

each. The purpose is to secure 100,000 pennies from citizens of Colorado, with the idea of thus making a strong protest against the blow administered by the court against the freedom of speech and the rights of the press. Senator Patterson has appealed the case to the United States supreme court.

THE FIFTY-SEVENTH anniversary of the accession of Francis Joseph to the throne of the Hapsburgs was observed in Vienna, December 2. A Vienna cablegram to the New York World says: "Francis Joseph was called to take the sceptre in the storm and tumult of revolution, and the conditions today are almost the same as those preceding the outbreak of 1848. At 75 years the emperor stands bent and broken. Practically deserted by all his kin, save his beloved daughter, the Archduchess Marie Valerie, and his grandchildren, his chief recreation nowadays is hunting. He cares nothing for either cards or novels, but looks carefully each day at a summary prepared for him of all press excerpts which might be supposed to interest him."

CHARLES E. HUGHES, counsel of the legislative committee investigating the insurance scandal has, according to the New York World received a tip to the effect that during the months of September and October, 1904, eleven corporations doing business in this state subscribed to a fund aggregating \$225,000. That of this amount the Equitable Life Assurance society contributed \$25,000. That the arrangements for a number of subscriptions, including the \$25,000 donated by the Equitable, were made by George B. Cortelyou, then chairman of the republican national committee. That all of the contributions were made upon the representations of various persons, including Mr. Cortelyou, Cornelius N. Bliss, Ex-Governor Odell, Senator Platt and Senator Depew, that additional money was needed to insure the election of Theodore Roosevelt as president. That the money was subscribed solely upon the representation that the republican national ticket was in danger of defeat. That of the amount collected less than 5 per cent, or, to be exact, \$10,500, found its way into the state campaign to help

the candidacy of Frank W. Higgins, republican candidate for governor.

IT IS CLAIMED that this information has been given by friends of Senators Platt and Depew, and former Governor Odell, who are somewhat exercised by the exposures concerning their own affairs. The World says: "Friends of Platt, Depew and Odell think that the committee has been too lenient with the national administration and is purposely wasting time over the trivial instance of 'graft' in all the management of the companies in order to shield the influential political beneficiaries of compulsory contributions. A financier of high standing who admits having assisted in the collection of some of the contributions is authority for the statement that Mr. Cortelyou can throw more light directly upon the contribution made by the Equitable than either Platt, Depew or Odell, and circumstances under which it was made and the manner in which it was paid. The same authority called attention to the fact yesterday that on Friday night before the election of 1904 President Roosevelt issued a statement from the Executive Mansion branding as false the assertion of Alton B. Parker that the national republican committee had solicited and collected money from corporations for the purpose of making certain the election of Mr. Roosevelt."

IT IS PLAIN that Platt, Depew, Odell and others are determined upon having some of the present-day criticisms directed to the national administration. In an interview the gentleman from whom doubtless much of this information comes says: "If Mr. Hughes will call Mr. Cortelyou to the stand and will summon Cornelius N. Bliss, he and the public will then learn definitely whether the president based his statement upon accurate information or whether he was misinformed. Men who subscribed to the fund will also learn if the persons who solicited the fund were authorized to do so with the knowledge of the president and whether the man or men who collected the amounts subscribed were empowered to collect them. The committee will soon end its labors, according to the present

plans, and the public would like to have this phase of the investigation clearly revealed. Mr. Hughes and the committee have shown up a lot of graft, and the public is thoroughly convinced of the rottenness of things generally in the management of the insurance companies. The political features of the expose will never be complete without a thorough ventilation of the national campaign contributions of 1904. Mr. Cortelyou, Mr. Bliss and perhaps Platt and Odell should be called to the stand again before the investigation is brought to a close. The petty graft can be attended to later. Nothing is more important now than the vindication of the president's positive declaration that the corporations did not contribute to the campaign fund used in promoting his election. Mr. Hughes can bring out the information by calling the men in possession of it. He knows who they are."

NEWSPAPER DISPATCHES say that a scheme is on foot whereby the Rockefeller group of capitalists, the J. Pierpont Morgan group, and the Thomas F. Ryan group, seek to bring the management of the Equitable, the Mutual and the New York Life Insurance companies all within the control of a Rockefeller-Morgan-Ryan combination. H. H. Rogers, concerning whose skill Thomas W. Lawson has said so much, seems just now to be very active in insurance affairs.

THE PRESIDENT has appointed Franklin Lane, of California, to be a member of the interstate commerce commission. A Washington dispatch says: "Mr. Lane is a democrat and his appointment will change the political complexion of the interstate commerce commission from republican to democratic. Former Governor Fifer, of Illinois, whom Mr. Lane will succeed on the commission, is a republican, as also are Commissioners Knapp and Prouty. Commissioners Cockrell and Clements are democrats. While Mr. Lane always has been a democrat in politics, he was a supporter of President Roosevelt in the last campaign. In connection with this appointment, it is pointed out that in the event of the enactment of railroad rate legislation by the present congress, the interstate commerce commission very likely will be reorganized."

## IOWA AND THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

Iowa stands tenth in the number of primary pledges returned to The Commoner office. In 1896 there were cast in Iowa 223,741 votes for the democratic nominee for president; in 1904 the votes cast for the democratic nominee for president amounted to 149,141. Here is an apparent loss, during eight years, of 74,600 votes. Every one knows that this does not by any means fairly represent the political sentiment in the Hawkeye state. It is unnecessary to refer to the conditions which in 1904 resulted in such pronounced loss to the democratic party. It is sufficient for democrats to know that they now have the opportunity of persuading those democrats who left the party to return by making their political organization responsive to public necessities. Whenever the democratic party so shapes its policies and methods as to persuade the old-time democrats to return, it will also become attractive to independent voters generally.

The one important thing is that the democratic party be organized by the rank and file, and the primary pledge plan suggested by The Commoner provides a practical method for effecting such an organization.

Many Iowa democrats have so far helped materially in this organization plan. But there is yet a large amount of work to be accomplished. It is not necessary that The Commoner present arguments to show why every democrat should enlist in this good work. It must be apparent to every man who believes that government should be administered for the greatest good to the greatest number that the only way to obtain this desired end is for the rank and file of great political parties to manifest active interest in their party's affairs.

To those Iowa democrats who have rendered material assistance, The Commoner extends its thanks. At the same time it urges these democrats to renew their activities, and calls upon other democrats in the Hawkeye state to lend their energies to this good work. If, in every county of Iowa, a number of democrats would organize for the purpose of circulating the primary pledge form in every precinct, obtaining the signature of every democrat who is willing

to discharge his duty to his party, the field would be covered in a short time.

One of the important features of this plan is the organization of democratic clubs in every state, in every county and in every precinct. These democratic clubs will be able to accomplish much in the effort to organize the party by the rank and file, and the result will, therefore, be advantageous to the public welfare.

Let every Iowa democrat assist in this good work and the result will be manifest in the election returns of that state

As this copy of The Commoner may be read by some one not familiar with the details of the primary pledge plan, it is necessary to say that according to the terms of this plan every democrat is asked to pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to The Commoner approving the object of the organization and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank pledge, which is printed on page 7.

Extracts from letters received at The Commoner office follow:

W. C. Carroll, Fieldon, Ill.—Enclosed find my request for ten more subscription cards, also some primary pledge blanks. I am a democrat who favors the principles so ably upheld by The Commoner. I am one of The Commoner's charter members and come to stay.

S. Flickinger, Homerville, Ohio—I enclose primary pledge with thirty-six signatures.

William Blair, Mason, Ill.—Please find thirty-six signatures to the primary pledge. They all signed readily, and thought it a good plan. I had intended to canvass the entire township, but I am now past seventy-two years of age, and am too feeble to do so.

W. E. Mitchell, Perry, Okla.—Please find enclosed the primary pledge, signed. It gives me

great pleasure to notice that Oklahoma stands fifth in the number of pledges signed, and I hasten to add one more to the list. Please send me twenty blanks, and see if I don't return them signed by the kind of democrats that never know defeat. Yours for good government.

Bert Brown, Ullin, Ill.—I enclose a primary pledge signed by eighteen good democrats.

F. M. Calhoun, Dry Run, W. Va.—Please find enclosed primary pledge with twenty-one names attached. I am sixty-six years old and have always voted the democratic ticket. I believe the primary plan a good one. Please send me another blank. With best wishes for the success of democracy.

J. R. Wilkinson, Jackson, Tenn.—I enclose a primary pledge with seven signatures attached.

Frank Wilkerson, East Marion, New York—I think the primary pledge is all right. It will have a tendency to get out a good many stay-at-home fellows like myself. I hope the next democratic presidential convention will be free from money sharks and insurance robbers.

B. F. Cross, Washington, D. C.—Enclosed find a primary pledge signed by nine democrats.

H. M. Spencer, Dexter, Texas—Enclosed find thirty names signed to primary pledge.

Frank Cogswell, Sunfield, Mich.—I herewith send you thirty-five signatures to the primary pledge.

H. C. Schilling, Oklahoma City, Okla.—You will please overlook my delay. This list should have reached you before now but these are all workers.

W. V. Bishop, Attica, Kans.—I enclose a pledge with seven signatures.

W. H. Cousins, Munday, Texas—Enclosed find primary pledge with thirty-five signatures.

G. W. Dale, Austin, Nev.—Enclosed please find primary pledge with ten signatures.

D. N. Cobb, Hutton Valley, Mo.—I enclose three signatures to the primary pledge.

C. M. Whittaker, Buffalo, N. Y.—Enclosed please find list of thirty-five signatures to the primary pledge; also six subscriptions to The Commoner. Will send more subscriptions soon. Please send me some more primary pledge blanks. We have the G. O. P. on the run and want to keep them there.