

Democracy in Banking

In the next issue of The Commoner will be found an extraordinary speech on "Democracy in Banking" by Honorable John Skelton Williams, comptroller of the currency. It was delivered before the annual convention of the North Carolina bankers in the house of representatives at the capitol, Raleigh, on May 13th last. It deserves reading—every word of it. It will give the readers of The Commoner an understanding of the point from which the reserve board will look at the new currency system. As comptroller, Mr. Williams will have a large part in the management of the central reserve banks which supervise and regulate the entire system. Mr. Williams' arraignment of the old system of finance, for which the new system is substituted, will be read with grateful appreciation by those who have for twenty years been engaged in fighting the money power. What a change has taken place! When the struggle began every man who dared to criticize the despotism of Wall street was denounced as a demagogue and a disturber of the peace, but today investigation and revela-

tions have made the American people acquainted with the methods employed by the members of the little group who ruled the financial world. Mr. Williams, since making this speech, has had occasion to learn of the radical change taking place in public sentiment. One of the most prominent financiers of the west wrote to him saying that if he read Mr. Williams' speech a year or two ago he would have said: "Poor Williams, what a demagogue he is," but that he himself has become convinced of the soundness of the position taken by Mr. Williams. All of the financiers who were not in the pool will soon be thanking the president and congress for the relief the new law has brought—their voices will be added to the chorus that is already rising from the mass of the people who see in the new declaration of independence emancipation from the invisible government that has been preying upon them. The country is fortunate in having in so influential a position a man like John Skelton Williams, who knows the methods that have been employed and has the courage to represent the people instead of the special interests.

W. J. BRYAN.

SHALL ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY COMMIT SUICIDE?

The attention of Illinois democrats is again called to the peril of the senatorial situation. The failure of the progressive democrats to get together on a candidate is a real menace to the party in the state. It is inconceivable that Roger Sullivan should be elected, now that senators are chosen by popular vote; the only effect of his candidacy would be to forfeit the party's chance to elect a senator and carry down to defeat the democratic candidates for congress and other offices. Mr. Sullivan is a relic of a past political era—a survival of the odious and odorous days when plunderbunds gained political ascendancy through public officials. He is commander-in-chief of such of the forces of evil as have taken up their political residence in the democratic party. He is the exponent of that favor-seeking, privilege-hunting group of which representatives are to be found in every large city, a group that has no political convictions and can be expected to support only those officials through whom the public can be overreached. The democratic party can not stand for this, and to make Sullivan the representative of the party for such an office as United States senator would be to confess judgment in advance and invite contemptuous repudiation at the polls. He can not secure the nomination without the expenditure of more money than the law permits, and an election would cost him vastly more.

But even this is not the end. The disaster entailed by Sullivan's selection at the primary would not end with his nomination. Such a victory would enable him to dominate the organization of the party and give him a chance to project his evil influence into the years to come. Just at this time, when corrupt political bosses are being drummed out of the party in other states, it would be a crime to put Sullivan at the head of the Illinois division of the splendid army which is now fighting the people's battles at Washington and throughout the land. It is imperative that the progressive democrats get together on a candidate and defeat Sullivan.

W. J. BRYAN.

STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR DUNNE ON THE SENATORIAL SITUATION IN ILLINOIS

For several months past my advice has been sought by democrats from different parts of the state in reference to the course which should be pursued in relation to the selection of a United States senator, and to all democrats seeking such advice I have been free to say during all these months that, in my judgment, it would be the part of wisdom and justice to the party to select a candidate for the senate who lives outside of the county of Cook.

Geographical locations have always been considered in the selection of candidates. At the present time, and under the present circumstances, the importance of taking geography into consideration is more than ordinarily pressing.

Illinois is a great state with nearly six millions of people, and public positions should be filled with due reference to all portions of the state. Most of the state offices now filled by

democrats are occupied by gentlemen who live in the county of Cook. The positions of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state auditor, and one of the United States senatorships are filled by men from Cook county. The speaker of the house is also from Cook county. The only state offices now held by democrats who do not live in the county of Cook are the two congressmen at large, the attorney general, and the state treasurer, the term of the latter office expiring at the end of the present year, 1914.

In view of the great preponderance in the present incumbents in favor of Cook county, I have been of the opinion for some time past, and have so advised my democratic friends, that the next United States senator should be selected from among the candidates who reside outside of Cook county.

There ought to be, and is, good material down state from which such a candidate should be selected. Democratic sentiment should unite in attaining this end. To select a candidate from Cook county, in view of the tremendous preponderance of offices now held by that county, will, in my judgment, create a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction among democrats that may militate against our success at the polls next November.

It is exceeding important that a senator be selected who is in hearty sympathy with the progressive policies and clean administration of President Wilson, and his secretary of state, Mr. Bryan.

It would be most unfortunate if the feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of democrats in central and southern Illinois over the unfair apportionment of the offices to one portion of the state should weaken our position at the polls in the selection of a United States senator.

I earnestly hope that candidates for the senatorship and the rank and file of the democratic party will cooperate in the selection of some strong, capable, progressive democrat outside of Cook county to lead us to the polls next November with the strength and solidarity of sentiment which will insure democratic success, and I am using every effort to assist the democrats of the state in bringing about this solution.

Personal considerations both among the candidates and among voters should give way before the interest of the party, and the interest of the party, in my judgment, requires the nomination of a down state democrat, in hearty sympathy with President Wilson and his policies.

E. F. DUNNE.

Whatever slowness of business there may be in some parts of the country can be traced to that queer psychological state brought about by the old-time republicans who believe the buncombe of their party leaders that a democratic administration always brings hard times. With business as fundamentally sound as it is and with unusually large crops in sight, the man who fools himself into believing that times are hard is the chief factor in bringing about the conditions he fears.

RURAL CREDIT LEGISLATION

Concerning the action of the recent democratic congressional caucus in declining, by an overwhelming vote, to include an agricultural credits bill in the legislative program of the present session, it should be stated that one reason for this action was that there was, apparently, an irreconcilable difference in the banking and currency committee on some of the important details of the proposed bill, and there was a fundamental difference between some members of the committee and the president, which might have protracted the session of congress clear through the summer and autumn without any assurance of results.

The main reason for the action of the democratic caucus in postponing consideration was that it was pointed out that, subsequent to the suggestion by the president of rural credit legislation, and after the matter had been referred to the banking and currency committee for consideration, the senate and house so amended the then pending federal reserve bank bill as to vastly extend its rural credit facilities. Indeed, many of the most intelligent and thoroughly informed representatives of the organized farmers insist that the terms of the federal reserve act are now so broad as to afford ample farm-credit facilities.

The land-mortgage provision of this act, according to Mr. Conant, a recognized expert, affords farm-credit facilities to the extent of \$369,000,000 from the national banks alone, which have heretofore been denied the privilege of making loans on real estate. Congressman Glass, chairman of the house banking and currency committee, points to the fact that, in addition, the rediscount provision of the federal reserve act furnishes unlimited agricultural credit facilities for current farming operations. Thus, altogether, the provisions of the new federal reserve act afford increased farm credit facilities to the amount, approximately, of a billion and a half dollars.

For the larger agricultural operations involved in the exportation of farm products the new federal reserve act also furnishes extended credit facilities, making it possible for the American farmer to get his money at once on drafts for products exported, instead of having to wait, as has heretofore been the case, until the return is made from abroad.

This is an unexampled record in banking and currency legislation and is highly creditable to the democratic administration and to the democratic party in congress. The republican party had possession of the government for forty-two years after the adoption of the national banking act fifty years ago. That party is responsible for the national banking act, under the terms of which not one dollar of credit could be procured on the richest farm lands in the country. In short, the republican party in its whole career has not in banking and currency done one thing in aid of the agricultural interests of the country. It remained for the democratic party to write on the statute books a banking and currency act which is now universally claimed as the wisest and most comprehensive piece of legislation ever enacted.

IOWA'S SPLENDID TICKET

The Iowa democracy has done itself proud in the selection of a state ticket. The honor of the governorship has fallen to ex-Congressman Hamilton. He is a man of high character, large experience, and eminent fitness; no better selection could have been made. He will poll the full party strength, and ought to draw largely from both the regular and progressive republicans.

For senator, the democrats have selected the Honorable Maurice Connolly, who now represents the Dubuque district in the house of representatives. Mr. Connolly is one of the coming young democrats of the west. He has devoted his splendid education and business training to the service of the people, and has made a most creditable record in congress. He has earned the distinction that has come to him and is destined to write his name high among democratic leaders if, as now seems probable, he wins the honor of representing Iowa in the United States senate.

W. J. BRYAN.

Under the English law a bill that the house of lords has rejected can become a law by being passed three times by the house of commons. If you are fond of figuring try to compute how long it would take if a bill, to become a law in this country, had to be passed three times by the United States senate.