

BOSSISM IN OHIO POLITICS—A STRIKING REVIEW

Columbus, Ohio.—October 5.—(Special Correspondence.)—The work of active campaigning in Ohio has begun. Both gubernatorial candidates are now on the stump and the people of the state are weighing their words with the greatest care.

In his opening address at Bellefontaine, Governor Herrick said of the veto power and the use thereof that "It will be used to prevent extravagance. It will be used to defeat laws that plainly violate the constitution or offend the moral sentiment of the people." He made this statement in justification of his threat to veto the Brannock local option bill.

In the first political speech that Mr. Pattison made after this statement of the governor he pointedly inquired whether Governor Herrick insisted that the original Brannock bill providing for local option in residence districts was an extravagant measure; if not, Mr. Pattison inquired whether that law plainly violated the constitution, and called attention to the fact that no lawyer claimed that it would. In fact the greatest change that the governor insisted on was merely a change in figures. If 75 per cent made the law unconstitutional, certainly 55 per cent would have the same effect. Therefore he must have threatened to veto the bill because it offended the moral sentiment of the people. The fact that every church organization in Ohio, every Sunday school convention and every institution allied with the churches approved the measure that the governor threatened to veto and have condemned him in unmeasured terms for his threat goes a long way towards demonstrating that the original bill did not offend the moral sentiment of the state. In his address at Akron last night Senator Houck, the democratic candidate for lieutenant governor, declared that if Governor Herrick would point to one single church conference; assembly, presbytery, association; to one single educational assembly, one single temperance club or any other organization that is designed for human uplift that is advocating Governor Herrick's election, he would vote for him himself. Not a single independent newspaper and not one of the leading magazines is supporting the governor in his campaign.

Night before last Governor Herrick made a speech in Akron. He lost his temper and declared that the charge that he had dismissed from the state service a large number of veterans of the Civil war was a base lie and defied a democratic speaker to produce the proof. On the succeeding night, and from the same platform, James A. Rice, democratic candidate for attorney general, read a list of twenty names of veterans of the Civil war who had been dismissed from one institution alone by Governor Herrick, and read nine other names of Civil war veterans who were still holding place in that institution because the local republican committees from counties whence these men hail have refused absolutely to recommend civilians to succeed them.

Governor Herrick frantically demanded proof of the charge of bossism. He desired specifications and insisted that his opponent, Mr. Pattison, should present a bill of particulars and cease his generalization. The demand for proof is really laughable. Not an elector in Ohio but knows that George B. Cox is absolute boss of the republican "organization" of the state. It is axiomatic; proof is unnecessary; yet Mr. Pattison in one brief speech provided more proof than Governor Herrick or Senator Dick or Mr. Cox can digest in the ensuing four years. He first called attention to the fact, well known and published in all newspapers, that Governor Herrick sent an embassy to Boss Cox in Cincinnati last January to implore and beseech him to permit Governor Herrick to have a renomination. The fact was published in all republican daily newspapers that Governor Herrick himself finally went upon this same mission, and it was proudly heralded in these republican papers that the mission was successful and that Cox had given his word to support the governor for re-nomination. Whereupon Lieutenant Governor Harding, who until that hour had been a candidate for the gubernatorial nomination himself, published in his own daily newspaper a bitter editorial withdrawing from the contest, in which he said: "If Mr. Cox can determine the governorship in 1905, he can name the United States senator and governor in 1908 and 1910, and more than half a million republican voters of the state can go about their private affairs, reaping the harvest of prosperity assured that the party 'organization' has things adjusted for all time to come." As if that was not sufficient proof, Mr. Pattison thereupon read a letter written by Congressman Shattuck of Cincinnati to George B. Cox, declining a re-

nomination for congress from the Cincinnati district. The letter was not addressed to Congressman Shattuck's constituency but to his boss, George B. Cox. As though the proof might not be sufficiently strong, Mr. Pattison read a resolution adopted by the legislative delegation from Cincinnati in the general assembly, wherein it was unanimously agreed that the votes of the entire delegation should be cast as Mr. Cox might direct. In Mr. Pattison's opinion that smacked something of bossism, and was adopted for the specific purpose of notifying the balance of the legislators throughout the state that Mr. Cox already had fourteen votes under his control with which to bargain and barter. Fac simile letters which Boss Cox had written to various members of the legislature commanding them to vote for a bill which proposed to turn over the canal system of the state, worth millions of dollars, to a syndicate of which he was head, have been published in all the daily papers in the state, and Mr. Pattison modestly told the hearers that he believed these letters provided some evidence of bossism. Fac simile copies of telephone bills paid by the state and contracted by Mr. Cox for service between his office and the legislative halls on nearly every day of the last session of the legislature, have been printed, and in Mr. Pattison's opinion, at least, these constitute proof of bossism. Letters written to the public school teachers of Cincinnati by Mr. Cox notifying them of his election to the presidency of a bank and soliciting them to turn their accounts to that bank have been published and some people there are in Ohio who think that these constitute proofs of bossism. Fac simile letters written by Cox to the various members of the legislature calling their attention to certain pending bills and commanding them to look after the same have been published in every newspaper, and even these sound something like bossism.

Lincoln Steffins' magazine article has been read by nearly every voter in Ohio, in which Cox is quoted as saying to Mr. Steffins that he is a boss and is proud of it. The magazine article of Mr. Cox's friend, Gus J. Kargar, has been reproduced by the thousand, the introduction of which refers to the nomination of the successor to Congressman Bromwell of Cincinnati. A prominent citizen of that city, who had not been actively engaged in "organization" politics, learned that Mr. Bromwell was about to retire from congress. This prominent citizen had some congressional aspirations and congressional equipment. He wrote to Mr. Bromwell stating that he had learned of his determination to retire from the national legislature and that he desired to be nominated to succeed him. He asked Mr. Bromwell how he should set about it to secure the nomination. Mr. Bromwell went to the telegraph office and sent this famous message of but two words: "See Cox." Why see Cox unless he is a boss? When the bill abolishing spring elections (which finally became a law) was before the legislature a state senator, in explaining his vote, dramatically exclaimed that he was opposed to it, that his constituency was opposed to it but that the party "leaders" were for it and then like a quivering coward he voted "aye." Most people think that such "leaders" are bosses.

Mr. Pattison provided this much proof of the charge of bossism in one brief speech. One hundred speeches could not provide it all.

The result is that the republicans are on the defensive all along their wavering line.

In the only speech that either Foraker or Dick have delivered in this campaign they made a futile attempt to switch the issues from those of state to those of national concern. In doing so Senator Foraker made a covert attack upon President Roosevelt's tariff and reciprocity policy and a vigorous attack upon his policy of rate legislation, solely for the reason that the democratic state platform commended the president in his attitude upon these questions. Senator Foraker placed the republicans of Ohio in this attitude—that if they vote for Herrick they attack President Roosevelt. There is no escaping this deduction, and the result is that much as Senator Dick would desire it the fight can not be made on national issues.

Governor Herrick and his fellow stumpers must defend themselves from the charge of bossism and graft, and there is no defense. Senator Dick announces this morning that most of the members of the cabinet will come to Ohio and appeal to the republicans to stand by the president; but the electors of Ohio will answer such appeals by suggesting that their two senators first get in line with the president. They can vote in the senate to sustain him, and the

republicans of Ohio have no opportunity to hold up his hands at the pending election. The democrats are not opposing him.

All in all, indications this hour are that Governor Herrick is marching to ignominious defeat. There is not the remotest doubt but what he will lose and Mr. Pattison will gain more than 100,000 honest, conscientious, patriotic republican votes.

The proposition that confronts the democratic organization now as in the beginning is solely one of so enthusing the rank and file of the democracy as to induce them to go to the polls on November 7. There is no doubt about what they will do when they arrive there. There is no split, no discontent, no sourness on the part of a single democratic voter in the state. But recent years of adversity has induced many to believe that it is no use, and it is the hope of those charged with the management of the campaign that they may be able to show to this class of democrats that their opportunity is now at hand. If the Bryan vote can be polled, or if that vote can be approximately polled, Mr. Pattison will win with a tremendous majority. Unless we poll this vote what matter is it that we draw so largely from the opposition? What will it profit the democratic party to win half the republican votes and lose through stay-at-homes half its own? If the real democrats who voted so valiently in 1896 and 1900 will now come to the polls, victory will be their portion. The opposition to Governor Herrick is growing every day, and the very condition that Mr. Bryan, when last in Ohio, predicted now exists, to-wit, governorship, the state offices and legislature are tendered us by the republican party, and the only doubt of their acceptance rests upon those democrats who may conclude to stay at home. Mr. Bryan urged us to get these votes to the polls. If his advice is heeded, and every voter in Ohio will be out, the victory will be won.

OHIO REPUBLICANS—ATTENTION!

The attention of the voters of Ohio is invited to an editorial which recently appeared in the New York Press, a republican newspaper, and is reproduced on page 14 of this issue.

It will be observed that the Press points out:

It is a sickening farce for republican speakers to go out on the stump asking votes for a state ticket on the ground that votes against it will be votes against President Roosevelt—when the state platform tacitly says that a vote for it is a vote against the president in the matter of republican party policy which he holds nearest his heart.

Then this republican paper solemnly declares:

The truth remains, which a conscientious voter is compelled to accept, that a victory for the democratic state ticket in Ohio would, theoretically, be more a Roosevelt indorsement by the people of Ohio than a popular approval of the "republican" platform prepared by Senator Foraker for his friends, the railroads and trusts.

The Press says that if the republican ticket "escapes ruin in Ohio at the hands of a wrathful electorate it will be because the aggregate benefits of republican state government outweigh the evils of party control by Forakerism, and not because the party deserves to succeed on its odious opposition to the cardinal feature of the Roosevelt domestic policy."

But, perhaps, the Press has forgotten that there are no "aggregate benefits of republican state government in Ohio," and that many old-time republicans have declared for Pattison because they recognize the necessity for an overthrow of an odious republican state machine. In that view, then, as well as in the consideration of railroad rate regulation, which, according to Senator Foraker is a "democratic measure," the Foraker and Cox ticket in Ohio deserves defeat.

Every Commoner reader in Ohio who desires to be of service to his state would do well to show this editorial from the New York Press to his republican neighbors.

A CORNER IN SUNBEAMS

In a speech delivered at Mansfield, Ohio, Eugene V. Debbs said: "It is fortunate that Old Sol is far removed from the earth. If the arm of corporate capital were long enough to reach him there would long since have been a meter on every sunbeam."

That's not at all bad; and in the light of recent disclosures who will say that there is not as much truth as poetry in the statement?