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ISSUED WEEKLY.

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that the iron interests do not always insist on a republican. For instance, during the last two state campaigns the steel trust provided the best of facilities for their employes throughout the iron range to hear the democratic candidate for governor discuss the issues and give reasons why he should be elected.

The steel trust acquired their holdings originally on the Missabe range through John D. Rockefeller from the Merritt Brothers of this city. The Merritts opened up the Missabe range and built the Missabe railroad, but they were frozen out during the panic of 1893-94 and the greatest iron range in the world became the property of John D. Rockefeller and his associates for a paltry sum. Previous to this great property going into the hands of what is now known as the steel trust, the Merritt Brothers being short of funds made a proposition to the people of St. Louis county that if they would vote bonds to them to the amount of \$250,000 they in return would give the county stock in the road at par; but after the road became the property of Rockefeller the county commissioners of St. Louis county refused to take shares in the Massabe road in lieu of this \$250,000. They gave as their reason for not taking them that the road would be a liability instead of an asset. The road is said to be the best paying piece of railroad on earth and some people are so unkind as to say that the county commissioners were improperly influenced. The people of St. Louis county are still paying interest to the steel trust on the \$250,000 bonds. The steel trust owns the road, they own the bonds, and they own the mines, and there is no chance so far as I can see for them to lose out.

There has never been a man for the last twenty years elected to any office great or small in this county, with one single exception, who has had the opposition of the iron interests.

I would like to go farther into the history of the steel trust of this county in regard to taxes they have paid and the way the valuation on their property has raised from time to time. They have always shown that they have the ability to fully protect all the rights that they have in this county regardless of how they have acquired those rights. They have always respected the majesty of the law, when the law did not interfere with them. Two years ago there was a strike throughout the ranges. The steel trust imported into this city and county more than one carload of plug-uglies, ruffians and thieves from outside the state, and had them sworn in as deputy sheriffs, contrary to a state statute, and they acted as peace officers in this county for five or six months. Many

of them were deserters from the United States army. Some of them had served terms in the penitentiary in different states. Two of those deputy sheriffs clubbed a seventeen year old boy half to death right here in this city. The boy committed the offense of watching a ball game from the right-of-way of the steel trust railroad. Those two worthy officers were afterwards arrested and served a term in the county jail. Many others committed flagrant violations of our laws. The importation of those thugs into this state is a direct violation of our laws. Governor Johnson's attention was called to the matter at the time but nothing ever came of it.

The big lumber barons and the railroad magnates and the large iron interests have and do now control this state and determine who its officials shall be. While they have furnished work and cheap food to a lot of people, at the same time they have been a menace to an independent American form of government. "The trail of the serpent is seen from one end of this fair state to the other." And our governor will never qualify in Minnesota like St. Patrick did in Ireland.

JOHN D. BRADY.

NOT "SNEAKED IN"

Jackson, Minn., July 28, 1909.—Editor The Commoner: In a letter appearing in The Commoner of July 16, my friend, Mr. Alfred Jaques, of Duluth, discusses the tonnage tax question in connection with Governor Johnson's veto of the bill passed by the last legislature of this state providing for a tonnage tax on iron ore.

In such letter Mr. Jaques says that the plank relating to a tonnage tax was "sneaked into the last democratic state platform of this state," and for that reason considers it of no binding force as a party utterance.

Mr. Jaques is a man of character and standing and I feel sure would not make this charge unless he believed it to be well founded. But he is mistaken. He was not present at the convention which adopted the resolution in question and has evidently been misinformed as to the facts.

The platform of that convention was prepared and drafted by a sub-committee of the committee on resolutions. Senator Moonan, who was a member of that committee, publicly stated in the state senate last winter that he was the author of the tonnage tax plank in that platform, and his statement was true.

After being presented by Senator Moonan this plank was discussed and fully considered by the sub-committee and agreed to without dissent. Each paragraph of the platform was afterwards read to the full committee and agreed to in the form in which it now appears. It was then reported and read to the convention by Mr. O'Brien, the chairman of the committee, and adopted by a practically unanimous vote. No utterance of that platform was more carefully considered, better understood or more generally favored than this tonnage tax plank and the claim that it did not express the views of the convention in reference to a tonnage tax finds no support in the facts.

I have no desire to engage in a controversy over this matter but having been a member of the committee which drafted this platform I feel that Mr. Jaques' statement ought not to go uncorrected.

T. J. KNOX.

THE TONNAGE TAX

St. Peter, Minn., August 10, 1909.—In The Commoner of July 16, Alfred Jaques of Duluth, tells the public that the tonnage tax measure was "arbitrary and tyrannical," and declares that the plank demanding or indorsing such a measure was "sneaked into the state platform," and he consequently does not consider it binding. Now will Mr. Jaques inform the public through The Commoner why the governor advocated an "arbitrary and tyrannical" measure before election in various sections of the state? If the object of Mr. Jaques' letter to The Commoner of the 16th was to justify Governor Johnson's veto of the tonnage tax bill, then I certainly can not dispel the belief that the explanation I ask for is pertinent, and that any citizen voter is entitled to an answer from Mr. Jaques.

DEACON DONHAM.

SUGGESTIONS TO COMMONER READERS

Robert R. Durst, Moundridge, Kansas.—I furnished about seventy copies of The Commoner for about three months before election last year, mostly to young voters, and this township made a change from a republican majority of 20 to a democratic majority of 24.

HELP THE PEOPLE OF MONTEREY

A terrible condition of affairs exists in Monterey, Mexico, and vicinity as a result of the floods of August 27. Eight hundred bodies have already been recovered in Monterey while twenty thousand people are homeless. The American people are asked to give aid to the stricken people of Monterey. The Commoner urges its readers to lend a hand in this labor of love. Contributions may be sent to Hon. Philip C. Hanna, United States consul general, Monterey, Mexico.

EDUCATIONAL SERIES

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are invalid, that are pointed out by the majority opinion, yet it does not appear that they are so intermingled with the valid portions that they can not be separated so as to leave an enforceable statute. The act in question would still be enforceable by omitting from its first section the following words: "Endorsed, recommended, censured, criticised or referred to in any manner." With these words omitted the first section would provide that candidates for the judiciary and executive school offices "shall not be nominated by any political party or any political convention or primary or at any primary election."

Applying the same rule to the feature of section 3 of the act which limits the number of signatures to five hundred names in any one county and with these words omitted: "Not more than five hundred of which shall be from one county," the section would then read: "The number of signatures shall not be less than five thousand when the nomination is for chief justice or judge of the supreme court."

The limitation of five hundred signatures to any one county is not essential to the practical operation of the act. With this feature omitted five thousand voters from any portion of the state would nominate and thus the relator, by his own showing, would not be deprived of any substantial right. The act would then merely change the place of nomination from the floor of the party convention, or from the party primary, to the body of the people without regard to party affiliation. Has a political party an inherent right to nominate part candidates for non-political offices? Are not all the people greater than a mere party subdivision of the people?

Cooley in his Constitutional Limitations, 7th Ed., p. 247, concerning a legislative act says: "The constitutional and unconstitutional provisions may even be contained in the same section, and yet be perfectly distinct and separable, so that the first may stand though the last fall." In support of this view the author cites many authorities. The majority opinion contains a citation from State v. Ins. Co., 71 Neb. 225. Fairly construed it reaffirms the rule laid down by Judge Cooley.

Blair v. Ridgley, 41 Mo. 63: "Outside of society, and disconnected with political society, no person has or can exercise the elective franchise as a natural right, and he only receives it upon entering into the social compact subject to such qualifications as may be presented by the state or any body politic."

People v. Barber, 48 Hun. 198, 201: "The elective franchise is not a natural right of the citizen. It is a franchise dependent upon law by which it must be conferred to permit its exercise. (Spencer v. Board of Registration, 1 McArthur, 169; 29 Am. R. 582.)"

That part of the act which provides that candidates for judicial and educational offices can not be censured or criticised is evidently intended to be merely advisory. It will not be seriously urged that either judges or educational officers should be immune from deserved censure or criticism by any person who has or thinks he has just cause for complaint.

The inducement for the passage of the act is not expressed in its details, but is found in its broader language which is expressive of a laudable desire to separate the judiciary and the school system from partisan political control by non-partisan nominations and non-partisan elections.

In the belief the judgment of the trial court should be reversed and the act in question sustained this dissent is submitted.