GROWLING AT THE PRESS.

There is no denying that the Nebraska country press, about 95 per cent of it, is in utter disgrace in certain quarters. That fact crops out in every debate between the old and the new in Nebraska politics. The odium is deserved, too. The facts are about these: According to immemorial custom the county newspaper has been an organ of one party or the other. If the editor was "good," and supported the ticket from top to bottom with sufficient frenzy he was rewarded in case his party won, with the county printing, with a fair scattering of legal notices, and per-chance, if he did the "right" thing in national affairs, the local postoffice was bestowed upon him. The danger in this situation lay in the fact that the editor became subservient not to the party, but to the men who controlled the party, a very different thing. If he showed a tendency to oppose the interests of the party organization even though he acted in the real interest of the party, he was punishable by the withdrawal of his public patronage.

The country press of Pennsylvania is a notable example of the way newspapers are held in line for a dominant machine by postoffice appointments. The way the lowa newspapers, or a large proportion of them, went down with the old machine when Cummins won, illustrated the case nearer home. The Nebraska editors were of a different breed. When the issue arose between the parties and the machines, the editors with one accord, the exceptions being so few as to emphasize the unanimity of the rest, elected to stand by the parties. The machine has never neen able to get over it, and wherever a machine man is heard there is heard a growl at the newspapers. say the newspapers favor the direct primary because that will mean gov-ernment by newspapers. The private interest of the newspapers in the direct primary lies altogether in the facilities it gives them to serve their subscribers without interference from or punishment by political machines.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

The biennial bill for a constitutional amendment has met with considerable favor this winter, so much so as to result in holding back good measures for amending the present constitution. The supporters of the convention idea seem to overlook the fact that the principal argument in favor of a general revision has been nulltfied completely by the supreme court decision on straight party voting, which permits the constitution to be changed now whenever needed. The success of the railroad commission amendment last fall paves the way for other amendments without waste of time or great expense. If an amendment is offered at the election of 1908 increasing the number and on all sides.

If only one amendment is submitted by each legislature, the constitution can be easily kept abreast of the needs of the state. The old document has some defects, due largely to its adop-tion during a time of enforced economy, but on the whole it remains about as satisfactory as anything the present generation would be likely to produce. In its provisions for the control of corporations, now the most vital issue before the public, the constitution of 1875 seems to have been prophetic. All the power the legislature needs to keep the railroads in the place of the servant, and not master of the state is found there, granted in unequivocal terms. Until conditions change radically the old constitution, with perhaps a blennial amendment, will serve every purpose.

SELF-GOVERNMENT.

President Roosevelt has issued the order for an election in the Philippines. In July each 100,000 of the population of the islands will elect an assemblyman and the eighty-five or thereabout so elected then form the lower house of a Philippine legislature. The Philippine commission will be the upper house. It is a rare thing to find

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an American interested in or informed upon the affairs of such of our territories as Hawaii, Porto Rico and the Philippines. This is unfortunate for the territories. For example, American indifference has made possible the exploting of the Philippines in behalf of the American sugar and tobacco interests. And yet their affairs are eminently interesting. Americans who enjoyed as students studying the growth of the colonies our forefathers founded their various stages in government and their feeble first steps as a nation can find an absorbing study in changes now under way in the Philippies. The Filipinos never had a vote or dreamed of one on even the smallest local matter before the United States entered the land. They have now had four or five years practice in voting for members of their town councils. This new electorate ranges from the educated Filipino capable of putting the brighest American on his mettle, through all degrees of civilization down to the thinly disguised savage. What will follow when this deeply stratified population begins to express nationality at the ballot box? It is worth any American's time to watch and see.

SANITY.

Professor Grasset of the French univesity of Montpelier has published a book on the sane, the insane and the half sane, whose dull pages at this time glow with reflected light from the Thaw trial. The professor adheres to the oft expressed belief in the madness of most forms of genius. Intellectual superiority is not a disease, but the touch that turns it into genius is likely to have a pathological aspect. There are all degrees of mental dis-order, he urges, and it is no small part of the proper task of society in dealing with Its eccentrics and criminals to determine to what extent they should be held responsible as rational beings and to what extent treated as victims of disease, in case of actions that require public attention. Since there is no way of telling except investigation on which side of the line a person stands, it would seem that as a preliminary to every criminal trial the accused should be put through an examination to determine whether he should be tried or comitted to a hospital. It is certainly not economical to wait until after the trial as in the Thaw case. It might be even better not to wait for the commission of an unlawful act, but to require every man to pass a periodical examination before an official insanity board as every well regulated man has his teeth tested once a year. Of course it would be essential in this case to have the insanity board itself examined frequently.

PRESIDENTIAL POPULARITY.

If the history of the United States has proved anything it has proved the pay of the supreme judges it will be partiality of party managers, conadopted without a doubt, for the ne-cessity for this change is admitted presidents who have the homely pripresidents who have the homely private virtues so popular with the American people, are good tempered, good intentioned, and lack in great personal force. Their ability to serve their preference can be judged from the lists of presidents. The min' instinctively leaps from Jackson to Lincoln, and from Lincoln to Roosevelt, three in seventy-five years. The reason is not far to seek. The ties of party and the pressure of personal interest that bind a president of the United States are so tight and so intricate that only a man of tremendous force and personality can free himself. That means ordinarily a president under the thumb of congress and the managers of his party, and a government run in their interest. The conduct of President Roosevelt which has endeared him to the American people has been distasteful to most of those who have been in the habit of Resping strings on the presidents. So Mr. Rooseveit is not really popular with congress nor with the managers of his party, except that they appreciate his value as a vote getter, The politicians of both political parties prefer the colorless candidate. If they have their way next year the democratic candidate will be a misty gray, the republican candidate a de-

A Gipsy Funeral.

"It is early for the gipsies," said a constable. "We don't usually find them hereabouts till the spring is well advanced. I saw a gipsy band the other day, though, and what is more, I saw a gipsy funeral.

"The odd thing about this funeral was the hereign that accompanied it the

the burning that accompanied it the burning of the dead man's effects. They burning of the dead man's effects. They burned everything, his wagon, his harness his clothes, his bedding, his cooking utensils, and his fiddle. No doubt they'd have burned his horse, but they sold that to pay the funeral expenses.

'I understand that gipsy funeral burnings are of great antiquity. The idea underlying them is that there shall be no according among relations and friends.

quarreling among relations and friends over the effects of the flead. "If we resorted to burnings of this kind

we might save a good many will con-

Dogged By Cunning Wolves

A Pestered Trapper Back From the Far North

were howling terribly about Bark Lake all winter," said Jules Godden, an old trapper who has just come in from the upper Gatineau country. They had bothered me badly on the trapping lines up near the height of land in November when the snow was only a few inches deep on the level.

Every round I made a big pack would be ahead of me and everything would be torn out of the traps. Where I had set for mink, so that when pinched the creature would get into the water and be drowned by the weight of the trap, the woives would pull on the chain, drag up the dead thing and eat it clean out of the steel. And I never saw the mink better and larger than they are this year.

I got a paw belonging to one little wolf pup out of a fox trap. I brought it along, for that is about all I got in two weeks, with more than three hundred traps, besides nares and deadfalls. It cost enough to be worth as much as a jackrabbit's foot, any-

"Yes, I guess the wolves took a good hundred dollars worth of fur out of my traps. Watch for them? Why, man, I sat up in trees all night, I dug holes in the snow and buried myself for hours and hours, I 'most poisoned myself with animal musk to kill the human scent, and the nearest I ever got to one of those brutes was when they would set up howling two or three hundred yards away from where I was hiding for them.

"Oh, yes, come to think of it, one day I saw nine of them, great big brutes, seven feet long, chase a deer the whole length of White Deer lake. The poor thing was loping along easily, half stopping every half mile or so to look back and see if they were still on her tracks.

"I ran down a ridge to the outlet, where it had only frozen over the night before, to see how she would take off, whether by the old log road, which ran 'round to near where I was or into the scrub. She did a mighty neat trick there.

"Right on the edge of the glace ice she turned sharp off, headed across the lake and jumped into the bush, into

LACHINE, Canada-"The wolves they knew were trying to stop and wheel around on the new slippery ice. "Two of them went sliding on clean

into the outlet and had quite a time of it crawling out of the current again. All of them got ugly fall and lost time getting their footing.

"I was too far away to hurt them, but I fired two or three shots to frighten them and give the doe a chance. But they slunk off after her, and I shouldn't wonder if they got her some time that day or the next.

"They are perservering, are wolves, when they get on a fresh track, I have known them to chase a cow moose for five days, giving her no rest day or night till she was dog tired and got pulled down at last.

"It was mighty poor business for me, though, and the second week in December I up stakes and made south. It is pretty much of a contract to take up three or four hundred traps and snares when they are scattered over fifteen or twenty miles of country and then portage them with chains and springs all frozen thick with ice and

"About New Year's I got them all down again, around the Bark lake country, and had first rate luck. My camp was in an old lumber shanty, and when the wolves howled every night I was not sorry to have the heavy logs between me and the weather.

"No, they didn't bother the traps very much about those parts. There were so many rabbits they had no need. All the old hunters say they never saw so many as there are this year, and the way the wolves picked them up was something cruel.

"I got one little wolf, the smallest one I ever saw, in a snare. The wire had been fastened to a birch sapling, bent down so that when the rabbit kicked the tree would spring and hang him up out of the way.

"When I got there one morning I noticed the snew all around was padded into ice by wolves. They had been trying to catch hold of the little brother that had been caught by jumping, and you could see where the cute things had been gnawing and tearing the bark as they tried to bend the santing down again. the sapling down again.

an old greatly used deer pad. The wolves came lumbering along with teeth well grown and must have been their heads well down, and first thing a dwarf. But his scalp was worth \$15,

