

CURRENT TOPICS

MR. BRYAN gave out the following statement April 28: "I have mailed a copy of the following letter to the democratic members of the Nebraska state senate and house of representatives: 'My Dear Sir: The failure of the legislature to submit the initiative and referendum at its regular session has brought the county option issue—which is direct legislation—into the present campaign, and this question is drawing attention from national issues. It is unfortunate that this should be the case at this time when six congressmen are to be elected and when a senator is to be chosen by the next legislature. Unless the mistake made by the legislature can be remedied, our party will be confronted by a very serious situation. It might promise in its platform to submit the initiative and referendum at the next session but it could hardly expect to be trusted to submit the measure next time if with a democratic governor, senate and house it is unable to do so now, unless it declares its independence of special interests. In my opinion the best way to meet the situation is by the submission of the initiative and referendum by a called session of the legislature, and I have no doubt that Governor Shallenberger will call such a special session if assured that a majority of both houses will support the initiative and referendum resolution which passed the house at the last session. The initiative and referendum will give to the people the legislative machinery through which they could legislate upon any question in which they are interested. A called session would also doubtless ratify the income tax amendment. If it is not possible to submit the initiative and referendum for ratification as a constitutional amendment at the election this fall, nothing is left for our party to do but to declare for the initiative and referendum and also county option in its state platform this summer. In order to ascertain whether an initiative and referendum resolution would pass in case of a special session being called, I take the liberty of submitting the question to you and to the other democratic members of the senate and house. Please wire me at once, at my expense, whether you would be willing to support such a resolution at a special session. Kindly answer even if you answer in the negative, in order that the poll may be completed as soon as possible. I shall ask the president of the Nebraska Direct Legislation League to co-operate by ascertaining how many of the republican members of the senate and house will pledge themselves to support the initiative and referendum resolution. Awaiting a reply at your earliest convenience, I am, very truly yours.'"

THE FOLLOWING letter was sent by Mr. Bryan to J. H. Mockett, Jr., president of the Nebraska Direct Legislation League, at Lincoln, Neb.: "I have just mailed a letter to the democratic members of the state senate and house, asking whether they will vote for the submission of the initiative and referendum in case a special session is called. I have no doubt that Governor Shallenberger will call a special session if assured that the resolution will receive a majority of both houses. I beg to submit to you the request that your league put the same question to the republican senators and members and inform me of the result. The initiative and referendum, if submitted, and adopted, will be the means of securing a popular vote on any question upon which the people desire to speak."

UPON THIS subject Mr. Bryan added: "I hope that the democratic papers and the republican papers that favor the initiative and referendum will take the matter up and urge the passage of the initiative and referendum resolution. It might be well for the committeemen and all others, both democrats and republicans, who are interested in the present campaign to see those senators and members who did not support the measure at the last session and point out to them the importance of the special session. Nothing but the submission of the amendment can correct the mistake that

was made. It is foolish to expect that a majority of either party will permit the domination of politics by the special interests when that domination becomes apparent, and it will be apparent to all if a measure so universally popular as the initiative and referendum can be throttled. Unless the initiative and referendum is submitted, there will necessarily be a fight in both party conventions, and it is not unlikely that both conventions will endorse county option."

BRIBERY IN the Illinois legislature is charged by Charles A. White, a member of that body. White alleges that William Lorimer was elected to the United States senate last May by bribery and corruption. The Associated Press report of this story follows: "White, who is a democrat, in his statement says that he received \$1,000 for voting for Lorimer. This money, he alleged, was paid him by Lee O'Neill Browne, democratic leader of the last legislature. White also says that he received \$900 more from the 'jack pot,' a term applied to an alleged general corruption fund distributed at the close of each session of the legislature. The \$900, White alleges, was paid him in St. Louis by Robert E. Wilson, also a member of the legislature. According to White he was first approached by Browne on May 24, 1909, while the voting was going on for a United States senator. A deadlock had existed for some time. Browne asked White if he would vote for Lorimer and White said he could and would. On May 25 they met again and Browne said he would pay \$1,000 and a share of the 'jack pot' for White's vote for Lorimer, according to the statement. On the next day Lorimer was elected on joint ballot, many democrats voting for him and White was among this number. White says Browne paid him \$100 in the next week at Springfield. Later, in Chicago, White alleges Browne paid him \$50 and then \$850. At the time he received the last sum. White says that Browne had \$30,000 in a belt. On July 15 White says he met Wilson in the Southern hotel in St. Louis in response to a telegram and received \$900 as his share of the 'jack pot.' White says he met other representatives in Wilson's room just before he received his money. According to White there was a general dissatisfaction among the members of the legislature he met in St. Louis, because they did not get more out of the 'jack pot' but that was explained by the fact that \$35,000 was lost in the 'jack pot' because of the failure of certain legislation to go through."

A WRITER IN the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch has been studying "some historic muckraking" with the following result: "When General Washington was about to retire from the presidency and was seeking that quiet which he so well deserved after his years of service, the Republican Aurora paid him this neat compliment: 'If ever a nation was debauched by a man, the American nation has been debauched by Washington. If ever a nation has been deceived by a man, the American nation has been deceived by Washington.' Not to be outdone by its yellow morning contemporary of Philadelphia, the New York Gazette had this to say regarding the Father of His Country: 'Now should the people rejoice exceedingly and let their hearts be glad, for now is the source of all misfortune brought down to the level of his fellow-men. Now will political iniquity cease to be legalized by a name.' In the next administration Adams came in for even worse treatment at the hands of the men who had black-guarded General Washington, and who had learned by the time the second president was chosen how abuse should be framed. In one of the republican sheets occurs this tirade: 'The historian will ask why the United States degraded themselves to the choice of a wretch whose soul came blasted from the hand of nature, of a wretch that has neither the science of a magistrate, the politeness of a courtier, nor the courage of a man. * * * But in order to give the president full justice we must recollect that the perfidy and imposture of his kidneys have a correspondent proportion to the crack in his

upper story; that, as Dryden says, 'every inch which is not fool is rogue;' that the now blasted tyrant of America, that ruffian who stigmatized the governor of Virginia as a minister recalled in disgrace, is supereminently entitled not only to laughter, but likewise to the curses of mankind.' In like manner Jefferson was said to have obtained his property by fraud and robbery and to have cheated a widow and her orphan children of an estate valued at \$10,000. He was also charged with swindling his creditors by paying his debts in worthless currency. John Quincy Adams, that ancient prototype of Fairbanks the Icy, was referred to in similar terms, and Andrew Jackson, foster-father of democracy, was called 'the baboon at the other end of the avenue' and other names which can hardly be printed, even in quotations, at this time."

NOW COMES the New York Sun, made famous by Charles A. Dana, and in discussing the Indiana republican convention, suggests Senator Beveridge as the democratic nominee in 1912. The Sun says: "We see nothing now for the democrats, meaning the disciples of Bryan, excepting the nomination of Beveridge as the party candidate for 1912. Even the prophet of the Platte must understand by this time he can not lead again the democratic hosts to calamity. It is only too evident that they have decided to die a different death. Then why not Beveridge? "Of course, it is conceivable that democratic leaders, awakened by disasters in the past, and alive to the possibilities of the future may get together and carve out a new department, neglecting populists and other drags, but is it likely? It was made evident to the whole country a year ago that the south is really in favor of protection on the Aldrich-Cannon plan. The only question is whether the voting millions can be divorced from the industrial thousands. It is a question of intelligence as against superstition. If the latter should prevail Beveridge is obviously the democratic candidate for 1912."

AN "OBSERVING Woman" writes from Farmington, Conn., to the New York Herald to say: "Will you allow me to enter my protest against the exploitation of great gifts of wealthy men as utterly unworthy of our praise or attention? They give of their overflow, denying themselves absolutely nothing, and are doing less than is their 'duty to do.' In some conspicuous cases the wealth has been gained by oppression and extortion. I know of a poor sick girl who has been kept for three years by two poor girl friends dividing her time between them. I know of a girl who works cleaning offices from 6 o'clock in the morning until 6 o'clock at night and at night freely gives her services to wash and iron for her frailer sister's family of six. I know still another who, after working in a factory all day, gives the last half of her nights to watching over an invalid sister (melancholia), to relieve the hard working husband. I could pile up these unsung benevolences—and they mount much nearer heaven than those that conspicuously occupy the center of the stage and receive the fullsome praise of men. Let us be spared as much of the latter as possible."

IMPORTANT decisions by the United States supreme court were rendered May 2. In one of these the associations of retail lumber dealers in Mississippi and Louisiana were disbanded and the "Standard Oil company of Kentucky" was, in another case, ousted from Tennessee. In either case the state courts had held that the corporations violated the anti-trust law and the supreme court supported this view. In the Mississippi case, Justice Lurton, the new member, announced the opinion of the court.

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