

Hill type, but they are about all in the republican party. Again, The Commoner reminds its readers that now is the time to organize. The sooner this organization is completed the sooner the fight will be won.

If the reorganizers find that they cannot steal a march on the people they will not carry their fight to the convention. The sooner the Kansas City platform democrats are aroused the more harmonious the convention will be.

Initiative and Referendum.

In a recent issue of The Commoner the editor called attention to the principle involved in the initiative and referendum, and criticised the Chicago Chronicle because of its attempt to defeat the will of the people on this question. On another page will be found an argument recently made against the initiative and referendum by one of the citizens of Chicago. It is published because it shows the standpoint from which the opponents begin to reason. The writer of this article asks the question: "Is it reasonable to assume that the placing upon the masses this great responsibility of making or selecting laws, is logical or safe?" Here is the secret of all the opposition. The opponents of the initiative and referendum distrust the masses; they assume that the people as a whole are incapable of passing judgment upon their own affairs; they must select officers to think for them and to act for them. The democratic idea is that the people think for themselves and select representatives to carry out their thoughts. The democratic idea is that the people think for themselves and select representatives to carry out their thoughts. The democratic idea is that the representative is a necessary evil—necessary because the people are too numerous to act directly upon all questions, but an evil still because the representative is often led by his own interests to sacrifice the interests of the people.

In the article referred to, we are told that the making of laws is a science calling for the highest talent. Here, again, the opponent of the initiative and referendum is trying to get the government out of the reach of the people. Jefferson said that the art of government was simply the art of being honest, and that the principles of right and wrong were so easily discerned that they required not the aid of many counselors. Is it because they are skilled in the science of government that the members of city councils vote away valuable franchises to corporations, or is it because the members of such councils sell for a price that which they themselves do not own? There is a great deal more danger that representatives will not do as well as they know than there is that the people themselves will not know enough to protect their own interests.

The writer of the article referred to lectures the people for not selecting "broad-minded, honest and courageous representatives." The admonition is often needed, but the trouble is that men are often selected who have not been dishonest before election, but who become dishonest when subjected to the temptations that surround their position. It is not always easy to detect corruption in legislators. Very few confess, and conclusive proof is often hard to secure. If the people have a right under reasonable restrictions to pass upon a law, temptation will be removed, because it will be of no advantage to a corporation to bribe a legislature if the people have a right to sit in judgment upon the law afterward. And so a corporation cannot bribe a legislature to avoid a subject upon which the people, through the initiative, have demanded action.

The initiative and referendum do not supplant representative government; they simply purify it and perfect it. If the reader of The Commoner will pursue and consider the argument made against the initiative and referendum he will have his faith strengthened in this popular reform.

It is neither necessary nor desirable that the people should attempt to decide all questions by the referendum, but when any considerable proportion of them desire a question submitted it is only fair that it should be submitted. Likewise, when a proportion of the people desire to vote upon a law passed by the legislature they should have a right to do so. Experience has shown that they do not have to avail themselves of the right very often, because the mere fact that they have the right makes the legislature more obedient to their wishes, thus giving the protection of the initiative and referendum without the expense of it.

Getting Rich Quick.

The recent exposure of several "get-rich-quick" concerns shows both how many people can be fooled and also how certain those are to be fooled who take up with short-cut schemes for making money rapidly. It is hard to sympathize with people who lose money in this way, and yet it is due to an ignorance of the fundamental principles of morality, and this ignorance can only be cured by education. Modern commercialism has led too many of our people to measure life by the amount of money accumulated rather than by the amount of service rendered. The man whose highest aim is to "get rich" is apt to violate the moral law, if not the statutes of the state, in his effort to secure the object of his search. It is useless to preach honesty or equity to such a man. As long as the purpose remains it is likely to break all the restraints placed upon it. When money becomes the master the man who possesses it is really possessed by it and is in bondage unto it. It is not even necessary to possess money to become a servant; a poor man who regards money as the measure of success can be as subservient to Mammon as the most opulent.

The frauds that have been perpetrated by the turf investment companies and similar swindling gangs can be turned to a useful purpose if they lead parents to impress upon the minds of their children the viciousness of all schemes that promise profits out of proportion to the investment, or profits to be secured by chance or luck.

There is only one honest and honorable way of accumulating money, and that is to give to society a service equal to the compensation received. If young men are taught that it is better to be underpaid than overpaid, better that they give overflowing than scant measure, they will be proof against all kinds of deception and fraud. If a swindler, when he offers something for nothing, is met with the reply that the person addressed is not willing to accept something for nothing he will go away in search of greener pastures. It is possible to render a child immune to the gambling disease that seems to be epidemic at present, but it must be done by inculcating a proper view of life. Manhood and womanhood, not money, must be made the standard, and the child must be taught that no amount of ill-gotten wealth can make a person worthy of respect—much less of envy.

"Wall Street Knows."

It may be instructive for those who imagine that the members of the republican congress really intended to provide any effective measures against trusts to read, in the light of the loud boasts now made on anti-trust lines by republican organs, an article written by a republican correspondent for a republican newspaper.

In a dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald, under date of Washington, January 15, Walter Wellman said: "There is no more uneasiness in Wall street as to what congress is to do in the trust-busting line. Wall street knows."

According to this republican correspondent, the representatives of the trusts recently held a secret meeting in Washington and in conferences

with republican leaders reached an agreement calling for these provisions:

1. Publicity of the operations of interstate trusts through reports to a government department.
2. More drastic law against discriminations and the payment of rebates by common carriers; shippers who receive rebates to be punishable, the same as transportation company officials who pay them.
3. The administration of the trust law to be turned over to a new department of commerce, to be created by congress, and that department to have a bureau of insurance and corporations to deal directly with true reports and publications.

Mr. Wellman said that it did not matter what the judiciary committee or the sub-committee of the house might do. That sub-committee was just then very active; but Mr. Wellman said "the president, the attorney general, the house judiciary committee and the house itself have not power enough to put through anything which the trusts object to. In trust legislation as in almost everything else the senate is the court of last resort."

Mr. Wellman cannot relieve the president of the entire responsibility nor persuade his readers that Mr. Roosevelt is at all "strenuous" in his famous anti-trust campaign until he can explain how it happens that Mr. Roosevelt's plan for curbing the trusts is not a bit more radical than the plan herein referred to, which plan, according to Mr. Wellman, the representatives of the trusts cordially indorsed.

The opening paragraph in Mr. Wellman's dispatch deserves a place in the scrap-book of every republican who imagines that the people have any reason to hope for relief from trust impositions at the hands of the republican party. In the beginning Mr. Wellman said:

"Anti-trust legislation so-called, but legislation which the trusts are wholly willing to have, is likely to be passed by the present congress. In fact, what amounts to an agreement or understanding has been reached between the leaders of the republican party in Washington, as the party of the first part, and the representatives of some of the most powerful trusts in the country as the party of the second part. The agreement is to pass a nominal anti-trust bill, but to take good care that nothing shall appear in it which the trusts have any objections to."

Referring to the visit of the representatives of the trusts, Mr. Wellman said:

"They declared that they had no objection to the publicity suggestion made by President Roosevelt. In fact, some of the biggest trusts, notably the United States steel corporation, have voluntarily adopted the policy of taking the public fully into confidence as to their operations. The progressive men who are at the head of a number of the greatest corporations are anxious to have as much publicity as possible as to the affairs of companies. Publicity is protection for investors as well as desirable on other grounds of public policy."

This correspondent gave the information that as a part of this program the bill to create a department of commerce would be passed and that Mr. Cortelyou would be at the head.

Is it not strange, in the light of such disclosures as these, that sincere and conscientious republicans who realize that the trust system is disadvantageous to their interests continue to nurse the hope that the republican party will do something to protect the people from trust impositions?

The Foreigner Does Not Pay.

Referring to the Venezuelan situation the Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin says: "As usual, it is the people who pay the costs of war; President Castro has clapped an extra duty of 30 per cent on all imports to satisfy the demands of the allies." And yet the Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin is a republican organ that still insists "the foreigner pays the tax."