

worth less than \$27,000,000. If they could raise four times the value of the tangible property upon an expiring franchise, can any sensible man for a moment hesitate as to what amount of money the city of Chicago can raise upon the security hereinbefore mentioned?

"The operation of public utilities by municipalities is no untried theory. Wherever a municipality has taken over a public utility, as to this utility corruption and bribery cease. There is no motive for the corruption of an alderman in case of a utility operated by the public.

"If good results have been secured in the cities of Europe and Australia, why can not they be secured in the cities of New York and Chicago, and the other cities of America? The men or parties who charge the citizens of Chicago or of New York with being so inefficient, incapable or dishonest as to be unable to own and operate their own utilities, frame an indictment against the citizens of these communities which our people will answer at the polls with a verdict of 'Not guilty.'

"The movement in favor of municipal ownership of all public utilities has taken deep root among the intelligent people of this country. It is no passing sentiment. It is here to stay. Municipal ownership and operation of these utilities and governmental ownership of railways, telegraphs and express transportation is a practical question upon which the people must pass within a very short time, and the politicians and parties who ignore this sentiment must be prepared for a short-lived career before the people."

POLITICS AND THE JUDICIARY

The terms of the truce by which Alva Adams has been installed as governor of Colorado, without the bloodshed that was predicted would follow an attempt to seat him, lays bare the entire miserable deal by which the corporations of the state have made a barter for control of the supreme court. The press reports have contained elaborate accounts of the election muddle in Colorado, leaving the impression that it was a clear-cut political fight between republicans and democrats for the control of the state, with abundant evidence of corrupt political practices, ballot-box stuffing, and election frauds that could be traced to both parties. It now appears that the triumph of one party or the other had little or nothing to do with the case.

Some years ago both parties in Colorado made platform pledges in favor of an eight-hour day in the mines and smelters of the state, and upon all public works and in all employment of a certain hazardous nature. The question was submitted by a democratic legislature—or a fusion legislature—as a constitutional amendment, and was carried by a big majority. The big corporate interests of the state, the smelter trust, the mine-owners' syndicate, and like organizations opposed the measure bitterly, and finally secured a decision of the supreme court declaring the amendment void. This was followed by the labor outbreaks, which have brought so much disgrace upon the state in the last two years.

In the recent election Roosevelt and Fairbanks carried the state by a big majority, and all of the republican state officers were elected, with the exception of James H. Peabody, the governor, under whose administration the deportation of miners by the militia was perpetrated in the Cripple Creek and Telluride mining districts. Alva Adams, who has already served the state twice in the capacity of governor, had a majority of about 10,000 on the face of the returns. By a remarkable action, the supreme court of the state took original jurisdiction

in the election cases and threw out enough democrats to give the republicans a majority of the senate. By the adoption of an amendment to the constitution the number of judges of the supreme court was increased by two, and as soon as the republicans secured control of the senate Peabody was used by the parties to the deal and induced to send in the names of two members for supreme court appointments. The senate confirmed these, and then the interests that had been backing Peabody gave way and withdrew all objection to the inauguration of Gov. Adams. It is always a delicate matter to comment upon the char-

acter of members of a high judicial body, but there is no secret of the fact that the men appointed by Peabody to fill the two places on the supreme bench of the state were named by two men who represent interests in Colorado that are seeking an extension of franchises and are bitterly opposed to the enactment of an eight-hour law. Gov. Peabody himself declares that he has been tricked, used by the men who were needing his services, and then flung aside with scant ceremony. Peabody promises to go on with his contest, but he no longer has even the indifferent encouragement of the leaders who were urging violence

a few weeks ago rather than see his place taken by Alva Adams.

The voters of the nation will stand a good deal in state and municipal administrations, but they have always shown a disinclination to tolerate politics on the bench. The interests that appoint judges and the judges who act as prevail in Colorado are usually and surely slated for punishment by the people. Plain citizens can hardly be blamed for questioning the quality of justice that will be administered by a tribunal so chosen. Colorado has nothing to be proud of in her peaceable settlement of the gubernatorial muddle.—Washington Post.

The Primary Pledge==Organize Now.

From The Commoner, Lincoln, Nebraska, March 17, 1905

Newspapers favoring the plan outlined are requested to reproduce this editorial together with the primary pledge as it appears below. They may request their readers to sign this pledge and forward the same either to The Commoner or to the office of their local democratic paper. In the latter event these pledges may be then forwarded in bulk to The Commoner office where they will be duly recorded.

The Pledge Outlined

The following editorial appeared in The Commoner of March 17:

"Mr. Bryan has been in receipt of a multitude of letters since the election urging organization for the campaign of 1908. The rank and file of the party are ready to begin the fight; they only await a plan of co-operation. This plan has been under consideration for some weeks and is herewith submitted.

"Let each democrat pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use his influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of

the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

"This plan does not involve the writing of a platform in advance of the primaries; it does not rest upon the paramount importance of any one issue. It recognizes the right of the democratic voters to control the policy of the democratic party, and to determine its position upon public questions. It also recognizes the importance of honesty and sincerity in politics.

"This proposition will appeal to all who believe in the rule of the people—to all who are willing that the majority shall govern in party management and in the nation. It does not mean that those who exert themselves to secure a good platform will be bound to support a bad platform—that is a question which each must determine for himself—but it does mean that the democratic platform shall give voice to the prevailing sentiment of the democratic party, and that the party shall take the country into its confidence. The pledge proposed is a primary pledge—because the people speak at the primaries. The national convention is attended by delegates and each delegate represents tens of thousands of democrats. The state convention is also attended by delegates, and these represent thousands of democrats. The county conventions are, as a rule, attended by delegates, and these in turn represent hundreds of democrats. At the primary the voters speak for themselves; there democracy has its citadel.

"When the work of organization is

sufficiently advanced, a time can be set for the meeting of the members in their various localities. The members of this organization, while pledged to but one thing—namely, attendance upon the primaries—are urged to co-operate among themselves for the support of every effort put forth to eliminate corruption in politics. No cause can prosper permanently that does not appeal to the moral sense of the country, and the moral sense of the country is now being awakened to the importance of purifying politics.

"The Commoner will do its part in aiding every movement that has for its object the ascertainment of the will of the people and the scrupulous enforcement of that will.

"The Commoner will also furnish all the information that it can upon the questions which are before the public to the end that its readers may be prepared to render the maximum of assistance to every worthy cause.

"Who will be the first to make this pledge? A record will be kept in The Commoner office of the name and address of each person who enters into this movement. Those who desire to be enrolled can either write approving the object of the organization, and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank which is printed below.

"The Commoner will be pleased to publish a limited number of brief letters on this subject. Mr. Bryan is encouraged by his correspondence to believe that there will be a prompt and hearty response to the above proposition."

THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

I promise to attend all the primaries of my party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use my influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

Signed.....

Street..... Postoffice..... State.....

County..... Voting precinct or ward.....

Fill out blanks and mail to Commoner Office, Lincoln, Neb.