

curing a national triumph for progressive, democratic ideas.

The democratic gains in congress have not been as great as the party expected, but they have been sufficient to make it probable that the democrats will control the congress to be elected in 1908. In nearly all the legislatures in the middle states the democrats have made decided gains and these promise much for the senatorial contests which take place two years hence.

In Iowa, Kansas and California the democrats made a splendid fight for their gubernatorial ticket. The reduction of Governor Cummins' majority from more than seventy thousand to about twenty thousand put Iowa in the doubtful states for two years hence. Kansas and California can no longer be claimed as certainly republican. The fight made by Mr. Harris in the former state and by Mr. Bell in the latter give more than a reasonable hope of success two years hence.

The victory in Missouri will bring joy to every democratic heart. A wall went up when Missouri dropped out of the democratic column two years ago. Her return is greeted with widespread rejoicing. Oklahoma, the new state, comes in with a rousing democratic majority. The constitution will be written by democrats, and she will send two senators to fight in the interest of the wealth producers. Democracy welcomes Oklahoma to a seat near the head of the table.

In Nebraska the democrats hoped, with the aid of the populists, to elect their state ticket and their candidate for the United States senate.

In this they failed, but they have made substantial gains throughout the state as shown by the vote on congressmen and the legislative ticket as well as by the state ticket. They have gained one congressman and came within less than two hundred votes of gaining another. In two other districts the republican majorities have been so much reduced that we can reasonably count on four democratic congressmen two years from now. In the legislature the fusionists will have about four times as many as they had two years ago.

The republicans have had an effective campaign cry in "stand by the president." While the record showed that the democrats in the senate and the house stood by the president better than the republicans, the admirers of the president very naturally gave weight to his appeal for a republican congress although in making the appeal the president put a personal victory above the reforms which he has been advocating. Two years from now that appeal will be of no avail, for the president will not be in office after March 4, 1909. Even if he were a candidate—which no friend of his can assume after his repeated declarations—he would have to confront the third term issue, and who would say that that issue alone would not lose the president enough votes to make his race hopeless? The popular vote as indicated by the congressional elections shows that the republicans even now have a narrow margin to go on, and that margin will be quickly wiped out if the president allowed himself to be drawn into a race for a third term.

Now as to the future. The democrats, uni-

ted in a real fight against the encroachments of organized wealth, see victory before them. The republicans divided, will enter the campaign without spirit and with little confidence in success. The fight in the republican ranks between the reformers and the standpatters will grow more fierce as the months go by, for the character of the republican party is to be determined by this fight. If the standpatters win, the reformers will have to take refuge in the democratic party; if the reformers win their fight in the republican party, there is no place on earth for the standpatters. It is a struggle that must end in complete victory for one side and in complete overthrow of the other side. Events have caused this division because those events have shown more clearly each year the dangers of corporate domination over politics. The democrats have assisted the division by advocating remedial legislation, and the president has contributed to the educational work more than anyone else. If this were a personal difference it could be smoothed over, but it is a vital difference, and the feeling between the two elements of the party is such that either element would rather see the party defeated than have the other element succeed. There is no republican in sight who can harmonize the two elements, and there is no republican belonging to either element of the party who can command the support of the other element. All that the democratic party has to do is to stand steadfast by its position and offer democratic principles for the solution of all the problems that vex the country.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FIRST VOTERS

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 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 debauched 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 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 republican leaders oppose 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. If you are against the people, your influence may retard that victory. But, while, in the first in-

stance 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.

Readers of The Commoner, look after the young man, the first voter. It is much easier to start him right than it is to convert one who in changing his party affiliations, may sever ties of great strength and long standing. If every democrat will pick out a young republican and furnish him literature between now and 1908 a vast army of recruits can be gathered. The Commoner will make itself as useful as possible to these young men. If you think that this paper will help you in your effort to bring the first voters into the democratic party, won't you bring The Commoner to their attention? There is no literature like a newspaper. Speeches are read and too often thrown away while newspapers come every week and each issue reinforces the arguments made by former issues. No single argument can equal in effect the argument which is presented weekly. If each reader of The Commoner will pick out a young republican who will vote for the first time in 1908 and secure his subscription, many congressional districts can be carried and many state legislatures be made democratic. Will you try?

A special rate of sixty cents per year will be given to anyone who will cast his first vote in 1908. In order to obtain this rate it will be necessary to say that the new subscriber will be a "first voter" in 1908.

To The Democratic Members of Congress

While we did not secure a majority in congress at the recent election, we made gains enough to give us a firm basis for our party's hope of securing a democratic majority in the congress to be elected two years hence. Now is the time to lay the foundation for success, and there is nothing that will contribute so much to success as deserving it. The house of representatives has ceased to be a deliberative body. The rules put it within the power of a few men to control legislation. The committee on rules is so small that it does not represent the country; it represents no one but the speaker. The committee on rules ought to be larger. If it were composed of fifteen members selected from various sections of the country, it would be possible for the house

of representatives to be brought into closer harmony with the entire nation and it would not be so easy to strangle legislation. Is it not worth while for the democratic minority to make a fight for a larger committee on rules?

The speaker has too much power, and he derives it from the custom which has put the appointment of committees in his hands. The committees ought not to be appointed by the speaker; they ought to be selected by a caucus. The members of the committee ought to be under obligations to their constituents first and to the party second. At present they are under obligation to the speaker first, to the party second and to their constituents third. While the democratic party can not make the rules of the house until it secures a majority of the members, it can and should begin its fight now. It has been customary

for the minority candidate for speaker to select the minority members of committees and this enables the minority leader to coerce by arbitrary authority whereas he should lead by argument and by superior wisdom. The Commoner ventures to suggest that the democratic minority should assert the right of a caucus to select the minority members of the committee. It will add strength to the party in the next campaign if democratic candidates will present the advantages of the caucus plan over the one man rule.

If the democrats in the house of representatives will make a fight for a committee on rules large enough to represent the whole country and put themselves in opposition to the one man power which has dwarfed the position of the members and enshrined the speaker as boss, the election of a democratic congress in 1908 will be made easier.