago. In its wake has come the inevitable reaction to excessive and in some cases, mischievous interference by lawmakers with "personal liberty."

#### **Must Act at Every Election.**

There is no cure-all for "Crime and the Civic Cancer—Graft" other than that which is always at hand for an intelligent public—the pressure of an aroused opinion against vicious and venal acts by public officials. And that opinion is impotent unless it makes itself manifest by expression at each and every election.

What this or any other city needs isn't an "eruption" in politics but less corruption in politicians who have been elected to positions of trust. Chicago "always gets the government it deserves"—it has been said with considerable conviction to support the saying—but that is a cynicism that I have found to be wholly false.

In the war against commercialized vice last winter I learned as chief justice of the Criminal court that Chicago could "clean up" a civic sore that was the most shameful condition which could come upon a community.

Within the short space of three or four months I had presented to me two contrasting reports from the Juvenile Protective association—the first in January and the second late in March. At

the beginning of this year there were between 500 and 1,000 open and notorious places of prostitution in Chicago, protected by the police, paying tribute to police and politicians and feeding the civic cancer with millions of dollars and thousands of votes, recruited from the ranks of vice-lords and their subjects.

#### **City Called Cleanest of Size.**

To-day I am told by the Juvenile Protective association and the Illinois Vigilance association that Chicago is the cleanest city in America of its size from the standpoint of vice. What brought this "cleanup?"

Certainly it was not indictment and prosecution in the Criminal court of Cook county for the panders, prostitutes and police protectors. Nor was it alone the energetic campaign of eradication ordered by the new mayor of Chicago.

To some newspapers of Chicago can be credited any cleanup that has come to this city through an aroused public opinion. Many times in the months since graft, vice and a criminal conspiracy between political overlords and public officials first began to be uncovered, I have asked myself the question: "What wouldn't they have done if it were not for the papers?"

The professional politician could not be blamed alone if an apathetic public had tacitly thrown up the job of governing itself. The public could have had little chance to learn the results of its apathy and indifference and to become aroused to action against the administrators of public affairs who had betrayed their trust—had not the newspapers undertaken the task of treating the civic cancer with the radium of exposure and publicity.

The pendulum of public opinion has been swinging against the prostitution of public office for some six months and the results are beginning to be seen. Certainly signs of the "cleanup" are in evidence and considerable has been accomplished since the school-graft scandal and the special grand jury's revelations drove a disgraceful set of spailsmen out of office.

#### **Only a Beginning Made.**

The business of boodling is no longer an industry protected by politicians in power, an honest administration of municipal affairs has succeeded the spoils machine of Thompson-Lundin—and yet there has been only a beginning. There will be no cleanup of every corner of public service and public trust until community interest and the civic conscience can be quickened to a degree that will make itself manifest at each and every election.

There can be no bribery of public officials if business men recognize the fact that the official who is bribed or "influenced" to illegitimate acts is no worse than the one who bribed him.

So long as the business man and the better citizen tolerate by inaction conditions that could not continue to exist if they would only discharge the duties of citizenship—there can be no permanent cleanup in Chicago. We do not need any politics in either our religious or business life but we do need all the religion and business we can get into politics.

Partisan politics is a permanent and potentially valuable influence in our civic life. It provides the processes and the machinery for the selection of public officials—without a political system there could be no such thing as an intelligent selection of candidates for public office.

#### **Some Love Politics as Game.**

There are many politicians—not all of them of my own party—who are in the "game" because they enjoy the and the recognition that comes from success in any endeavor. These men put more of their time and money into the work of up-building of "organizations" than they ever take out either in power, prestige or in pecuniary returns.

The writer as well as every other judge of a court in Cook county is a product of the partisan political system—but he is not necessarily a pawn on a political chessboard. He has been criticized and condemned at times throughout the last two years in the Criminal court and told he has "made more enemies than any other judge on the bench."

So be it. He has also been told in thousands of letters from the mothers and fathers of Chicago—from the moral leaders of the community and the business men and public officials whose good opinion he values that his work in the Criminal court has not been entirely in vain. If in the telling of the story of "Crime and the Civic Cancer—Graft," he has accomplished anything further in awakening the public to the perils that constantly menace good government in Chicago he is content.

To the thousands of enemies he may have made the writer has only this to say; the encouragement and commendation contained in one heart-felt consoling letter from only one Christian mother in Chicago more than compensates for the curses and jeers of 10,000 lawbreakers.

(THE END.)