

sion of important questions to a popular vote. For instance, a constitution is considered a much more important matter than a single statute. The statute is adopted by a legislative body; the constitution is usually adopted by the people themselves. City charters usually provide that the council can decide minor matters, but that it must submit important propositions, like the voting of bonds, to the people at a general or special election.

Some advocates of the initiative and referendum go to the extreme of declaring representative government a failure. This is an unfair statement of the proposition. Representative government is not a failure, but it has not given us a perfection. Improvement is always possible, and we should be willing to accept any amendment that will better our government. It was the opinion of the democratic national convention that the application of the referendum principle, as far as it was practicable, would improve the government, and the editor of The Commoner fully shares this opinion. If the people could compel the enactment of any law that they desired and reject any law that was obnoxious to them, legislatures would not be so easily corrupted nor would they be so perpetually annoyed by the influences which now surround state and national capitals.

Is It Settled?

Henry Clews, the New York banker, in his weekly letter under date of January 11, 1902, said:

The country is still in need of a scientific and elastic currency system; the absence of which vastly increases the danger of panic in times of retrenchment and disaster. But congress sleeps; forgetful that the promises of two national elections to provide a sound currency system are still unfulfilled. What if the country should fail to give the party in power a third chance to redeem ante-election pledges?

What right has Mr. Clews to agitate a dead issue? With what reason does he seek to disturb the prosperity and happiness of the business world by a discussion of the money question? Is it not an approach to treason for any one to say that the republican party has failed to fulfill its ante-election pledges?

But seriously, if it be true that there must be a change in our currency system, if we must have legislation on the money question in order to avoid the danger of panic in times of retrenchment and disaster, if we must provide a sound currency system, are the men who think as Mr. Clews thinks, to have a monopoly on the discussion of the money question? Are those who have opinions of their own on this great question to be hushed to silence on the plea that the money question has been settled, while Mr. Clews and his associates are bombarding congress with a demand that the money question be disposed of, and that a new currency system be devised?

The man who, while insisting that the money question is dead, persists in agitating for a new currency system, either arrogates to himself the exclusive right to think and speak upon this subject or he must concede it to be the privilege of the humblest citizen in the land to express his opinion upon a question so important to the welfare of the people.

Dewey and Miles Rebuked.

Walter Wellman, the Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald, appears to be in the confidence of the administration and frequently seeks to set the public right concerning administration conduct.

When Mr. Roosevelt selected Captain Clark to represent the navy and General Wilson to represent the army at the coronation of the king of England, it was generally understood that the president's action was in the form of a rebuke to Admiral Dewey and General Miles.

In discussing these appointments in the Rec-

ord-Herald, Mr. Wellman explains why General Miles was not appointed. He says:

General Miles came naturally to his mind as the head of the army, and the president was reluctant to miss the chance to exhibit this handsome and gallant officer and his magnificent and specially designed uniform to the crowned heads of Europe. If it had been possible to send General Miles it is agreed by everyone that his fine bearing and his finer uniform would have won universal applause even among the bejeweled princes and potentates of the old world.

Unfortunately, there were reasons why General Miles could not be selected, willing as he was to undertake the mission. The president and he recently had an interview which neither of them cares to have a repetition of. But for that interview, and the causes that led to it, the president's choice would naturally have fallen upon General Miles.

In the same report, Mr. Wellman explains why Admiral Dewey was not appointed:

When he came to the naval end of the coronation problem the president was even more embarrassed. His first thought naturally was of Admiral Dewey, the best-known American naval officer, both at home and abroad. But here again recent events were still casting their shadows. The president was not pleased with a part of Admiral Dewey's performance as president of the Schley court of inquiry, and Mr. Roosevelt has made no secret of his displeasure. If the admiral had found in favor of Schley on all the counts of the precept no one would have criticised him. He would have been wholly within his rights. But instead of doing this he voted with the other two members of the court against Schley on all counts, joined in the censure and stood as much responsible as any of them for the adverse verdict, save in the few minor particulars in which he expressed an individual opinion in qualified contradiction of the main body of the report.

The complaint which the president makes of the admiral is that he went into a matter which the court had decided not to consider at all, and on which it refused to hear evidence, and decided the question of command at the battle of Santiago. It was this obiter dictum of Dewey's that kept the controversy alive, greatly to the president's regret and embarrassment, and in his opinion Admiral Dewey erred in delivering any such opinion, both as to fact and as to form. Hence Dewey could not be selected to go to London.

Admiral Schley was the next to be considered, but, of course, that did not take much thought. Had the verdict of the court of inquiry been different he would have been a promising candidate.

According to this eminent authority, then, the public is justified in construing the president's action as a rebuke to Dewey and Miles. It will be observed that Mr. Wellman says Admiral Schley's name was also on the list, but the verdict of the court removed the hero of Santiago bay from consideration.

The fame of Dewey, Miles and Schley will not be affected because they were deprived of the privilege of attending the coronation ceremonies of a king. The American people will be interested in knowing, however, how far the administration purposes going in its efforts to rebuke men whom the American people have learned to regard as heroes.

What have these men done to deserve a rebuke at the president's hands? Why have they been relentlessly pursued by administration agents and administration organs, while at the same time they occupy a very high place in the affections of the people generally?

Tammany's New Leader.

Mr. Croker showed good sense as well as devotion to the party's interests when he threw his influence to so excellent a man as Mr. Nixon and caused him to be selected as the leader of Tammany. Mr. Nixon represents that element of the organization which has stood for clean government and has opposed the use of official position for private gain. He is a man of honesty, character and ability, and his leadership will silence much of the criticism which has been aimed at the organization in recent years.

Mr. Nixon can make Tammany a powerful influence in democratic politics if he follows out the theory which he has announced, namely, that the only way to ensure democratic victory is to make the organization deserve public confidence. Tammany's new leader was not a candidate and knew nothing of the proposed honor until he was selected. He announces that he enters upon his duties without pledges to anyone, and he is thus able to act with an eye single to the party's welfare. The democrats of the country at large will applaud the selection of Mr. Nixon and will wish him success.

The Bacon Resolution.

A reader of The Commoner asks for the publication of the Bacon resolution, together with the vote thereon. Senator Bacon of Georgia offered this resolution as an amendment to the McEnery resolution:

Resolved, further, That the United States hereby disclaim any disposition or intention to exercise permanent sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said islands, and assert their determination, when a stable and independent government shall have been erected therein, entitled in the judgment of the government of the United States to recognition as such, to transfer to said government, upon terms which shall be reasonable and just, all rights secured under the cession by Spain, and to thereupon leave the government and control of the islands to their people.

The vote on the resolution stood twenty-nine to twenty-nine, and the vice president, casting his vote in the negative, declared it lost. The following persons were recorded as voting in the affirmative:

Bacon, Bate, Berry, Chilton, Clay, Cockrell, Faulkner, Gorman, Jones (Ark.), Martin, Money, Murphy, Pettus, Rawlins, Smith, and Tillman, (democrats), sixteen.

Caffery, Gray, and Lindsay, (gold democrats), three.

Harris, Helffeld, Pettigrew, and Turner, (fusion), four.

Hale, Hoar, Perkins, and Quay, (republicans), four.

McLauren, democrat at that time, but since then acting with the republicans.

Jones of Nevada, silver republican then, since then acting with the republican party.

Total, twenty-nine.

The following were recorded as voting in the negative:

Allison, Burrows, Carter, Chandler, Deboe, Fairbanks, Frye, Gear, Hanna, Hawley, Lodge, McEride, McMillan, Mantle, Nelson, Penrose, Platt (Conn.), Platt (N. Y.), Pritchard, Ross, Shoup, Simon, Warren, Wolcott.

Morgan and McEnery, (democrats), two.

Teller, silver republican.

Kyle and Stewart, then fusion, since acting with the republicans, two.

The following were paired in favor of the resolution:

Daniel, Mallery, Kenney, Roach, Mills, Turley, Vest, White, (democrats).

Allen and Butler, (populists).

Cannon, (silver republican).

The following were paired against the resolution:

Davis, Elkins, Callinger, Hansbrough, Clark, Proctor, Wilson, Baker, Cullom, Spooner, Aldridge, and Wetmore.

If this resolution had been adopted by the senate and carried out by the administration there would have been no bloodshed in the Philippines and the inhabitants would now be our friends instead of our enemies.

A movement is on foot in some of the states to prevent the carrying of concealed weapons. It is a much needed reform. If a man is always careful to tell the truth the danger of his being called a liar is so remote that he need not go around in anticipation of it.

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