

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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THE PORTLAND PRIMARY

JUDGING FROM LONG DISTANCE, the portland people had a hot time at their primary election, last Saturday and they will, probably, have a hotter time at the election to follow.

Judging from newspaper reports, Mr. Rushlight is the labor candidate and won the republican nomination. With all honor to labor interests, we doubt if Mr. Rushlight is just the proper man for mayor. Besides the labor support, he had that of the North End habitues, the breweries and the street railway interests. The residence section, as a rule, gave its vote to Mr. Lombard. Mr. Werlein did not figure extensively in the mayoralty fight; though he was the probable cause of Mr. Lombard's defeat. When Mr. Rushlight refused to qualify as a legislator because he wished to advance his candidacy for the mayoralty, he made a mistake in the minds of thinking people. When he refused to participate in discussing public questions, nor even made any public addresses during the primary campaign, he inspired the outside people with a feeling of distrust. The people are loth to trust a man who is unwilling to take them into his confidence. They have a right to know how a man stands upon matters effecting public interests. They have a right to be suspicious of a man who makes a still hunt for an office.

It may be said that people outside are not interested in who or what man may be elected for mayor of Portland. But they are interested. One third of the votes of Oregon are within the corporate limits of Portland and, as a rule, the Portland vote controls the election of state officers. Indeed, it is rare that a state officer is elected, of either political party, without a majority of Portland votes. Hence, we outside people are interested how elections are conducted and how law is administered, down there. We want Portland to elect honest and reliable men as legislators. We want her courts to be conducted in accordance with law and justice. We do not wish to see, what is termed "The North End," predominate in control of her politics.

Mr. Rushlight may be everything desirable in a mayor. The NEWS does not know. But it does know that he has not taken the general public into his confidence and that there are some ugly charges which he has not explained away. He should have made his position plain upon all matters at issue, concerning city government.

On the other hand, Mr. Lombard has been unusually outspoken in all matters at issue in the campaign. He has discussed all these matters publicly and has answered all questions asked frankly. If he is a bad man, or if he is an unfit man for mayor, surely the campaign he has made does not show it.

Some of these days there will be an upheaval in the conduct of the Portland city government. There is too much smoke about paving contracts, about bridge contracts and about the police force, for there to be no fire. Some day someone will start an expose which will make the political bones rattle, down there. It has been true of other big cities and Portland is sure to have her turn, if the North End is to continue to nominate and elect her chief officers.

"THE OREGON PLAN"

OREGON BUILT very much better than she knew, when the people adopted what has come to be known throughout the nation as "The Oregon Plan." When the Initiative and Referendum law was adopted, the road was opened for the Direct Primary and Statement No. 1 and later on the "Recall." These laws have placed the entire nominating and elective machinery within the hands of the people, resulting in the complete overthrow of old party machine politics. And the example of comparatively pure politics of today in Oregon alongside that of a few years ago, is having an influence for good in the family of states from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. "The fool of the family" as the Oregonian characterized Oregon a few years ago, is not so lonesome as she was. A number of her sister states have become equally foolish, while others are on the verge of becoming likewise foolish. The expedition Oregon makes in electing her United States senators, has inspired a sort of friendly envy in such states as have had senatorial battles lasting through weeks and months. The people are getting very tired of senatorial elections in which "boodle" plays a prominent though secret part and will force their states into line, either for the Oregon plan, or an amendment to the Federal constitution making United States senators alike elective in all the states.

Until the Oregon Plan had been adopted by several states, the Federal senate would never entertain the proposition of submitting an amendment to the constitution to the states for ratification. Last winter, the measure was actually proposed in that august body, but old guard senators were powerful enough to prevent the measure from being voted upon. The present senate is likely to look upon the measure more favorably. And it is only a question of time when the mossbacks will have to submit and permit the people to adopt a fundamental law which they, almost, universally demand. Then, if the states will adopt the Oregon method of nominating candidates, senatorial deadlocks will pass into oblivion.

But until a Federal amendment is adopted, the Oregon method is destined to grow in favor and senators elected in this manner are sure to be friendly to the Federal amendment. When the Federal senate is composed of members responsive to the wishes of the people, as in the case of the house of representatives, then can the people hope that congress will enact laws that are really of benefit to all the people and not in that of some particular combine or trust.

So, Oregon does not need to feel chagrined at the reform laws she has adopted. On the other hand, she has reason to feel proud that she has pointed a way to avoid what has come to be a scandal and disgrace in many of the states—that she has forged the wedge which will force the United States senate to submit to the states, an amendment to the Federal constitution, making United States senators elective in all the states, and that she is no longer the fool of the family.

TARIFF LEGISLATION

THE REPUBLICAN United States senate may be able to delay tariff legislation for a few years and it may be able to, again, stave off President Taft's Canadian reciprocity measure. If it does so, the people will see that a different class of senators are selected in the future.

If evidence was required to establish the fact that these old guard senators were servants of the interests rather than the people, this opposition to giving the people a tariff measure which they, almost universally desire, supplies it. Nor are the interest serving senators all to be found on the republican side. There are a few democrats who serve the interests with equal loyalty. Both parties in congress are tinctured with an interest serving contingent. The only difference is, the interest servers control the republican side, while they are but a small minority on the democratic side. Senator Bailey, of Texas, is just as undesirable as was Senator Aldrich.

As a matter of fact, the masses of the people, particularly in the west, understand the tariff question thoroughly. They know that "protection" simply means taking money from the pockets of the masses and giving it to the classes. So if these class-serving senators wish the defeat of the republican party in 1912, they can pursue no better course than to block all efforts at tariff revision and reciprocity. Then the people will do the rest.

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