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POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT

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WHY NOT "CONVENTION?"

WHY SHALL the effort of certain people to set aside the Primary Law be styled "Assembly" or "gatherings" of the people, or more correctly speaking, the Republicans? Sugar coat the plan as much as possible, it is to get the larger number to swallow the pill, yet the purpose is just the same and that is the overthrow of the Primary law.

It is amusing to notice the efforts of the Assembly boomers. Oh no, they are not opposed to the Direct Primary law; yet they formulate plans, just like the old convention system and counsel holding precinct and county conventions or, as they say, "assemblies," just the same as in the old days.

As a matter of fact, the two systems will not mix, no more than will oil and water. The people must either stay with the Direct Primary law as it now stands with, perhaps, amendment hereafter which will make it better and conserve the interests of the people in a more satisfactory manner; or they must return to the old convention system. There is no use to quibble about the matter. Either one system or the other must maintain.

The Assembly plan proposes that a few interested people shall control the management of the Republican party and select the men who shall stand for office. The Direct Primary, on the other hand, provides a plan by which ALL of that party shall say who shall be candidates for office. The two systems are very easily understood. The Assembly or Convention system, is a method through which a few leaders and interested parties control the primary, county and state conventions. The Direct Primary law affords a means through which every individual voter can express his party preference.

To sum the matter up is to say, shall a few people or all the people select the candidates for office.

All of this talk about self-nominated candidates is simply absurd. Unless a man who aspires for office, can command a plurality of the votes of his party, he is defeated and his more successful neighbor is the winner. And this talk about personal modesty is, also, nonsense. If a man is desirable for office, either he or his friends will bring his name before his party. If he possesses the necessary qualifications for the office and is honest, he is usually nominated; otherwise, he is defeated either at the Primary or General election.

Men nominated themselves through the old convention system and will through the proposed Assembly plan, much more easily than under the present law. All of us remember how men, who desired to be nominated for a particular office, would scheme to have delegates favorable to their particular interests, sent up from the old time primaries or precinct conventions. We can all remember for we participated in them. So, it is nonsensical, to say that men nominate themselves through the Direct Primary more easily than they did during the old convention days. Every thinking man, who participated in the campaigns under the old law, knows that it was far easier for a candidate to scheme and bring about his nomination, say for the office of congressman, under the old system, than under the present law and the Assembly will provide the same opportunities for scheming and wirepulling that the old convention did. The Direct Primary was erected to make this self-nominating and self-select on, more difficult. That it has succeeded in its purpose, is evidenced by the fact that our Republican friends are striving so frantically to have the Assembly adopted.

The two systems cannot harmonize. Either one or the other of the systems will prevail. Voters must choose between the two. Either the groundwork for the repeal of the Direct Primary will be laid, this year, or the Assembly will receive its everlasting quietus.

If either the Convention system or the Direct Primary should be conducted honestly, (and they can in the country precincts for the corruption of the cities and particularly Portland caused the enactment of our present law,) nobody could or would find fault. Dishonesty and scheming brought the old convention system to grief. Dishonesty and scheming may bring the Direct Primary to grief, as well; yet the task will be found far more difficult, than under the old system. But when second-class means to get around the Direct Primary, other and more drastic measures will be adopted; for, let it be understood, the people will rule, in the end.

It matters not to the common people, whether people called Republicans or Democrats manage the affairs of the nation. All that is required is, that our rulers shall conduct governmental affairs honestly, reasonably economical and with justice and impartiality to all. Nobody has a right to ask more than this and everybody has the right to demand it. The common people are not asking favors from the government, but they demand that favors to others shall cease.

All reformatory laws of the character of the Initiative and Referendum and the Direct Primary, are for the purpose of getting justice for the people and to prevent undue favors to certain special classes of the people. And all people, who are attempting to overthrow these laws, especially the Direct Primary including Statement No. 1, are endeavoring to overthrow justice to the people.

The NEWS realizes that the above is somewhat harsh and may ruffle the feelings of hide-bound partisans; but the time has arrived when sugar coated doses should not be administered. Matters should be called by their right names, without prefixes or suffixes. This new movement may be called "Assembly," "Gathering" or "Convention." They all mean the same thing. The purpose of one and all of them is to violate our present law. As to, no matter how many people participate therein, the law will be violated just the same.

The only proper and legal method to pursue, if the present law is not satisfactory, is to repeal it. To attempt to change the law, or beat around the bush, is wrong and destructive to the observance of law.

Various plans are proposed, in the attempt to make the Assembly respectable and equitable; but nothing short of the old convention system, with its delegates elected by the precinct primaries, seem feasible. Any of the other plans proposed, is simply the dictation of a mob. Our Assembly brethren would do better to turn their attention to the education of the people for the repeal of the Direct Primary law.

LABOR AND CAPITAL.

THE RELATION of labor to capital has been one of most vital interest to mankind, since the command "By the sweat of thy brow" was pronounced by the Most High to our first parents in the garden of Eden.

Capital is the product of labor. Every dollar, in which capital or wealth is estimated, represents something and in some way the personal exertions of some laboring man or woman. Capital can be produced in no other way and when we speak of an aggregation of capital or of dollars, we would be more nearly correct if we would say, an aggregation of days work.

Wealth, when reduced to its first estate, is something produced from the soil by the labor of man. It is a something which gives to man sustenance—which enables him to live. And the more wealth or dollars he has, the more of the comforts of life he can enjoy.

The relation of labor to wealth, or wealth to labor, should be reciprocal; but it isn't. When wealth employs labor, it obtains it as cheaply as possible. When a man labors for wealth, he exacts the largest return permissible with his getting the job. And because of the difference of opinion of labor on the one hand and wealth on the other, do we have labor disputes, strikes and lockouts.

The attempt of man to regulate this relation of labor to wealth, is called government. All of the laws and rules of action enacted by the government of men, has for its primary purpose the adjustment of these relations. In the early history of man, or even before the time of recorded history, physical force was the only law. The stronger and more powerful appropriated the product of the labor of the weaker. A step in civilization was the association of men into families and small tribes, for the dual purpose of protection against the force of other families and

tribes and to arrange equitably, among themselves, the distribution of the product of their labor. Later on, the tribes were enlarged into kingdoms and monarchies first, and eventually into republics. But all were for the purpose of adjusting equitably the relation of capital and labor.

It follows then that the best form of government among men, is that form which adjusts these relations the most equitably. Republics are regarded as the best and most satisfactory; because each man is supposed to have a voice in adjusting these relations. An ideal form of government would be, one in which absolute equity as between capital and labor would exist. That is to say, a government which guarantees to each of its citizens the full fruits of his labor and the right to exchange the fruits of labor equitably with each other. Therefore, if men would always attempt to give full value in this exchange—if each would be willing to give as much of the product of his own labor as he receives from his neighbor, the relation would be ideal. The millennium would then be here.

But men are not willing to adopt this equitable method of exchange. Each man desires to give just as small an amount of his own and exact the largest possible amount of the product of the other fellow's labor as possible. He wants to introduce a feature called "profit" for which he gives nothing in return, into the game. And from this desire of profit, we have the modern business man and the employer of labor.

Just at the present time, the cost of living is a question which deeply concerns us all. The men who produce food products, clothing and other what we regard as necessities for our comfort and convenience, seem to be in a position in which they can dictate, in a measure, just how much of the product of the labor of others they shall receive for the product of their own. It is a question of so much importance, that our president desires that a commission shall be appointed to inquire as to what are the causes of this unusual cost.

The NEWS does not pose as an economic expert, yet it, as any other citizen, may be permitted to express an opinion upon the subject to which the president has called the attention of congress.

If the reward for labor had kept pace with the increase of the cost of living, the equities in the matter would be of little consequence. But it has not. While our laws throw the fostering arm of protection around the manufacturer, they permit free access to our labor markets, the hordes of European laborers, who come to our shores and become competitors with our laborers. This abundance of labor has a tendency, or has had a tendency of preventing the advance of the price of labor in accordance with the increase in price of food products, clothing, etc. Our laws permit combinations of capital, called trusts and combines, through which manufactured goods and food products have been sent skyward, in price.

These trusts and manufacturers set the price of both their products and that of labor. They seem to be in absolute control of the situation on both sides of the question. In some instances, the supply of food products do not seem quite equal to the demand, but the main cause can be placed at the door of the trusts, combines and the late revision of the tariff.

The remedy for foreign competition in our labor market, would be more stringent laws controlling immigration. Make it more difficult and costly for the foreigner to enter into competition with our laborers. Reduce the tariff so that foreign made goods can enter into competition with our domestic manufacturers and when it is seen that a trust or combine controls the supply of any article, place that article on the free list.

The foregoing thoughts of a country newspaperman may be, and doubtless are, of little value; yet, as they cost the reader nothing save the time required to read them, they are tendered as a sort of free will offering, hoping they may cause the reader to think. In a multitude of thought and counsel there is safety. And if enough of the American people will think about these matters and think rightly and justly, the inequalities from which the people now suffer will soon be remedied.

Mr. R. A. Bensell, of Newport, Ore. says, "The present loose system has given us the strongest 'machine' ever seen in Oregon politics—a machine with nobody capable of managing it." This is simply a confession of the inefficiency of our Direct Primary law. It was the intent of the law to institute a "machine" so prodigious that nobody could be capable of managing it. It is this "managing" business which caused the people to register so emphatic a protest.

The Oregonian is devoting a whole lot of space in exploiting the beauties of the "Assembly" to the people of Oregon. As it is a well known fact that the Oregonian works for only what money there is in it, the NEWS wonders who is putting up the cash for this "Assembly" fight.

THE ASSEMBLY AND THE MASS MEETING.

There is no more resemblance between the proposed assembly the Portland machine wants the Republicans to hold and the mass meeting the Democrats held in 1906 than there is between a sawbuck and a sausage.

The proposed assembly is wanted for the purpose of eliminating candidates; the Democratic mass meeting was for the purpose of getting somebody to be a candidate.

The assembly is desired in order to give the machine opportunity to put up its candidate and drive other candidates out of the hope of being nominated; the Democratic mass meeting was for the purpose of getting somebody to fill a place on the ticket that would not otherwise be filled.

The assembly is to make selections between rival candidates; the mass meeting made no selections, but in each case where there was a contest no selection was made, and the decision referred to the electorate.

The assembly insists that the people haven't sense enough to select fit candidates and proposes to make the selections and tell the people which candidate to vote for; the mass meeting confined its acts solely to inducing someone, hopeless of election, to make a burnt offering of himself by consenting to run on a hopeless ticket, leaving the matter of selection in all cases where more than one person was willing to run, strictly to the people.

The assembly proposes to act for the Republican party by determining what candidates shall or shall not be considered worthy of support; the mass meeting distinctly refused to act for the party by refusing to decide between rival candidates and by insisting on referring the few cases of contest to the people for decision.

These are vital differences. If the proposed assembly will follow the lines laid down by the mass meeting and make no recommendations where there are two or more candidates for the same office, it would not be objectionable. It is the fact that the assembly is to be held for the purpose of deciding between rival candidates exactly as the old convention decided, and that its known and notorious purpose is not to respect but to supersede the primary law by taking the selection into its own hands that makes it both odious and unlawful. All this is perfectly clear, and all the sophistry of the Oregonian will not confuse or humbug the citizenry of the state.—Oregon Journal.

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