

DIRECT LEGISLATION IN KANSAS

The Associated Press was in error when it said that the democrats defeated the initiative and referendum in the Kansas legislature. The Pittsburg Kansan tells the real story in this way:

"The situation in the legislature is unprecedented. The big mistake made by the people last fall is easily seen now even by a blind man, was to place in power a party so divided in its sentiments that practically nothing demanded by the people will be given them.

"As has been predicted, the republican senate, like the republican congress, repudiated their platform by defeating the initiative and referendum on February 9th.

"This clause gave the people the right to enact or repeal laws independent of the legislature. The vote stood 18 for the bill, with 24 against it. It took 27 votes to submit this measure as a constitutional amendment. For two hours the senate was stormed by the enemies of the resolution, giving explanation to their votes. The five democratic senators, Anderson, Cooke, Hodges, Milton and Robertson, stood solidly for the support of the measure, although it was an administration bill. The vote stood as follows: Yeas—Anderson, Avery, Brady, Cooke, Ganse, Hamilton, Hodges, Huffman, Milligan, Milton, Murphy, Myers, Potter, Quincy, Robertson, Smith, Stannard and Stavely.

"Nays—Bender, Brewster, Brown, Caldwell, Cambern, Carey, Denton, Fagenburg, Fowler, Glenn, Harris, Hostrup, Hunter, Lower, Overfield, Porter, Reed, Stewart, Stillings and Travis.

"On last Friday morning the recall joined the funeral procession by a vote of 25 to 15 in the senate. For two hours the debate was carried on in the senate, personalities were used and votes were explained. Again the five democratic members stood solidly for the administration bill, but the seven republican insurgents voting against it were: Avery, Brown, Fowler, Ganse, Morris, Hostrup.

"Perhaps there is no political question, on which the average voter is so well informed, and for which there is a more general demand in the state of Kansas, as has been the initiative, referendum and recall. This is real progress which insures to the people the proper kind of legislation on all issues as well as the proper officers and their good behavior while in office. No more flagrant violation of a platform was ever made by the republicans that voted against these measures. The resolutions will never be enacted into law giving the people their voice in adopting them until there is a clean democratic sweep of the state of Kansas."

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

The papers which are friendly to different candidates seem disposed to misconstrue the comments which The Commoner has made upon the different democrats whose names have been suggested in connection with the presidential nomination. For instance, some weeks ago four names were mentioned, and questions which have been asked concerning them were answered. Some of the eastern papers at once reported that Mr. Bryan had declared the four gentlemen named to be available candidates. More recently The Commoner has referred to different public men in connection with their official work. In the last issue an extended quotation was made from an Ohio paper in regard to Governor Harmon's attitude on the Oregon plan. It might be as well understood now as later that commendation of particular acts does not necessarily mean that the parties are available as presidential candidates or that their nomination would be desirable. The Commoner is not attempting to select a candidate for the presidency, and Mr. Bryan is not prepared to express an opinion yet as to which one of the many gentlemen named would be the most available, but that The Commoner may be free to commend such acts of Governor Harmon's administration as seem worthy of commendation, it is stated now for the benefit of the readers that The Commoner does not consider Governor Harmon as an available man for the democratic nomination for reasons that will be given when the discussion of the subject seems proper.

SUBSIDIZING LITERATURE

"The many will be ruined, that the few may be pleased. While everything is splendid above, all will be rotten below. Fine pictures, noble palaces, touching dramas—these may for a time be produced in profusion, but it will be at the cost of the heart and strength of the nation. Even the class for whom the sacrifice has been made, will soon decay. Poets may continue

to sing the praises of the prince who has bought them with his gold. It is, however, certain that men who begin by losing their independence, will end by losing their energy. Their intellect must be robust, indeed, if it does not wither in the sickly atmosphere of a court. Their attention being concentrated on their master, they insensibly contract those habits of servility which are suited to their position; and, as the range of their sympathies is diminished, the use and action of their genius become impaired. To them submission is a custom, and servitude a pleasure. In their hands, literature soon loses its boldness, tradition is appealed to as the ground of truth, and the spirit of inquiry is extinguished. Then it is, that there comes one of those sad moments in which no outlet being left for public opinion, the minds of men are unable to find a vent; their discontents, having no voice, slowly rankle into a deadly hatred; their passions accumulate in silence, until at length, losing all patience, they are goaded into one of those terrible revolutions, by which they humble the pride of their rulers, and carry retribution even unto the heart of the palace."

The above is the criticism which Buckle directs against the practice of subsidizing literature. The nearest approach to it today is found in efforts of trust magnates to subsidize our colleges and the effort of predatory corporations to subsidize newspapers.

SELF-CONDEMNED

In an editorial entitled, "An Invitation to Mr. Sheehan," the New York World offers to print denials from a number of corporation chiefs that these men are supporting Mr. Sheehan for senator. The World makes it very plain that in this instance it believes that the fact that a man is supported by a large number of the representatives of special interests is prima facie evidence that he is the candidate of the special interests.

Of course, Mr. Sheehan is the choice of special interests, and he would not do those interests any harm should he be elected. But the World's effort to defeat Sheehan is not based upon the newspaper's opposition to a special interests man in public office. The special interests in New York are quarreling over the senatorship and the New York World in its fight against Sheehan represents one faction of those special interests.

If the World ever supported for nomination a man who was not fairly suspected of being what we call a corporation man, then its protestations against Sheehan's candidacy would be entitled to more respect. By the same sort of proof with which the World condemns Sheehan as a special interests candidate (and the proof is good) the men whom the World has put forth as its preferred candidates for the democratic presidential nomination may be convicted of being the representatives of special interests.

But the World is unwilling that its candidates for the presidency shall be judged by the same rule it insists shall be applied to Mr. Sheehan.

WHY THE CANAL SHOULD NOT BE FORTIFIED

Charles Seymour, of Kings Park, L. I., gives the advocates of canal fortification something to think about when, in a letter to the New York World, he says:

"Just a few reasons against fortifying Panama canal:

"1. Because its integrity and safety would be better guaranteed by treaty between Europe and the United States than by the enormous expenditure in men and money by this country alone. This money could be better employed, if necessary, in strengthening and fortifying the Pacific coast and San Francisco.

"2. That the peace and integrity of Switzerland, Belgium and Holland are maintained by guarantee of Europe, which cannot be said for other countries of Europe and America. Even the powerful army of McMahon in 1870 preferred to be surrounded and captured at Sedan rather than cross Belgian territory.

"3. That the Suez canal is not fortified and is immune from attack in time of war. Although there are about 5,000 British and 20,000 Egyptian troops in Egypt, yet I know there is scarcely a soldier garrisoned in the vicinity of Port Said or Suez. No expenditure has ever been made by England for this purpose.

"4. To have to defend the Panama canal in time of war would mean the detachment of enormous supplies in men, money, ships and

arms which could ill be spared, with the additional danger of it being invested by land and sea and eventually falling into the hands of the enemy, even as Port Arthur, after tremendous expense to Russia, fell into the hands of Japan.

"Finally, President Taft's statement regarding Canada, that it had not cost this country one dollar, one man or one drop of blood for defense, would be equally applicable to the Panama canal."

A STRONG APPEAL

A statement embodying six reasons why the Panama canal should be neutralized, bearing the signatures of men and women, prominent in the United States and abroad, has been made public. Richard Olney, former secretary of state; David Starr Jordan, president of Leland Stanford, Jr., university; William Dean Howells, author; Charles P. Anderson, Protestant Episcopal bishop of Chicago; William H. J. Faurce, president of Brown university; Jane Addams, of Hull House, Chicago; George B. Holt, justice of the United States district court, and George Foster Peabody, the New York banker, are among the sponsors of the document. The statement follows:

"Why the Panama canal should be neutralized, not fortified.

"First—Because the canal would be safer in wartime without fortification. According to the agreement signed by The Hague conference in 1907, unfortified coast places cannot be bombarded.

"Second—Because the original intention of our government, as distinctly expressed in 1900, and previously, was to prohibit fortifications on the canal. Though this prohibition was omitted in the finally revised Hay-Pauncefort treaty signed in 1902, this in no wise implies that we ought to fortify it nor was its construction proposed as primarily a military undertaking.

"Third—Because, though the Suez canal was built with English money, England agreed to its neutralization. The Straits of Magellan are also neutralized and the interparliamentary union in 1910 declared in favor of the neutralization of all inter-oceanic waterways.

"Fourth—Because the United States in all its history has never been attacked and began every foreign war it ever had, and it is too important a customer for any great nation at this late day to wantonly attack. Though an enemy might in stress of war be tempted to break its pledge with us, no nation would dare break its neutralization pledge with the combined powers, as the penalty of non-intercourse, which would be included in the general treaty, would involve commercial ruin.

"Fifth—Because, with the experience of nearly a century's peace with England, ensured by our undefended Canadian border line, until we have asked for complete arbitration treaties with all possible future enemies and have been refused, we should be insincere in increasing our war measures. This is especially true in view of the facts that, since 1902, the nations have signed 100 arbitration treaties and President Taft has made the impressive declaration that he sees no reason why any question whatever should not be arbitrated; that the second Hague conference in various ways diminished the likelihood of war; that not only the prize court but the court of arbitral justice is practically assured; and that in the summer of 1910, congress unanimously passed a resolution asking the president to appoint a commission of five to consider the utilization of existing agencies to limit the armaments of the world by mutual agreement of the nations and to constitute the world navies an international force for the preservation of universal peace and to consider other means to diminish expenditures for military purposes.

"Sixth—Because, in the words of Hon. David J. Foster, chairman of the committee on foreign affairs in the house of representatives, 'the initial expense of the necessary fortifications would not be less than \$25,000,000; in all probability it would not be less than \$50,000,000. The annual expense of maintaining such fortifications 2,000 miles from home would probably amount to \$5,000,000. With all the fortifications possible, it is still apparent that in order that the canal might be of military advantage to the United States in time of war a guard of battleships at each of its entrances would be an absolute necessity. It is equally apparent that with such a guard the fortifications would be unnecessary, if not entirely useless. We are bound by solemn treaty obligations to see to it that the canal shall be and remain forever open to British ships in time of war as well as in time of peace, and while it is probably