

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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THE PRIMARY OF TOMORROW

TOMORROW will be, in many respects, the most important day in the recent history of Oregon. It will differ, in one and a most important respect, from the primary elections of the past, in that the primary law itself is to be assailed. Previous primary elections, which have been held under the provisions of the present law, have been for the purpose intended by the law only, viz, that of the popular selection of candidates for the various offices to be voted for at the following general election. But at the primary election of tomorrow, the vital feature of the law is to be assailed. The question is: Shall the people make selection of candidates at the primary election uninfluenced and without bias, so that all aspirants for office shall have equal opportunity; or whether candidates shall be selected at assemblies prior to the primary election and the people to merely ratify and make legal the choice of the assembly. One of these phases of the question must win out. If the first, then we will have seen the last of the assembly. But should the assembly win the legislature and the governor, our present primary law will be so loaded down with restrictions and amendments that the people, for relief, will be glad to return to the old delegate convention system. This feature of the present political campaign is of vastly greater importance than the election or defeat of any candidate; for it means either the permanency or change of the present primary law.

The Oregonian says: "The primary law has come to stay." The NEWS believes this statement is true; for it expects assemblyism to get such a complete setback, that it will vex us no more. But let the Oregonian and assemblyism win out, and never more will the people select the candidates, whom they desire, for office. In fact, should assemblies be permitted to select candidates or to recommend them, the primary election would become a farce and a useless expense. People would not trouble themselves to go to the primary polls at all, if volunteer assemblies had already selected the candidates.

So, on tomorrow the voter must pass upon a question which is of the greatest importance to himself, to his children and his children's children. It behooves him to think well before he votes for a political system and for men, whose purpose is to annul all of the reform laws enacted during the past decade.

Not since the civil war have corporations and big business concerns been so nearly under the control of law as at the present time; yet the fight has just begun. The primary and state elections, which have lately occurred, demonstrate that the people, from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans, are aroused as never before against the beneficiaries of special privilege and, when all of the people become aroused, with one common purpose in view as at the present time, they are sure to accomplish their purpose in whole or in part. Whenever public opinion is so universally concentrated for one purpose as it is now, it will force congress and legislatures to enact such laws as are demanded. It may be necessary to replace corporation serving congressmen with men who will serve the people and which will require years to accomplish but, in

the end, the people will win; for they are simply demanding justice and right.

Oregon is the pioneer leader of all the states in reform legislation. She has been the first to establish the people's rule. She has pointed out and established a method by which United States senators can be elected, indirectly, by the people. Shall she abandon the proud position she now holds and be the first state to surrender abjectly and supinely to the dictation of the political boss and of big business concerns? Let us hope not. Let us hope that the republican party of Oregon will stand true to the people and itself and administer such decisive rebuke to assemblyism that it will nevermore be heard of.

At the primary election, no voter who opposes assemblyism and believes in popular selection of our public officials, as well as elect them, can afford to vote for any candidate, no matter for what office, who sympathizes with the assembly movement in the least. It is your duty, if you would see the republican party of Oregon win at the polls, to nominate only such candidates as will command the respect and confidence of the people in November. The NEWS candidly believes that, should any candidate who wears the assembly collar, be nominated on tomorrow, he is sure to be defeated in November, no matter how acceptable he may be in other respects.

The republican party holds the political destiny of Oregon, figuratively, in the hollow of its hand. To be decided on the morrow. But in making that decision, it might be well to remember that the final arbitrament will occur in November. Only two years ago that party nominated a man for United States Senator, for whom thousands of its members would not vote. The result was the election of a democrat. If assembly candidates win the nominations, there will be several democratic candidates for whom the antis can vote if they prefer them to assembly nominees.

It would be far better, if the republicans would settle their own dissensions, if they can, and nominate men who can command the entire party vote. But if they will not and persist in rending the party asunder, as above suggested, there is always candidates of the minority party for whom they can vote and, if enough voters are of this opinion, the minority candidate will win out.

The only safety for the republican party, so far as the NEWS can ascertain, is to join the ranks of insurgency and establish the people's rule so completely that there will be no attempt, in the future, to re-establish boss or corporation rule.

HONESTY AND EFFICIENCY THE CHIEF TEST

IN SELECTING CANDIDATES at tomorrow's election, voters should have the public service first in mind. That is to say, they should select candidates whom they know can give the county and state the best service. Voters should use the same judgment in selecting the public hired man that they use in employing the private hired man. If experience and general fitness make an employee more valuable in private business, the rule ought to maintain in selecting the public employee or official. For this reason the NEWS has favored the renomination of Sheriff Smith to succeed himself. For the same reason we favor the nomination of B. M. Payne for clerk. While these men are our personal friends, it is not because of personal friendship that we advocate their nominations. Both have served the county in the respective positions and the county has never had better or more efficient officials than they.

The people should get out of the idea that public office is a sort of public charity. It is service the people want, without favor to one person more than another, that is expected of an official. It makes but little difference whether an official is a democrat or republican, so long as he is honest, is capable and is an official for all the people, high or low, rich or poor, prominent or obscure. This is the class of men who should be named for office at the primary election tomorrow and elected in November. The business of Linn county has become very large. Over \$250,700 is collected and disbursed annually, and not every man is qualified to conduct this large business in a manner satisfactory to the people. For this reason, it is folly to displace men who have demonstrated that they are honest and capable with men who have had no experience in the office they seek. Our county and state governments can be no better than the men whom we elect can give us. The election of candidates for office is one of the most important functions which is required of the citizen, and every voter should remember that unless good, capable men are nominated, they cannot be elected.

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