

The Primaries

REGARDLESS of the factional tugging at the lines, we shall, in all probability, retain and safeguard the instrumentalities of self-government in America which permit free and untrammelled popular expression. The direct primary election methods may not suit those who belong to the convention school of thought, but there is little likelihood that the people will give up any of the prerogatives of the primary.

America's government is built on a representative plan, but the right to elect the representatives rests with the people. Every citizen of America has a right to offer himself to his constituency as a candidate for political service, subject to the laws governing qualifications for office.

Citizens, or groups of citizens, have the right to issue recommendations of candidates in the field, but the people are jealously guarding the right of choice and elimination.

The doctrines of party must hereafter become popular issues, or party government in America will come to have little significance in the choice of representatives. A party cause is no longer an issue with a few; if it is to succeed, it must be placed squarely before the people and cloaked in language that is unmistakably clear.

The people have outgrown the party bosses. They prefer to make the candidate for office responsible to the people rather than to the bosses of the party, who are responsible to no one.

There are no roads leading back to either the party caucus or the party "convention." These instruments are a thing of the past. The middle man has been dismissed. In his manipulations he failed to recognize the rights of the people and the people in turn abolished his office and took away his power.

The direct primary, however, calls for greater individual responsibility and greater individual political intelligence. Only those who give thought and attention to political issues and men will help to strengthen government in America. Those who are careless and indifferent will be responsible should we fail.

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL SUBJECTS—

The Americanization Preceptor who Speaks without Knowledge; How Slow is Thy Pace, O American Justice; An Immigrant with a Will to Succeed; Those who Protect us while we Sleep; Not for Self but for Others, etc.....	10-12
THE PRIMARIES	3
By H. J. Langoe	
WHERE SELF-GOVERNMENT BEGINS AND ENDS	5-6
By H. J. Langoe	
OUR IMMIGRANTS	7
By Ginty Beynon, in "The Independent"	
THE MAKING OF AMERICAN CITIZENS	8
By A. C. Strange, Oregon State Director of Americanization	
THE COMMONWEALTH OF OREGON	9
By A. C. Strange, Oregon State Director of Americanization	
AND THEY, TOO, WILL BE THE AMERICAN CITIZENS OF TOMORROW	13
COTTAGE CLASSES FOR ADULTS IN CALIFORNIA	14
By Flora D. Smith, Americanization Director, Los Angeles	
CHALLENGING THE ACCLAIM OF THE NORDIC	15
By Konrad Bercovici, in "The Nation"	
OVERCOMING ILLITERACY BY THE MONTESSORI METHOD	16
By Irma Weill, Home Teacher, Los Angeles, California	
TEACHING IMMIGRANTS ETIQUETTE IN NIGHT SCHOOLS..	17
By Grace R. Southwick, Adult Education, Santa Barbara, Cal.	
QUESTION AND ANSWER PAGE FOR FOREIGN BORN.....	18
BITS OF HUMOR FOR THE HOME CIRCLE.....	19

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