The Commoner.

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The First Voter

Young man, great responsibility attaches to your first vote. As you begin, so you are likely to continue. The momentum that carries you into a party at the beginning of your political life is apt to keep you in that party unless some convulsion shakes you out of it. Start right, and in order that you may start right, examine the principles of the parties and the policies which they advocate.

There are two great party organizations in the United States, one more than fifty years old, and the other more than a century old. The republican party has been in power almost uninterruptedly for more than half a century, and under its reign abuses have grown up which threaten the perpetuity of the government and endanger our civilization. So great are these abuses that republican reformers are now pointing out that something must be done—and what can be done? The first thing is to undo the things that have been done, and the party to undo these abuses is not the party which has done them, but the party which has protested against these abuses and pointed out remedies.

The republican party has turned the taxing power over to private individuals; it has allowed monopolies to grow up and assume control of the industries of the country by granting privileges by law and by giving immunity to the large violators of the law; the republican party has permitted the fortunes of the predatory rich to become so large that government is corrupted, politics dehauched, and business polluted.

The democratic party proposes to withdraw the taxing power from private hands, to so legislate as to make a private monopoly impossible, and to enforce the law without discrimination. It proposes to protect legitimate wealth and punish those who attempt to plunder the public for private gain. On which side do you stand, young man? Are you with the masses in their effort to restore the government to its old foundation and make it a government of the people. for the people and by the people, or are you with the republican leaders in their effort to perpetuate the party in power by selling immunity in return for campaign contributions? There are always two parties in the country, and one is necessarily nearer to the people than the other. In this country the democratic party is nearer to the people than the republican party. Its leaders have more faith in the people and are more anxious to keep the government under the control of the people. Take the election of United States senators by the people as a test. The democrats want to give to the voters a chance to elect and to control their representatives in the United States senate. The democratic party in the house of representatives

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A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE

0 While Representative Henry's resolu-0 0 tion providing for an investigation of the 0 Money trust was pending Mr. Henry ۲ 0 received a letter from former Represen-() 0 tative Fowler of New Jersey who has a 0 0 pretty accurate idea of money trust 0 methods, saying:

"No one was ever engaged in a more
righteous cause than you. It will be a
crime against the American people not
to pass your resolution."
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passed the first resolution for the submission of the necessary constitutional amendment. They did this eight years before any republican congress did it. The democratic party has twice demanded this reform in its national platform. The republican party has not done so. Why do democratic leaders insist upon this reform and republicans leaders opose it? There can be but one answer—the democratic party is nearer to the people than the republican party. Young man, will you stand with the people or against them?

The answer to this question affects your country. If you are with the people your influence, be it great or small, will hasten their victory. But while in the first instance it is your country that may gain or lose by your action, you must remember that in the long run your own position in politics will depend upon your conduct. You can not fool the people always. You may lead them astray if you dare, but they will punish you when they find you out. You may work for the people without their recognizing it at first, but you can trust them to discover the character of your work and to reward you accordingly.

TRANSFORMING STUMP SPEECHES INTO SUPREME COURT OPINIONS

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"From Missouri"

Those democrats who have been deceived by the claim that Mr. Harmon is a "progressive democrat" will learn something to their advantage by reading the story of the unsuccessful fight made by Governor Harmon last week against the initiative and referendum before the Ohio constitutional convention now in session. The following Associated Press dispatch tells the story:

"Columbus, O., Feb. 8.—After hearing an address at noon today by Governor Harmon, in which he took a strong position against incorporating a clause providing for the statewide initiative and referendum in the new constitution, supporters of the proposed initiative and referendum plank won a decisive victory in the constitutional convention a few hours later. The governor in his address said the idea of direct legislation still is in an experimental stage and that Ohio would do well at least to wait until it has been given a thorough trial in other states. He defined his own position on the subject as a whole as being in the attitude of the 'man from Missouri.'

"The declaration of the governor came in the nature of a sensation to the supporters of the initiative and referendum in the constitutional convention, coming as it did at a time when that body was about to take up for consideration a resolution which had been introduced by Delegate Hill, of Allen county. The Hill resolution, backed by opponents of the initiative and referendum, proposed to censure President Bigelow for having secured pledges from many members to abide by caucus action on that subject.

"The resolution declared that the action of the president of the convention in securing pledges for caucus support of the initiative and referendum was unfair.

"Following the address of Governor Harmon and at the close of an acriminous debate the convention late today tabled the resolution, the vote standing 60 to 45.

FROM MISSOURI THE FIRST VOTER THE HIGHEST OFFICE SENATE DEMANDS INVESTIGATION MR. HARMON ATTACKS DIRECT LEGISLATION GENERAL JAMES B. WEAVER MARTIN DIES ATTACKS MR. BRYAN HOW THEY LOOK AT IT IN OHIO

AS A PROGRESSIVE REPUBLICAN SEES IT FOLK WITHDRAWS IN MISSOURI HOME DEPARTMENT WHETHER COMMON OR NOT NEWS OF THE WEEK WASHINGTON NEWS From the speech delivered at Detroit, Mich., October 4, by George W. Perkins:

"The only vestige of keeping faith with the people on anything involved in this question and as discussed in the campaign, is found in the supreme court's recent trust decisions wherein the 'rule of reason' is applied, and in connection with this, the following closing sentences from the Youngstown speech of Governor Hughes (for the past year a member of the supreme court) are significant:

""* * But in our progress we must seek to avoid false steps. Ours must be THE RULE OF REASON, clear-eyed, calm, patient and steadfast; defeating the conspiracies of intrigue and escaping the pitfalls of folly. Supreme must be the sense of justice, with its recognition of our mutual dependence."

REAL INVESTIGATION

According to reports in the Houston Post, Congressman Glass in arguing for investigation by the banking committee of which he is a member, declared that he was not in favor of turning attention away from the tariff. The banking committee can not make a thorough investigation of the Money trust if it is afraid to turn public attention to the Money trust's methods.

GOOD FOR HENRY

Congratulations, Mr. Henry! You made a good fight and you kept the faith. If the banking committee does its duty you can rejoice; if as seems probable the committee makes a farce of the investigation your judgment will be vindicated and the men who opposed you will be apologizing to their constituents.

A good many congressmen will wish for a secret caucus before they square themselves with their constituents for voting against a a special committee to investigate the Money trust. "President Bigelow led the debate on the resolution, declaring that it was being supported by 'reactionaries,' and asserting that it was necessary to secure the caucus support to prevent the initiative and referendum plank being lost because of divergence of views of its friends regarding matters of detail."

Does any reader of The Commoner believe that a progressive democrat would in this day urge a constitutional convention to defeat the initiative and referendum? At the very time when progressive republicans and progressive democrats, progressive populists and progressive independents are working one with the other and irrespective of political prejudice for the advancement of the great reform known as initiative and referendum, otherwise direct legislation, Mr. Harmon of Ohio rises before the constitutional convention of his state and pleads for the defeat of that reform.

"Ohio would do well at least to wait until it (the initiative and referendum) has been given a thorough trial in other states," says Mr. Harmon of Ohio, who on this occasion declares that with respect to arguments in favor of the initiative and referendum he is the "man from Missouri." Ohio is one of the greatest states of the union; must it wait for other states to take the lead in great reforms? Must it be the late day follower rather than the brave, intrepid leader? Mr. Harmon, 'the man from Missouri,' says that Ohio must not take the lead but that Ohio must wait until the initiative and referendum has been given a thorough trial in other states. What a magnificently progressive state Ohio would be if it yielded to the plea made by its present day governor and how magnificently progressive is the man who fights direct legislation when men of all parties are subscribing to that reform.

Well, sixty-six democrats voted for a real investigation of the Money trust. That is a beginning.