

# The Commoner.

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## Nebraska Convention

The Nebraska democratic state convention refused, by a vote of 647 to 198, to endorse county option and this has been heralded over the country as a defeat for Mr. Bryan. Let all the facts be known: About May 1 Mr. Bryan urged the calling of a special session of the legislature to submit the initiative and referendum. He stated that by the submission of the initiative and referendum the county option fight could be postponed for two years. He failed to secure the special session. Then he announced himself in favor of an endorsement of county option as the only way to break the hold of the liquor interests and insure the submission of the initiative and referendum.

As a result of his fight the republicans endorsed the initiative and referendum, thus making it certain that it will be submitted at the coming session of the legislature (the democrats and populists also having endorsed it). This is a victory for the reform for which he has contended for fourteen years. He can afford to be turned down on county option if he can make sure of the initiative and referendum.

But the democratic convention defeated, by a vote of 638 to 202 a plank declaring against county option and Governor Shallenberger announced at the convention that he would sign a county option bill. Since the republicans and populists have declared for county option and the democrats have refused to declare against it the chances are largely in favor of the passage of a county option bill. It will be seen, therefore, that Mr. Bryan has reason to rejoice over the progress made in Nebraska. It matters little what is done to him; he can be happy so long as the things he is fighting for win—and they are winning in Nebraska.

### IN NEBRASKA

On the day following the adjournment of the Nebraska democratic convention, Mr. Bryan gave out the following statement:

"While the failure of the democratic convention to endorse county option was disappointing, still the fight for county option in the democratic party has not been in vain. In the first place it has helped to secure a declaration in favor of the initiative and referendum in the party, and now that all parties have declared for it, there is no doubt of the necessary amendment being submitted at the next session of the legislature. The only thing that remains to be done on this subject is to pledge every candidate on all tickets to support the initiative and referendum, and this ought to be attended to. The candidate who refuses to pledge himself to support the initiative and referendum not only declares himself against the rule of the people, but repudiates the platform of his party.

"The populist party declared for county option two years ago, and it was to be expected that it would declare for it again. The work now to be done is to secure county option candidates in every senatorial and representative district. The democrats who favor county option should

turn out at the primaries and nominate a candidate favorable to county option. The republicans in favor of county option should be as active in securing the nomination of republican candidates favorable to county option. County option candidates should be nominated by all parties in each district, and I have no doubt that this can be done in a great many districts. If the democratic convention had endorsed county option, the issue would have been eliminated from our campaign for state officers, congressmen and senator, but even as it is, it will not be a controlling factor except in the case of governor. There is no reason why anyone's vote on the other state offices should be influenced by the attitude of the candidate on the question of county option, and there is no reason why we should not vote for our congressmen with a view to securing proper representation on national issues.

"I believe that the democrats have a great advantage in the discussion of national issues, and that advantage ought to be used to secure as many democratic congressmen from this state as possible. It is fortunate that we have the Oregon plan on senatorship. Every legislative candidate should be urged to pledge himself to vote for the senatorial candidate receiving the largest number of votes, and in this way we can, to a great extent, eliminate the county option question in the selection of a senator. The democrats ought to elect a United States senator. Mr. Burkett is opposed by a large and influential element in his own party, and from this element we ought to draw enough votes to insure the success of the democratic candidate. The county option question will cut some figure in the election of the governor, but if we can succeed in electing a county option legislature, the governor in all probability will be elected who will either favor county option or be pledged to sign the bill.

"There is no reason why any democrat should be discouraged or lose interest in the fight. On the contrary there is every reason why the voters should come out to the primaries on August 16. A full vote at the primary will give an authoritative expression of the wishes of the voters, and that is all that we can ask."

Following is another newspaper dispatch:

"Mr. Bryan was asked about the motion which he made regarding the so-called 'gag rule' and said: 'Some of the papers construed it as an effort to secure a hearing before the convention. They are in error. I had no doubt that the convention would present no opposition to my making my report and discussing it. I proposed the amendment to Mr. Hitchcock's motion because I saw it would prevent Mr. Metcalfe's introducing his amendment to the Shallenberger resolution. It had that effect as those remember who were at the convention. When Mr. Metcalfe attempted to introduce his plank he was ruled out of order and the convention refused to modify the ruling.'"

### WATCH IT GROW

Direct legislation, otherwise known as the initiative and referendum, is growing in popular favor. Recently four democratic conventions have declared in favor of this great reform. Ohio democrats, Minnesota democrats, Iowa democrats, and Nebraska democrats, adopted state platform declarations in favor of the initiative and referendum. A few years ago a man who offered a direct legislation plank in the democratic convention was laughed at. Now he is highly honored and is given a seat at the head of the table.

### PROGRESS

Colonel Sibert, who has charge of the Atlantic section of the canal at the Isthmus, reports that good progress is being made in the construction of the locks in his division. As much as 3,758 cubic yards of concrete have been laid in one day, which is said to be double the record made on any similar work in the world. The average is now 2,500 cubic yards per day. It will be a great day for our country and for the world when the first ship goes through.

## "Lorimer Democrats"

At Lincoln, Illinois, a few days ago a gathering of Illinois democrats adopted resolutions denouncing the democratic legislators who voted for Lorimer and demanding their retirement from politics. The meeting was not as largely attended as it ought to have been, but the resolutions adopted give voice to the conscience of the party, as the Lorimer democrats will find if they become candidates for re-election.

One of the democrats condemned resents the action of the protesting democrats and mournfully declares that "we may as well give up government if their diabolical doctrine that one party must not assist the patriots of another in a solemn crisis," etc., "is right." "Patriots" is good. So it seems that the "patriots" of the two parties got together and, finding that the patriots were not in the majority, proceeded to buy enough votes to insure a victory for the patriots.

Any democrat who voted for Lorimer for "patriotic" reasons ought to be retired to private life and kept there long enough to learn what patriotism means. The democrats who assembled at Lincoln were right in refusing to draw a line between those who voted for Lorimer for pay and those who voted for him because they lacked sense. It is almost as dangerous to have a fool in the legislature as a knave. A democratic legislator who could be convinced that he was performing a patriotic duty in voting for Lorimer could be persuaded to do any thing desired by the lobby, provided the same patriotic arguments were used. He is not fit for any representative position—it is hardly safe to allow him to run at large.

The Lorimer senatorial election seems, from developments, to have been the most corrupt in the history of the nation; that a majority of the democrats should have voted for such a man, under such circumstances, is in itself conclusive proof of widespread corruption. If there were democrats who did not actually receive money they could not have been ignorant of the means being employed.

Turn them out! The party can not pause to defend those who are guilty or who, if innocent, have aroused a suspicion which can never be removed.

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY GROWING

The modification of the king's oath by act of the British parliament is a step in the direction of religious liberty. The change not only eliminates the words objectionable to the Catholics, but the words objectionable to non-conformists. And while Great Britain, a Protestant country, is making a concession to Catholics, Spain, a Catholic country, is making concessions to Protestants. Thus does toleration grow. It is gratifying to see the doctrine of brotherhood growing—the more gratifying to see concessions made by both sides.

### "LEST WE FORGET"

To dispel any possible lingering doubts, the Associated Press again sends out the veiled rumor that Secretary Ballinger is to be exonerated by the congressional investigating committee.

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### The Primaries in Nebraska

August 16

Every Voter in Every Party  
Should Go to the Polls on  
that Day and Vote his Choice