

Democratic Prospects for 1912 Are Bright

The Denver Times of March 1st printed the following news item: Declared former Governor Joseph W. Folk of Missouri, a smooth-faced, dimpled-chinned man of forty-one years, when talking with a Times representative:

"These are some of the things I favor—
 "A reciprocity treaty with Canada.
 "Popular election of United States senators.
 "Commission form of administration for cities.
 "Uniformity of laws in the several states.
 "And I believe that the national democratic party will be successful in 1912 if it advocates real democratic principles.
 "I am opposed to—
 "The new nationalism of Mr. Roosevelt.
 "Protective tariff, bounties and subsidies in any form."

Mr. Folk did not become heated while expounding his views. He is a calm man. He is cheerful, dark complexioned, a little above medium height and carries a hearty handshake around with him on his journeys. Just now he is here because of a contract that he had with the teachers' club of Denver to deliver an address at Trinity M. E. church.

"I favor reciprocity with Canada," said Mr. Folk, in his room at the Brown hotel, "because it will open up a vast domain to American trade and will not cost the country a cent. The United States is spending millions of dollars to open up trade in South America. The United States is spending hundreds of millions to build the Panama canal for the purpose of expanding trade. The proposed treaty with Canada will cost nothing. I believe that it should be adopted by congress.

"As to the election of senators by direct vote of the people, it simply is another step in government, not only of and by the people but government for the people. When our constitution was being framed the fear was that the people might confiscate the property of the well-to-do. That the time would ever come when the rights of the people would be in danger through accumulation of capital, did not occur to the fathers

of the republic, so they provided a house of representatives to represent the people and for a senate elected by the legislatures of the various states to represent property.

"We now have learned that property interests should not be inconsistent with public interests, and that officials should represent no class but the entire public.

"The commission form of civic administration is an excellent one. A city government is not a sovereign government like a state or national government, but is a business corporation and should be modeled after a business corporation. The idea is to have five directors to conduct the affairs of the city. There is no reason that I know of why a commission system of administration should not be successful in a large city like Denver."

In reply to further queries, Mr. Folk said: "I do not favor the 'new nationalism' because I think the integrity of the states should be preserved. The perpetuity of the nation depends upon the dual form of government under which we operate—the government of the states and the government of the nation. If one of these is strengthened at the expense of the other, the ship of the republic will sink.

"The chances for democratic success in 1912 are bright if the democratic party advocates real democratic principles. By these I mean those principles embraced in the maxim, 'equal rights to all, special privileges to none.' This prohibits protective tariff, subsidies and bounties in any form for the benefit of the few at the expense of all.

"Privilege says to a man, 'Come with us and we will give you a tariff, with subsidies enabling you to make money at the expense of your fellow men.' True democracy says, 'Come with us, we cannot offer you any advantage over others, but promise that others will not have any advantage over you.' Privilege appeals to avarice and greed, true democracy to brotherhood and conscience. One stands for the selfish few and the other for the common good."

Popular Election of United States Senators

(By Hon. Alva Adams.)

"In accord with true democratic ideals I favor the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people. A democracy has no right to fear a popular verdict.

"Political responsibility leads to political rectitude. The direct judgment of the electorate is more apt to be right than the conclusion of their agents. Direct power is more sure and safe than delegated power. The people are not and cannot be subject to the diverse influences that may assail a legislature. The direct voice of the people is the life of a true republic.

"The present system of electing senators was a sort of compromise between the political sensibilities of those who were willing to trust the people and those who distrusted them.

"A century of experience has swept away the fears of those who doubted the stability of popular government. The faith Jefferson held in the people has been justified. It is time that the proven capacity of the people to rule themselves should be recognized. It is more democracy, not less, that our country needs. If the full electorate cannot be trusted democracy is a failure. While I realize, I do not fear, the possible perils in the absolute rule of all the people, for I believe that way lies the ultimate glory and destiny of free government.

"In spite of the frenzied fears of subsidized editor and orator no harm has come to the republic through the franchise of the masses. The people can be trusted. Their self-directed ballots have never been false to liberty. Direct and universal suffrage is a power the 'interests' fear. It is the hammer than can break the corporate plutocratic grasp upon the senate of the United States.

"Hamilton's ideal was an aristocratic republic; our dream is a constitutional democratic republic. In such a government there can be no senator, no official that is not subject to the direct vote of the people. A free ballot is the best teacher in the school of patriotism. The unconstitutional right to vote develops the self-respect, confidence and judgment of the race.

"The free independent citizen, with no legislative complications, can be trusted to select

senators. The nation demands a constitutional amendment giving them this right. The old senators object—it is not human nature to tear down the bridge that carried them over, but from every new senator elected there should be exacted a pledge to vote for such an amendment. That pledge I will gladly take.

"By our present method there is a possibility of a senator being chosen who is not in sympathy with the people and who, in a primary election, could not carry a precinct in the state. Such a result is a travesty upon free government, yet an inventory of senatorial elections in the United States will show that such possibility is not entirely a child of imagination. The making of laws is the true function of a legislature. The election of a senator interferes with that purpose. It breaks and disturbs the process of law making. Senatorial sessions are often barren sessions. Senatorial maneuvering and interference delays, modifies or defeats desired legislation. The injection of a senatorial election affords a fruitful field for intrigue and corruption. Honest legislators are hindered in their work, needed and promised laws are used as trading pawns to secure senatorial influence. The statehouse becomes stained with the barter of infamy, as was the temple from which Christ lashed the money changers.

"There is every opportunity for unfair combines and manipulations. One body can be played against the other. Law making and the election of senators are different, and often conflicting missions. Where these diverse duties are mixed a temptation is offered to make trades and bargains that will defeat legislation and nullify the honest purposes of the people. Legislative history tells of senatorial contests where members have resigned, absented themselves and in various ways tied up and obstructed legislative business. A hundred cases might be cited of scandal and wrong resulting from the present system. A compilation of senatorial elections would not make a history to stir the pride of the American citizen. In fact, senatorial conflicts are not seldom a reproach and a menace to popular government. Selfish and powerful interests have been able to twist, manipulate or

control a legislature where they would be helpless or impotent before the people. It is difficult—almost impossible—to corrupt an entire electorate. In the direct verdict of the people there can be no deadlock. Confine legislatures to the making of laws. Let the voters elect senators and all officials. Where possible let the people speak direct. Narrow the field upon which ambition, money and dicker may focus their blighting influence.

"A broad river may flow clear and healthful where a small stream is easily tainted and poisoned.

"Let the people rule."—Alva Adams in Denver News.

GOOD WORDS FOR THE COMMONER

Joseph L. Vairey, Bushnell, S. D.—I will gladly do all I can to extend The Commoner's circulation. Despite the fact that our community is rock-ribbed republican, the sentiment here, as elsewhere, is rapidly changing. Party lines are being broken and people are turning toward the reforms that the democratic party has stood for all these years. The wanton disregard of pre-election promises on the part of Taft and his evident alliance with the moneyed interests, together with the duplicity of Roosevelt and his third term aspirations, has awakened the republicans as to where they are at. As a life-long republican recently told me the other day that he would vote for Bryan Folk, or any other democrat rather than be deceived again by another administration such as Taft's. If at any time it will be possible for me to aid in securing a victory for the people in 1912, whether it be through The Commoner or otherwise, I shall gladly do so for I am one who, like Champ Clark says in his letter to The Commoner, "Have Kept the Faith."

Charles B. Chancellor, Parkersburg, W. Va.—You can depend on me to help extend The Commoner subscription list and thereby its influence political and moral. One dollar spent to send The Commoner to a republican (and am sorry to say many so-called democrats need it also) will do more good than \$10 to \$20 will do to any campaign fund.

J. C. Libis, Mantua, Ohio—I am going to try to get a club for The Commoner. I think it the best paper I ever read. Please send me six or seven copies and I will make an effort.

William Shepherd, Ness City, Kan.—You will find enclosed a money-order for one dollar to pay for another year's subscription to The Commoner. We have not missed a single number of The Commoner. We received No. 1, Vol. 1, and yesterday Vol. 11, No. 4 came to hand and is read with just as much interest as the first number. How many readers of your paper can show a record as good as this for faithfulness.

TRY GUARANTEED DEPOSITS

Los Angeles, Cal., January 27.—Editor The Commoner: In a paragraph of this week's *Colliers Weekly*, under the caption, "Like a Colossus," that paper views, with pretended alarm, the incoming democratic house of representatives, as affecting the banking system of the country. In said paragraph this question is raised: "Is it well for the banks of the United States to depend upon the good will of J. P. Morgan?" and closes with this unwarranted and disingenuous fling: "As the democrats come into power in the house next fall, we may take it for granted that the little banks all over the country will continue to depend for their existence upon the big banks of New York City." Has Mr. Collier forgotten that the heads of the Morgan-Rockefeller-Harriman interests control the big banks of New York, and that they are "practical men," and have shown by their contributions to the republican national campaign fund, which party they think will best serve them, in exercising guardianship over the little banks of the country?

Why not be fair, Mr. Collier, and let the bank deposit guarantee clause as contained in the Denver platform (which is the last democratic expression on the subject) answer your question as to what is best for the small banks of the country? No, the trouble with *Colliers* is the same as with so many publications that appear to be so much concerned for the welfare of the people, matador-like, they flaunt the flag of reform before the peoples' eyes, while they never lose an opportunity to stab the party and the individuals who are, and have been for years, the real advocates of reform.

WILLIAM LINDSEY.