

voters are intelligent and law-abiding citizens and quickly learn the English language and adapt themselves to the customs of the country.

"While we have had the initiative and referendum for a number of years, it has been invoked on a very few occasions. Notwithstanding, it is a tremendous check upon legislative wrongs."

Governor William T. Cobb, of Maine, a republican, in his annual message of 1907:

"The belief in the soundness and efficacy of the principle of the initiative and referendum as a means to enable the citizens to express more directly and promptly their opinions of proposed legislation has become very general in Maine, and has been recognized in the platforms of both political parties. We may safely assume, therefore, that these declarations were made in good faith, and I heartily approve the adoption of a measure that shall give them a practical and binding effect."

From message of Lucius F. C. Garvin, governor of Rhode Island, January, 1903:

"Not only should the people of the state be proffered an opportunity to make a new constitution, but a reasonable minority of the people should also be given the right to propose amendments to the organic law. In this way only can a constitution keep pace with the needs of a progressive civilization. Against the conferring of this power, which is in complete accord with the American doctrine of republican government, no possible argument can be made except that the qualified electors are incapable of governing themselves.

"I therefore recommend the passage, by this general assembly, of a joint resolution proposing a constitutional amendment, which shall provide that a number of electors, not in excess of 5,000, shall be empowered to propose future specific amendments to the constitution and to have them submitted directly to the people for their adoption or rejection by majority vote."

In his message the following year, 1904, Governor Garvin said:

"For several years an amendment to the constitution, so drawn as to confer upon 5,000 voters the power to propose future constitutional amendments, has been before the general assembly. Two years ago the passage of that amendment was petitioned for by twenty-eight organizations in the state, including labor, reform, and religious bodies, representing many thousands of citizens. Upon these petitions no action whatever was taken.

"Experience elsewhere proves that the power conferred upon the electorate in the popular initiative is eminently safe. It has resulted in a gradual and careful progress, and could not possibly lead to such revolutionary follies as irrevocable laws, or the transfer of the appointing power from the executive to one branch of the legislature.

"In view of the wide demand, and in view of its intrinsic merits, I ask you, gentlemen, to give to this wholly non-partisan measure due consideration, and I feel that in so doing no good reason will be found for its rejection. Certainly no one who has faith in a government by the people can logically object to the constitutional initiative."

Message of Governor George W. Donaghey, of Arkansas, January, 1909:

"I recommend that you submit to the people a constitutional amendment providing for the initiative and referendum. I regard such a step a most just protection for a democratic constituency. The sovereign people should have the right to demand any law they want through the initiative, and annul any act by use of the referendum; and the servants of the people should never be backward in granting them the privilege to exercise this prerogative."

BUT ALDRICH IS LEADER

The Decorah (Iowa) Republican says: "Senator Nelson of Minnesota, too, has also been read out of our party by Aldrich, of little Rhody. Nelson can afford it if the spokesman of the millionaires does assail the loyalty of the republicans of the broad prairie states of the west. Behind the representatives and senators of Iowa, Minnesota and other prairie states are the masses. Against these the pocket borough Mr. Aldrich owns, or thinks he owns, count as nothing compared with thirteen votes in the electoral college from Iowa, the twenty-seven from Illinois, or the eleven from Minnesota."

But it will be remembered that Senator Aldrich and his associates frame republican platforms and name republican candidates. Then the representatives and senators of Iowa, Minnesota and other republican states, and republi-

cans generally, march to the polls and vote the Aldrich ticket.

Mr. Aldrich may come from a "pocket borough," and Rhode Island may be inconsequential when compared with Iowa, Illinois or Minnesota. But when Aldrich speaks the senate acts in accordance with the Aldrich decree; when Aldrich speaks republican conventions carry out the Aldrich program; when Aldrich speaks republican presidents and congressmen repudiate their pledges; and whatever the Aldrich program may be the republicans of Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota tamely fall in line and follow the Aldrich banner. So what does Rhode Island care?

This republican paper need not worry about Senator Aldrich "assailing the loyalty of republicans." Mr. Aldrich counts confidently upon the loyalty of republicans, whatever a republican congress may do. Who will say that he is not justified in this position by the history of his party?

THE PRESIDENT WITH ALDRICH

From Walter Wellman's Washington dispatch, April 25, to the Chicago Record-Herald, republican:

"The attitude of many republican senators who give Aldrich reluctant support through a sense of party loyalty is 'We'll have to stand it this time, but we shall be condemned if we ever stand it again.' Their complaints are not only as to the contents of the pending bill but as to the manner in which it was made. Concerning the former, no one now pretends that is such a revision as the country wanted and as Mr. Taft promised. President Taft is represented as being on both sides of the fence—with Aldrich and against Aldrich—leading the most acute observers to the belief that his influence is more or less negligible on account of its lack of positiveness and continuity. Tariff reformers who go to the White House come away loud in their declarations that the president is dissatisfied with the Aldrich bill. But it is noteworthy that whenever Mr. Aldrich himself goes to the White House his visit is followed by semi-official assurances that the president and the tariff-maker are getting on very well and that Mr. Taft is charmed to find, in White House language, that 'he can do business with the senator from Rhode Island.' Veteran watchers of the game as played for generations by the gray wolves of protection smile to themselves at this assurance, and remark that when Mr. Aldrich does business with Mr. Taft on the tariff it is much like the way the lion does business with the lamb.

"Since Senator Aldrich's frank avowal that his measure does not pretend to meet the promises made by the republican party, as those promises were understood by the people, and his declaration that the Chicago platform never made such a promise, anyway, curiosity has redoubled as to what the president intends doing when it comes to signing the bill, some weeks hence. All efforts to draw from the president a plain statement of his intentions have come to naught."

DR. A. H. GIVEN

Dr. A. H. Given, who died recently at his home in Wymore, Neb., was well known in democratic circles throughout the state. Dr. Given was one of those stalwart men who devote their lives to the battle for principles. The town of Wymore will miss the good efforts of Dr. Given. Nebraska will miss him too and among the many who feel a keen personal loss in Dr. Given's death, Mr. Bryan is to be counted. Beginning with Mr. Bryan's first race for congress, Dr. Given was not only a stalwart political supporter but a warm personal friend.

DENVER'S GREAT NEWSPAPER

The Rocky Mountain News, Former United States Senator Patterson's paper, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary April 23 by issuing a special 110 page golden jubilee edition. The history of the News, from its founding before the city of Denver was born until the present day, is a story of the trials, joys and triumphs of the American pioneer. It blazed the way for a great empire in the west and has lived to see the fruition of its hopes, the results of its potent influence in that work. The News is a living refutation of the too prevalent idea that the modern daily must be subservient to the business office to be a financial success. Presided over by that fearless fighter, Thomas Patterson, it is true to its traditions as a pioneer in thought and progress. It has not hesitated to take a stand on all matters where it could advocate the cause of the common people. It belongs to that

rapidly disappearing class of journals that dominate and influence public opinion for the common good. Such a paper is one of the greatest assets any city can have, and the model municipality of Denver is a monument to its good work. The Rocky Mountain News is one of the great newspapers of the continent, one of which the largest metropolis of the nation might be proud. The Commoner wishes to congratulate the News on the success it so richly deserves.

HERE IS A CHANCE

McAlester, Oklahoma, has a population of 40,000 within twelve miles of its postoffice, composed of intelligent business men, farmers and laborers, the majority of whom are democrats, and who have been for the past year without a democratic daily newspaper, the nearest at the present time being sixty-five miles away. The people in that vicinity have the reputation of being wide-awake enterprising business men, and from the outlook there is a fine opening at that place for a good democratic daily.

WELCOME TO BECKHAM

The press dispatches announce that former Governor J. C. W. Beckham has become the editor of the Kentucky State Journal, published at Frankfort. The Commoner welcomes Governor Beckham to the journalistic field. His ability, his experience, his democracy and his wide acquaintance combine to make him an influential factor in the newspaper world from the beginning.

COMPLIMENTARY?

The New York Evening Post, in a well considered tribute to Senator Beveridge of Indiana, says that he is "inveterately fortune's champion and ever strong upon the stronger side." That is the New York Evening Post's polite way of saying that the senator from Indiana has the "band-wagon habit."

THE LAST ONE CONSIDERED

A tariff on wool and a tariff on brass,
A tariff on fur, hides and tallow;
A tariff on steel and a tariff on glass;
A tariff on crocks, deep and shallow.
A tariff on rails and a tariff on nails—
A tariff on coffee's a rumor—
Protect everything in the tariff trust ring;
Put th' cinch on the helpless consumer.

A tariff on flour and a tariff on salt,
A tariff on linen and cotton;
A tariff on sugar, and don't call a halt
Until not a thing is forgotten.
A tariff on clocks, on gloves and on socks—
Just pile up the tariff tax higher—
Protect everything in the tariff trust ring;
Put th' cinch on the poor helpless buyer!

A tariff on clothes and a tariff on boots,
A tariff on rubber and copper;
A tariff on lace and a tariff on fruits,
On medicine, bottle and stopper.
A tariff on thread and a tariff on bread—
Hoist the tariff as high as the steeple—
Protect everything in the tariff trust ring;
Put th' cinch on the poor common people!

A tariff on coal and a tariff on tin,
A tariff on lumber and paper;
A tariff on needle, a tariff on pin;
A tariff on shirts—that's the caper.
A tariff on rope and a tariff on soap—
Hoist the tax to the stars and surprise 'em—
Protect everything in the tariff trust ring;
No thought for the fellow who buys 'em!

A tariff on cradle, a tariff on bed,
A tariff on shroud and on coffin;
A tariff on tombstone to place at his head—
Get after him early and often.
From cradle to grave gouge the poor, helpless
slave—
Here's your chance, Tariff Baron; just
note 'er—
Protect everything in the tariff trust ring;
Put th' cinch on the short-sighted voter!

A tariff on lead and a tariff on zinc,
A tariff on carpet and curtain;
A tariff on food and a tariff on drink—
You've got them all cornered—that's
certain.
Tax his birth and his death, tax his first and
last breath—
Everything that he needs put the ban on.
Play the limit of lust, ev'ry tariff-fed trust,
With the help of Payne, Aldrich and
Cannon.
—W. M. M.