
EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

WRECKING THE STEAM ROLLER IN OREGON.*

Portland, Ore., Aug. 6.

The performance of the Roosevelt-Hitchcock-Taft steam roller at the Republican national convention in 1908 gave an idea to Senator Jonathan Bourne, of Oregon; and the People's Power League of that State has put the idea into a bill and submitted it by Initiative petition to the voters at the ballot box in November.

This bill extends the provisions of the Oregon direct primary law, which was enacted by the voters, to Presidential nominations, to nominations of Presidential electors and to delegates to national conventions. It is a cruel blow at "the administration," because it is a method by which the Presidential hand would be shut out of the selection of Presidential candidates and delegates to national conventions; a most foul blow at such political saints as Hitchcock, because it would virtually retire them from their business of interfering with the people's business; and a wicked attack upon the divine right of corporations to assist White House politicians and party saints in nominating Presidential candidates, regardless of the wishes of the people.

+

If the people of Oregon approve this bill, there will be a new deal in Oregon, because every voter of every political party will have opportunity to "vote his preference, on his party nominating ballot, for one person to be the candidate of his political party for President, and one person to be the candidate of his political party for Vice-President of the United States."

It will not be necessary for any candidate for the nomination to sign any petition or other paper, but his political supporters will place his name on the ballot. In that way, each party in Oregon will determine, by majority vote at the primaries, its choice for its candidate for President.

That will make the steam roller skid into a stone wall.

+

Next, the members of the political parties will, at the same primary election, nominate their candidates for Presidential electors; and it is just possible that when this choice is left to the voters they will nominate some real men as Presidential electors.

+

Third—and this provision will make the steam roller turn over and quit rolling,—under the proposed bill every voter will have the right at that same primary election to vote for one person, and no more, as a delegate to the national convention of his party; and "a number of such candidates equal to the number of delegates to be elected by each party . . . receiving, respectively, each for himself, the highest number of votes for such office, shall be thereby elected."

*See The Public of August 5, page 729.

In the same way, each voter may vote for one candidate, and no more, for Presidential elector.

+

A fourth provision interferes with the vested right of corporations to provide funds for the traveling expenses of delegates to national conventions and with the iron law that prevents a poor man from going to a national convention unless he will accept money and "pass under the yoke."

The bill provides that every delegate shall receive from the State treasury the amount of his traveling expenses necessarily spent in actual attendance upon the convention, as his account may be audited and allowed by the Secretary of State, but in no case to exceed \$200 for each delegate; "provided, that such expenses shall never be paid to any greater number of delegates of any political party than would be allowed such party under the plan by which the number of delegates to the Republican national convention was fixed for the Republican party of Oregon in the year 1908."

Every such delegate will be required to subscribe to an oath that he will uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States and of the State of Oregon, and that he will, as such officer and delegate, to the best of his judgment and ability, faithfully carry out the wishes of his political party as expressed by its voters at the time of his election.

+

The committee or organization that files a petition to place the name of any person on the nominating ballot of their political party for President or Vice-President, will have the right to use, upon payment therefor, four pages in the party campaign book—which is provided for under the Corrupt Practices Act, a law enacted by the people; and any voter may use as much as four pages, at \$100 a page, to advocate or oppose a candidate for President or Vice-President in that book.

And in the State Campaign Book, also provided for under the Corrupt Practices Act, a person nominated for President or Vice-President, or his supporters with his permission, may use four pages, without charge, to set forth the reasons why he should be elected.

+

What would happen to the steam roller if half a dozen of the more populous States had such a law in operation?

And what chance would a Hitchcock have to draw a Cabinet position as his "honorarium" for operating the machine?

Think about it.

W. G. EGGLESTON.

+ + +

AN OBJECT LESSON FOR LABOR.

On Chesapeake Bay.

Labor conditions in the tidal basin of the Chesapeake illustrate beautifully the relation of free natural opportunities to wages, and throw an interesting light on the race question, which, of course is also a labor question.

The tidal area of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia bordering the Chesapeake and its half-score of big and two or three score little tributaries, is a