

vote on and when disobedience is useless the representative is more sure to obey.

And if the people have the referendum, which is a process by which they sit in judgment on what their representatives do, then the representatives know that the people can veto their acts, and that if they do pass laws that the people do not want the people will veto them. The beauty of this system is that it gives you power, and yet you do not always have to use the power; the possession of it is in itself a great protection.

And why shouldn't the people have what they want; why shouldn't the people have the veto power? Does not your governor veto the acts of your legislature? And if one man can veto an act of the legislature, why shouldn't the people, who elect the governor and the legislature, have the right of veto if they do not want a particular law?

I read the other day in the New York Tribune an editorial on the Oklahoma constitution, and the great objection to it, according to that editor, was that it was written by cornfield lawyers—now get that right—I was about to say cornfed lawyers the other day, but that is not it—I mean cornfield lawyers—that's what it said. Now I read that Oklahoma constitution, and I say to you that it is the best constitution in the United States today. I was interested to find how carefully those cornfield lawyers had putted up the holes that the trust-fed lawyers had been making in other constitutions. It was really interesting to see how carefully these cornfield lawyers, looking at the question from the standpoint of the common people, had corrected the things that had been found weak in the constitutions of other states, and the best thing in that constitution is the provision for the initiative and referendum.

Now no matter what mistakes you make in your constitution, if you give the people power to correct the mistakes they will correct them. No matter how bad your laws may be, if the people have the power to make them good they will make them good, and the most important provision that you can have in a constitution is a provision that places in the hands of the people power to correct the constitution and make it keep pace with progress and intelligence, and the initiative and referendum are the best things that we have found so far to bring the government near to the people and make it their government.

But you say the people make mistakes. Of course they make mistakes. But I think the people have the right to make their own mistakes. Others have made mistakes for them, and the people have been denied the privilege of correcting those mistakes. You can not expect to have a government that is free from mistakes, because we are governed by human beings and they are not perfect. But there is this difference between mistakes that are made by the majority and mistakes that are made by the minority.

The majority never makes a mistake intentionally, for it never pays the majority to make a mistake. Whenever the majority finds out that it has made a mistake it corrects it, but if you have the minority ruling it is sometimes so profitable for the minority to make mistakes that they never want to correct them, and nearly every revolution in society has been an effort of the people to correct the mistakes of the minority. When you give the people the power to correct mistakes, you will find abuses corrected very quickly.

Now I do not want to appeal to the radical, but to the conservative, for if the conservative people of this country took an intelligent view of their own affairs it would not be necessary to make any other argument in favor of these reforms. If these conservative people were foresighted and took an enlarged view of their own interests, they would see the necessity of reform in our methods of government. Take the stream as an illustration; if the current is not obstructed there is no danger in it; you can stand and listen to the singing of the waters. But if you attempt to put a dam across the stream the water rises and presses against the dam; if you raise the dam higher the water rises higher yet, and after awhile there will be a force in that pent-up water that no dam made by human hands can long stay; and then the people who live in the valley below are in danger.

And so, my friends, if you let the people have their way there is no danger in any country, but if you dare to obstruct the will of the people there is always pressure behind the dam, and the more you raise the dam the greater is the pressure; if there is any danger now it is because predatory wealth has obstructed the will of the people for years.

The more freely you allow the people to

rule, the more quickly will every abuse be remedied. If you scratch your finger and blood poisoning sets in your doctor tells you to cut the finger off and thus save the hand; if you wait he tells you to cut off the hand and save the arm, and if you still wait he tells you to cut off your arm in order that you may save your body. And so it is in the body politic; if you will give the people a government that they can control, if you let the people have their way they will reform every abuse as soon as they find it out. But if you dare obstruct the will of the people you simply invite more radical reform.

Ten years ago, when I was a candidate, I never mentioned government ownership of railroads, and six years ago I was so conservative that I never mentioned, either in writing or in speech, the possibility of government ownership of railroads, and yet so rapidly has public sentiment grown and so arrogantly have the great railroad corporations obstructed the will of the people that a republican president has, in two messages threatened government ownership if the railroads did not get out of politics and allow the people to attend to their own business.

Is not that evidence of the truth of what I have said, that if you refuse mild remedies you must be prepared sooner or later to meet harsher remedies?

Now I believe in the initiative and referendum, and I have believed in them for years; and I have believed in them because I believe that they make it possible for the people to correct abuses whenever they want to correct them. This is the only way to save society from great convulsions for great remedies must be applied to great evils. I know of nothing that is milder as a reform than the initiative and referendum, and I want to encourage you in fighting for it, be you republicans or democrats.

If you are republicans do not object to it because you are told that the democrats advocated it first. Of course, we will boast a little. You can not expect that we will not be human, and it is human to rejoice; but I will give you an answer to make to us: If we rejoice too much, if we accuse you of borrowing our ideas, don't cast it aside on that account; just tell us that we got it from the populists, and then we can't say much more about it. And the populists borrowed it from somebody.

But there is no patent on ideas; ideas belong to the world, and an idea once sent forth can never be withdrawn, for man has no ownership of ideas. And let us not refuse to accept a good idea because we did not originate it. We did not originate the telegraph system. For years man saw the lightning, but he saw in it nothing but a menace, but after a while someone conceived the idea—a great American—of bringing it down and making it of service to man, and it has been imprisoned in wires, and those wires now girdle the globe. We use this idea, and we do not feel badly because we did not originate it. So it is with all the great ideas that have been used in this great world. If we advance the idea first, let it be said of us that we adopted it as soon as we did see it; let it be said of us that we did not delay after we had a chance to adopt it.

The ideal and the idea belong to the world. You may see a man living in a house so fine that you may never hope to have one like it—it may be entirely out of your reach; you may find one so well educated that you can never hope to be his equal in that respect; but, my friends, there is no one who has an ideal so high that you can not hope to claim that ideal and make it as much yours as his.

And so with an idea. No man has any special ownership in an idea more than in an ideal, and there ought to be no feeling on the subject, because it belongs not to one party, but to the whole country. And if anything more need to be said to encourage you let me say that behind every truth there is an irresistible force. You find that the grain when it is put into the ground will send forth first the blade, then the stalk and then the full head; and when we find that is true the world around we conclude that back of that grain there is a power irresistibly and constantly at work and, my friends, the force that is back of truth—intellectual, moral and political—is just as irresistible and as constantly at work as the force that is behind the grain.

Go into any part of the world today and you will find that everywhere our theory of government has been planted, and you will find that everywhere it is growing. In Persia they have adopted the first constitution they ever had within the last two years. In Austria they are enlarging the basis of representation; and they are doing the same thing in Sweden at this same time. In England the great controversy is be-

tween the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and the House of Commons says that that hereditary body shall not defeat the will of the people.

China has sent envoys throughout the world to gather information for the forming of a constitution. Everywhere this leaven is at work; everywhere you will find two great parties, one struggling to bring the government nearer to the people, the other obstructing the way. Everywhere in the world the people's party is growing, and everywhere the party of the aristocracy is dying. And it is as true in this country as in every other country. If I did not have faith in the final triumph of right I could not fight for anything, but believing, as I do, that every righteous principle will at last prevail, I can fight for it whether it triumphs in my day or not. I am glad if I can help the least little bit to hasten this victory even if it does not come until after I am dead.

And now I want to say just one thing in conclusion. I have been interested in politics for a good many years; I have been making political speeches for twenty-seven years; I have been acquainted with national politics for seventeen years, and I have never seen so much to encourage a man who believes in a government of the people, for the people and by the people, as I have seen within the last few years. Until recently I saw great campaign funds collected from corporations that contributed the money in order to purchase immunity or legislation, and the public conscience seemed dead.

It is more than ten years ago that Mr. Havemeyer, the president of the sugar trust, testified to campaign contributions before a committee of the United States Senate.

You remember that Mr. Havemeyer said, when they asked him if he or the sugar trust had contributed to the campaign funds, yes; and they asked, "To which party?" and he said, "That depends on circumstances." He was asked, "To which party did you contribute in New York?" and he replied, "The democratic party." "To which party did you contribute in Massachusetts?" he was asked, and he replied "The republican party." "To which party in New Jersey," he was asked, and he said, "Well, New Jersey is a doubtful state; I will have to look at the books."

Now that was the testimony of the head of the sugar trust, testimony given before a senate committee, and yet I will venture the assertion that not one person in a hundred in the state of New Jersey ever read it, or, if he read it, that it did not make an impression on his mind so that he would remember it. And so for years we saw elections bought and sold; for years we saw these great corporations controlling executives and legislatures for their own benefit and use—that's what we saw—and it seemed as if the people were indifferent.

But within the last three years what a change has taken place! Investigation has shown how the great insurance companies contributed, to campaign funds, money belonging to their policyholders, and we have been allowing men for years to make an improper use of funds in their hands, and at last the president of the United States has recommended the passage of a law that will prevent such contributions. I thank the president for what he has done in this respect. But I do not think he goes far enough. I am glad to have him go as far as he will, and then, standing on the vantage ground that he gives us, we will fight for better things until we drive the corporations out of politics.

It is a good thing for corporations to be prevented from contributing campaign funds. No one can defend corporation contributions to campaigns. The money belongs to the stockholders, not to the officers, and the officers have no right, moral or legal, to contribute political views. But that is not enough. We must go farther than that. If we stop there we will find these officers will get around it by using the money and covering it up so as not to violate the letter of the law. I believe the time has come when men who contribute any considerable sum should give their names and let the public know where the money comes from to carry on campaigns, for we have certain individuals with such large interests that even if they contribute out of their own pockets they could finance a campaign committee and give ten times as much as all the rest of the people. If they succeed in electing those they want, they can get ten times as much out of the people's pockets as they contribute.

So I say that it is necessary that we shall have the names of contributors of campaign funds. Nor is that enough. We must have publication, publication before the election so that the people may know what is going on. And,