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Champ Clark's Presidential Boom

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SOME DON'TS FOR REFORMERS

Speaking of the initiative and referendum reformers like the Oregon plan. They should ever keep in mind the fact that opponents of the initiative and referendum will attack it at various points. There are three things that opponents may be expected to do. They will not attack the principle—the time is past for that, but they will want to make the per cent for the petition as large as possible; they will want to limit the number of propositions to be submitted at one time and they will insist that a majority of all the votes cast at the election be required for adoption.

The first objection is the least important, for while the percentage required in Oregon is good it is not a vital matter just what percentage is required. The second objection is more serious for if a limit is fixed the special interests can rush in enough unimportant propositions to exclude those that they object to. The third is most serious of all. It gives the opponents of reforms the benefit of all the ignorant, the careless and the indifferent. Why should the opponents of reform be given this legal advantage? Why hamper the people when they try to legislate for themselves?

A plurality elects when we select a governor and members of the legislature to act for us; why should not a plurality pass a law by direct legislation? If those who vote for the proposition outnumber those who vote against it that is enough. Let the submission of the proposition be thoroughly advertised, then let the law assume that those who do not vote are willing for the matter to be determined by those who do vote. That is much more reasonable than to count those not voting as if they voted in the negative.

This is the most important point to be guarded: Insist that only a majority of those voting on the proposition shall be required.

THE LITTLE FAULTS

So many little faults we find In those we love; we see them, but if you and I Would soon pass on to bye and bye, They would not be faults, then—grave faults—to you and me, But just odd ways, mistakes, or even less—Remembrances to bless. Days change so many things, yes hours. We see so differently in sun and showers, Harsh words tonight will be so changed by tomorrow light, Can we not then forget, since we all know At best there's such a little way to go? —San Francisco Star.

Champ Clark's presidential boom is growing. It is already nearly as big as that of any other democrat mentioned in connection with the 1912 presidential nomination. The more the democrats think the matter over, the more convinced they are that Clark is the most available compromise candidate. On the day of the big democratic banquet in Baltimore a straw ballot was taken among the passengers of the special train which conveyed the members of congress from Washington to Baltimore. All of the leading aspirants for the 1912 presidential nomination were named on the ballots save Champ Clark. Notwithstanding, when the ballots were counted, Champ Clark's name had been written into a sufficient number of them to make him run a close second to Judson Harmon.

At Baltimore the big Missourian had the honors over the entire democratic field as a presidential possibility. Clark's star rose still a little higher when he was nominated for the speakership without opposition. The same harmonious sentiment which named Clark for speaker may grow and make him a presidential candidate a year hence.

Clark is not behind his own boom. While he was no doubt naturally pleased at the first connection of his name with so high a place, he has recently asked some of his friends who were intent upon urging his fitness for the position of democratic standard bearer in 1912 to desist, at least until he shall have made good as speaker, which is his one great ambition at this time.

Here are some of the reasons advanced by the friends of the speaker-to-be why they are urging him as a presidential possibility:

He will soon occupy the most important position of any democrat in public office.

He has demonstrated that he can work in harmony with the party in congress. That was McKinley's great strength. It was largely due to his long experience on the floor of the house that McKinley was able to get legislation.

Clark found the democrats disorganized and fighting and formed them into a solid phalanx. With the minority welded solidly, Clark whipped the republicans and reformed the committee on rules. He is the only democratic leader in congress who ever did it.

There is no reason why any democrat should fail to support Clark, for his loyalty to the party and its nominees has never faltered. No republican has ever gotten any comfort out of anything Clark has said of any fellow democrat. Clark would not be opposed either by the Bryan or Parker factions of the party.

No one can question Champ Clark's honesty, ability, democracy or patriotism. "We must never forget," said Mr. Clark in accepting the nomination for speaker, "that the best way to serve the party is to serve the people." This illustrates his high standard of politics.

Clark occupies a unique and advantageous position, geographically speaking. He can hardly be classed as a northern man or as a southern man. Neither can the east or the west claim him, for he votes in Missouri, which is practically in the center of the country.—Johnstown (Pa.) Democrat.

SPEAKER AND PRESIDENT

The Hon. Champ Clark is now an active candidate for the democratic presidential nomination in 1912. He has been put in the field by the logic of events rather than by his personal initiative. He has been the chief beneficiary in a political sense of last year's democratic victory. The most striking result of that victory was the transfer of power in the house of representatives from republican to democratic hands. The country decided to give the opposition party a chance to show what it could do in congress, and Mr. Clark has just been unanimously chosen to supervise the efforts to "make good," to prepare for which the new democratic majority has now gone into arduous training. He will be for the next year the democratic leader most in the public eye. If he can produce satisfactory results his claim on the democratic nomination in 1912 will be hard to sidetrack.

If it happens to be recognized by the next democratic national convention Mr. Clark will have triumphed over political precedent, for since the national convention system was introduced no incumbent of the speakership has ever been nominated for president. Henry Clay be-

came the candidate of one of the factions of the old republican party in 1824, while serving as speaker. Several ex-speakers have received nominations from national conventions, Clay himself in 1844, James K. Polk in that year, John Bell in 1860 and James G. Blaine in 1884. But no aspirant for the presidency has made much headway while filling the speaker's office. Speakers Samuel J. Randall, John G. Carlisle and Thomas B. Reed all failed to develop substantial strength as presidential candidates, although their distinction as party leaders was unquestioned.

In recent years parties have also been exceedingly chary about selecting presidential nominees from the roll of the house, or, for that matter, from the roll of the senate. The only president nominated and elected while a member of the house was James A. Garfield, who was also a member-elect of the senate. Of the republican party's other nominees Mr. Blaine was an ex-representative and ex-senator, General Harrison was an ex-senator and Major McKinley was an ex-representative. The only democratic presidential candidates since the war who had previously served in congress were Horace Greeley and William J. Bryan. The house of representatives has, therefore, proved a poor training school for presidential aspirants, and Mr. Clark will upset tradition if, while representing his party there, he is drafted for service as a presidential candidate.—New York Tribune. (rep.)

STOOD BY HIS GUNS

Jud Welliver is the most authentic of the insurgent newspaper reporters at Washington, and in an article in Hampton's magazine for February he gives a new view of the fight against Speaker Cannon last spring:

He says while the Norris resolution was under consideration some of the Tory democrats went to Champ Clark, leader of the democrats in the house, not realizing that he was in earnest, and suggested that they would "lose themselves" by leaving Washington so that Clark could get the glory of ostensibly fighting Cannon, and at the same time do him no harm. Clark told these men that they must stay in the house and vote on pain of exposure and denunciation.

And then, after the fight had waged day and night for nearly three days and everybody was suffering from loss of sleep, the insurgent republicans weakened. They came to Clark and proposed a compromise by which the committee on rules would be chosen by the house, but which omitted the section excluding the speaker from membership. And Clark told the insurgents also that they must stay in line.

The result was that the resolution was adopted in its original form. The thirty-odd insurgent republicans got all the glory at the time, but it was Champ Clark and his 174 democrats who did the work. Some of the 174 were unwilling, but Champ Clark led them. They voted right.

Clark will not have the aid of the big papers, but his record will be a great herald in itself.—Creighton (Neb.) Liberal.

HIS LONG SERVICE

The democratic party is in the position now of seeming to be near to victory if the proper man can be found as a candidate for the presidency. The Journal nominates Champ Clark, the sturdy old democratic war horse of Missouri.

Mr. Clark will be elected speaker of the house of representatives at the beginning of the next congress. This will bring him prominently before the people and also prove the confidence reposed in him by his colleagues in congress. More than any other man, at this time, he stands between conflicting democratic factions. He should be satisfactory both to the democracy of the east and of the west. Weatherworn and time-tried in scores of political battles, he is the ideal candidate for president of the United States.

His long service in congress has been without stain. He has proved himself a friend of the common people and the ever vigilant enemy of special privilege. Yet he has not been a dreamer, filled with ideal visions, no more than he has been a standpatter, hesitating to give the people the power they rightfully possess.

He has already signified his intention, as speaker throwing aside the old rules of the