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Nebraska land is selling at the present time for \$200 and \$300 an acre. The language-makers will be compelled to invent a more descriptive title than that of dirt cheap.

Herr Erzberger declares that the treaty of peace presented to him is the devil's own work. This intimation that the German secret service had somebody on the drafting committee ought to be looked into.

Sunday baseball has finally been legalized in New York city. The primary object, presumably, is to enable those of its citizens still able to move to take some kind of an antidote for the Sunday New York newspaper.

The chairman of the republican national committee announces that what the country needs is not less politics but more of it. Judging from the attitude of Senators Borah and Lodge he seems to have some senatorial support in the proposition.

The natural bent of the lawyer is to find flaws in any legal document presented to him for consideration. That's what the trouble with the republican senators who are criticising the league of nations. The habit is constitutional with them even if the covenant isn't.

The republican senate seems to be running true to form. It has named as secretary of that body a man who was formerly a lobbyist for the harvester trust. We extend our condolences to the woolen trust, which appears to have been unable to re-elect its former Washington representative.

The demand of the railway investors' league that the government shall guarantee their investments sounds rather cheeky until we remember that the republican congress has always been in favor of guaranteeing the returns of the manufacturers of the country through the protective tariff device.

Penrose was elected the floor leader of the republican senators by virtue of the progressive votes. They explain their action by saying that they had to choose between Penrose and democratic control of that body. Judging from their previously-expressed opinions about Penrose this seems to have been an instance where men chose the worse of what they regarded as two evils.

Congress ought not to have any difficulty in solving the problem of what to do with the railways. The league of investors in railway stocks and bonds is demanding that the government guarantee a fixed return on the money they have in these securities. After that is done we suppose they will have no objections to the publishers and the farmers being guaranteed returns on their investments.

President Opposes the Limitation of Terms

Below will be found the President's letter opposing any limitation on the number of presidential terms. While it is written as a protest against an amendment which had passed the senate limiting the President to ONE term, it gives the President's reason for opposing ANY limitation whatever. The letter was written early in 1913, to A. Mitchell Palmer, now attorney general, who was chairman of the democratic caucus in the house of representatives at the time, and reads as follows:

"My dear Palmer:

"Thank you warmly for your letter of Feb. 3, 1913. It was characteristically considerate of you to ask my views with regard to the joint resolution which has just come over from the house with regard to the presidential term. I have not hitherto said anything about this question because I had not observed that there was any evidence that the public was very much interested in it. I must have been mistaken in this, else the senate would hardly have acted so promptly upon it. It is a matter which concerns the character and conduct of the great office upon the duties of which I am about to enter. I feel, therefore, that in the present circumstances I should not be acting consistently with my ideals with regard to the rule of entire frankness and plain speaking that ought to exist between public servants and the house whom they serve if I did not speak about it without reserve of any kind and without thought of the personal embarrassment.

"The question is simply this: Shall our Presidents be free so far as the law is concerned to seek a second term of four years, or shall they be limited by a constitutional amendment to a single term of four years or to a single term extended to six years. I can approach the question from a perfectly impersonal point of view because I shall most carefully abide by the judgment of my party and the public as to whether I shall be a candidate for the presidency in 1916. I absolutely pledge myself to resort to nothing but public opinion to decide that question. The President ought to be absolutely deprived of every other means of deciding it. He can be. I shall use to the utmost every proper influence within my reach to see that he is before the term to which I have been elected is out. That side of the matter need disturb no one.

"And yet if he is deprived of every other means of deciding the question, what becomes of the argument for a constitutional limitation to a single term? The argument is not that it is clearly known just how long each President should remain in office. Four years is too long a term for a President who is not a true spokesman of the people, who is imposed upon and does not lead. It is too short a term for a President who is doing or attempting a great work of reform and who has not had time to finish it. To change the term to six years would be to increase the likelihood of its being too long without any assurance that it would in happy cases be long enough. A fixed constitutional limitation to a single term of office is highly arbitrary and unsatisfactory from every point of view.

"The argument for it rests upon temporary conditions which can easily be removed by law. Presidents, it is said, are effective for one-half of their term only, because they devote their attention during the last two years of the term to building up the influences and, above all, the organization by which they hope and purpose to secure a second nomination and election. It is this illicit power, not their legitimate influence with the country, that the advocates of a constitutional change profess to be afraid of, and I heartily sympathize with them. It is intolerable that any President should be permitted to determine who should succeed him—himself or another, by patronage or coercion, or by any sort of control of the machinery by which the delegates to the nominating convention are chosen.

"There ought never to be another presidential nominating convention and there never need be another. Several of the states have successfully solved that difficulty with regard to the choice of their governors, and federal law can solve it

in the same way with regard to the choice of their Presidents.

"The nominations should be made directly by the people at the polls; conventions should determine nothing but party platforms and should be made up of the men who would be expected, if elected, to carry those platforms into effect. It is not necessary to attend to the people's business by constitutional amendment if you will only actually put the business into the people's own hands.

"I think it may safely be assumed that that will be done within the next four years; for it can be done by statute. It need not wait for constitutional change. That being done, the question of the presidential term can be discussed on its merits.

"It must be clear to everybody who has studied our political development at all that the character of the presidency is passing through a transitional change. We know what the office is now and what use must be made of it, but we do not know what it is going to work into, and until we do know we shall not know what constitutional change, if any, is needed, it would be best to make.

"I must speak with absolute freedom and candor in this matter or not speak at all, and it seems to me that the present position of the presidency in our actual system as we use it is quite abnormal and must lead eventually to something very different. He is expected by the nation to be the leader of his party as well as the chief executive officer of the government, and the country will take no excuses from him. He must play the part, and play it successfully, or lose the country's confidence. He must be prime minister, as much concerned with the guidance of legislation as with the just and orderly execution of law. And he is the spokesman of the nation in even the most momentous and delicate dealings of the government with foreign nations. Why, in such circumstances, should he be responsible to no one for four long years? All the people's legitimate spokesmen in the house of representatives, and one-third of their representatives in the senate are brought to book every two years.

"Why not the President, if he is to be the leader of the party and the spokesman of policy? Sooner or later, it would seem, he must be made answerable to opinion in a somewhat more informal and intimate fashion—answerable, it may be, to the houses which he seeks to lead either personally or through a cabinet as well as to the people for whom they speak. But that is a matter to be worked out—as it inevitably will be in some natural American way which we cannot yet even predict.

The present fact is that the President is held responsible for what happens in Washington in every large matter, and so long as he is commanded to lead he is surely entitled to a certain amount of power—all the power he can get from the support and convictions and opinions of his fellow countrymen; that he ought to be suffered to use that power against his opponents until his work is done. It will be difficult for him to abuse it. He holds it upon sufferance at the pleasure of public opinion. Everyone else, his opponents included, have access to opinion as he has. He must keep the confidence of the country by earning it, for he can keep it no other way.

"Put the present customary limitation of two terms into the constitution if you don't trust the people to take care of themselves, but make it two terms (not one, because four years is often too long), and give the President the chance to win the full service by proving himself fit for it.

"If you wish to learn the result of constitutional ineligibility to re-election ask any former governor of New Jersey, for example, what the effect is in actual experience. He will tell you how cynically and with what complacency the politicians banished against him waited for the inevitable end of his term to take their chances with his successor. Constitutions place and can place no limitations upon their power.

"They may control what governors they can as long as they please, as long as they can keep their outside power and influence together. They smile at the coming and going of governors as some men in Washington have smiled at the coming and going of Presidents, as upon things ephemeral, which passed and were soon enough got rid of if you but sat tight and waited.

"As things stand now, the people might more likely be cheated than served by further limitations of the President's eligibility. His fighting