

out for a walk in the sunshine. "I know what you want to do," the invalid replied, "you want to take me out in the middle of that field and then leave me." Timid mankind, fearful of being left out in a wild field of choice and responsibility, but yesterday sighed and sought for a king, emperor, president or party to lead them by the hand to political and economic safety. But they are learning that the only true safety is in themselves; that trusting to a party is like hitching to a derelict. They would fain pass from party rule to People's Rule.

Already in Oregon, which elects Democratic reform Senators by Republican votes, the platforms of candidates and the arguments on measures to be voted upon are mailed to each elector and brought to his very door. This new method not only breaks down party walls but threatens to keep them down. Every election must be practically a new alignment. Even the House of Representatives has adopted a bill to nominate Senators by popular vote, and many States are preparing to enact some of Oregon's other reforms. This indicates that one day every election will be as every election should be, up to date, and show practically a new party alignment.

Will not the shells of the old parties fly then? Will it be so very bad then to be a man without a party? The truth is, parties, usually, are like breakfast eggs: the only good party is the fresh one, and the fresher the better.

LONA INGHAM ROBINSON.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

BRYAN, NEBRASKA AND THE INTERESTS.

St. Louis City, Ia., July 27.

It was my privilege to attend the Democratic State convention of Nebraska, held at Fremont on July 25. The duly advertised repudiation of Mr. Bryan's leadership and the indorsement of Judson Harmon for President failed to materialize, although the plutocratic Eastern press had confidently predicted that both were bound to happen.

An effort is being made now to make much of the "failure" of the convention to indorse Mr. Bryan. But Mr. Bryan asked for no indorsement at the hands of the convention. He did not even attend it. He is a candidate for no office, and an indorsement is not necessary to him.

Nobody doubts seriously that he will head the Nebraska delegation to the next national convention, and that he will have a delegation in sympathy with him. An effort will be made by the Dahlman faction of Omaha either to indorse Harmon or to prevent Mr. Bryan's election as a delegate, but either effort is doomed to failure.

In view of the present effort of his enemies to prove that Mr. Bryan has lost the leadership of his party in his home State, a plain recital of a few facts in connection with the situation in Nebraska may be of interest.

In 1909 the Democratic legislature failed, through the machinations of the Omaha brewers, to submit a Direct Legislation amendment, to which the party was pledged in its platform. After the regular session had adjourned, Mr. Bryan secured pledges from enough members to submit the amendment if an extra session were called. Ashton C. Shallenberger, then Governor, refused to call the extra session. It was subserviency to the brewers that actuated Governor Shallenberger (for he had signed an 8 o'clock closing law over their violent protest), as it was a temperamental failure to rise to the occasion.

Failing to have the amendment submitted, Mr. Bryan declared that it was necessary to drive the brewers out of politics, not so much on their own account, although they were bad enough, but because for years they had been part of a railroad and corporation combination which had sought to throttle all progressive legislation. He allied himself, therefore, with the temperance people, who were advocating county option. The Republican State convention indorsed county option, and the Democratic convention did not.

Governor Shallenberger, with the support of most of Mr. Bryan's friends, was a candidate for renomination. Opposed to him, as the candidate of all the vicious elements in the State, was Mayor Dahlman of Omaha. Dahlman was nominated, but it will not be seriously claimed that he won fairly. The Democratic primaries in Omaha were invaded by Republicans interested in the defeat of all liquor legislation, and this element gave to Mr. Dahlman considerably more than the narrow margin of a few hundred votes by which he was nominated over Shallenberger.

Mr. Bryan refused to support Dahlman at the polls. He was absolved from giving him support for two reasons. The first one was the unfair and fraudulent manner in which he secured his nomination. The second was that Dahlman defiantly proclaimed from every stump in the State that he would not only veto any new liquor legislation, but that he would not enforce the laws already on the statute books.

Dahlman's character was fully demonstrated in a speech which he made on a public street in Omaha the night of the election. Early returns mistakenly indicated his election, and he was highly jubilant. He invited a ribald crowd to attend a free beer barbecue which he declared he would give on the State House grounds at Lincoln on the day of his inauguration. Lincoln was then "dry," and the laws of Nebraska forbade the sale or giving away of liquor within its corporate limits; but Mr. Dahlman averred that if the people of Lincoln didn't like the idea of his proposed beer orgy, "they knew what they could do."

This sterling patriot, who is now being hailed as the redeemer of the Nebraska Democracy from the incendiary dictatorship of Mr. Bryan, did not stop there. He informed the applauding multitude, recruited from Omaha's notorious Third ward, that "if any member of the W. C. T. U. tries to tell me how to run the office of Governor of Nebraska, I'll kick her out of my office."

The next day the full returns showed the election of the Republican candidate, and Mr. Dahlman retired to the calm of Excelsior Springs to recuperate.

+

Nebraska elects minor State officers this year, and county and State conventions were duly held for the purpose of promulgating platforms and electing party committees. The Douglas county (Omaha) convention was controlled by Mayor Dahlman. It passed a resolution denouncing Mr. Bryan as a party traitor. It indorsed Governor Harmon for President. Many of Mayor Dahlman's alcoholized followers had never heard of Harmon before, but they accepted "Mayor Jim's" assurance that he must be all right because Bryan was against him.

Dahlman gave out that he would force the ratification of the Douglas county resolution at the State convention, and the Eastern organs of plutocracy featured him in headlines. They waited expectantly for the forthcoming indorsement of Harmon by "Bryan's own State," and preparations were made to beat the tom-tom over Mr. Bryan's utter defeat and humiliation.

When the delegates got together at Fremont, Dahlman's nerve weakened. He was the first to suggest "harmony." He was one of the first arrivals on the ground, and at once declared to the newspaper men that no effort would be made to pass the Douglas county resolution in the State convention. The leaders of the party got together and agreed upon a platform that dealt solely with issues and not with personalities. By common consent all references, either favorable or adverse, to Senator Hitcock, Mr. Bryan, and the Nebraska Democrats in the lower house of Congress, were omitted. The principal feature of the platform was an unqualified indorsement of the Initiative and Referendum amendment, which will be voted on in 1912, and to which Mr. Dahlman's liquor and corporation sponsors are violently opposed.

In a sense, the liquor issue is temporarily eliminated from Nebraska politics. The temperance people are showing a disposition not to force it until the Direct Legislation amendment is adopted. Then they will submit county option to the voters under the Initiative. The brewers and the railroads are preparing to fight the proposed amendment. They may succeed, because it must receive a majority of all the votes cast in the election, and not a majority of those voting directly upon the amendment.

+

Herein is set down the simple tale of the Fremont convention and the events which led up to it. The dominating spirits of that convention were ex-Governor Shallenberger, whom Dahlman hates bitterly and who is a candidate for the United States Senate, and M. F. Harrington, of O'Neill, a former Populist and a staunch advocate of railroad regulation and control. Mr. Harrington presided over the convention as its chairman, and delivered a speech which had the genuine Progressive ring. He is openly committed to the support of Woodrow Wilson for President, while ex-Governor Shallenberger says he favors either Wilson or Champ Clark.

Nebraska Democrats, as well as Republicans, will vote directly in the primaries next April on their

choice for President. Mr. Dahlman hopes to secure an indorsement of Harmon through the division of the opposition, but the anti-Harmon men say they will agree on a candidate long before the primaries. Mr. Bryan will be on the stump pleading the cause of progress and for a progressive candidate, and there is not one chance in a million that the party will fall into the hands of the reactionaries.

D. K. L.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of *The Public* for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, August 1, 1911.

President Taft's Alaska Policy.

Responding to Senator Poindexter's resolution of June 27 calling for all letters, maps, etc., bearing on the reopening of entry of certain lands in the Chugach national forest, President Taft sent a special message to the Senate on the 26th, in which he assumes full responsibility for his Executive order opening for settlement and development the 12,800 acres of the Chugach national forest reserve in Alaska. [See current volume, page 779.]

+

After explaining that Secretary Ballinger, the Secretary of Agriculture and the general land office had in May, 1910, recommended to him that 320 acres, with a frontage of 160 rods on the northwest shore of Controller Bay, be ordered, on the application of Richard S. Ryan, representing the Controller Railway and Navigation Company, as opened for settlement for a railroad terminal, etc., and that after an interview with Mr. Ryan in June, 1910, he had in August so ordered, but that nothing was done in the matter until October, 1910, when the formal order was laid before him. Mr. Taft states that "the question finally came before the Cabinet late in October," and then proceeds:

I expressed dissatisfaction with the order because it purported on its face to make the elimination for the benefit of a railroad company of a tract of land which the company could not secure under the statute for it was a tract 320 acres in one body, when only 160 acres could be thus acquired. In the second place, I preferred to make a much larger elimination of a tract facing the entire channel, and with sufficient room for a terminal railway town. I was willing to do this because I found the restrictions in the law sufficient to prevent the possibility of any monopoly of either the upland or the harbor or channel by the Controller Railway and Navigation company or any other persons or company. For lack of time sufficient to draft a memor-