

ing them for office? That call reads as if its writer had composed it after a banquet instead of before one.

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But over-stimulation at table does not account for the whole performance of those gentlemen who mistake devotion to their private interests for civic holiness. To discredit direct legislation they have made display of an enormously long direct legislation ballot, putting this absurd thing forward as characteristic. In fact the ballot they display is a South Dakota specimen, and its length is due not to direct legislation but to representative legislation. A legislature of South Dakota, in order to furnish enemies of direct legislation precisely this kind of campaign material, enacted a law requiring the text of every direct legislation measure to be printed on the ballot. Consequently, six questions on the South Dakota ballot make that ballot about ten feet long. But 32 questions on the Oregon ballot occupy no more space than the names of candidates do. The simple and sufficient Oregon ballot was devised by a law initiated by the people; the absurd South Dakota ballot was devised by a legislature.

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It was in its speakers, however, that the Civic Federation excelled at its banquet in opposition to the Initiative and Referendum. They were of two classes: (1) the confessedly unintelligent (on the subject in hand); and, (2) the manifestly self-interested. The first were well represented by Prof. Laughlin, one of those faithful conservatives who would probably insist upon eating with his fingers yet if forks hadn't come into vogue before he began to eat at all; the second found a perfect representative in the Oregon lawyer for the corporation which is to Portland what the electric combine is to Chicago. This gentleman reported from Oregon that the Initiative and Referendum there are dangerous. His testimony was quite unnecessary. To such corporation interests, as those he represents, the Initiative and Referendum are exceedingly dangerous, not only in Oregon but wherever they get a foothold. If they were not, they wouldn't be worth advocating.

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Government by Minorities.

Now that the Initiative and Referendum movement forges ahead, its adversaries discover in themselves a prodigious and hitherto unsuspected regard for majority rule. Heretofore insistent on limiting the suffrage to "the intelligent," or "the propertied," etc., they now fly so far from their

moorings as to oppose the initiation or the vetoing of measures by a majority of those who vote on them, if those voting be fewer than those who vote for candidates, even though every voter be allowed full opportunity. Here is a test of intelligence—the Initiative and Referendum—which is self-executing. A question is brought to vote; every qualified voter is given a ballot; every qualified voter who is intelligent on the subject votes one way or the other; the unintelligent (on that subject) voluntarily disfranchise themselves to that extent and for that occasion. But your restrictionist of the suffrage is not satisfied. He wants the whole body of voters who voluntarily refrain from voting on a referendum question to be counted in the negative—the lazy business men and the lazy professional men and the venal voters who get paid for voting for candidates but not for referendum voting, the "heelers" who take no interest in politics except as it has spoils in it, and blind partisans who relate their politics to nothing but the party of their daddies or a hero of the moment. Therefore your adversary of the Initiative and Referendum explains himself with professions of love for majority rule. But he doesn't want majority rule. What he wants is a temporary argument that sounds plausible, with which to oppose the Initiative and Referendum. So he urges that experience shows that only a small proportion of the electorate vote on referendum questions. It isn't true, but what if it were? The essential principle of majority rule is not that all shall vote whether they wish to or not; it is that all shall have opportunity to vote.

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Governor Wilson and Direct Legislation.

In our mention of Governor Wilson's attitude toward People's Power (pp. 74, 97), we appear to have given an impression that he has definitely declared for the initiative, referendum and recall—reforms he had previously opposed. For such an intimation we have had no warrant. The most that can be said is that in his inaugural address he apparently alluded to those reforms favorably. That there may be no further misunderstanding, we quote from his address as published in *The New York Evening Post*, of January 17th:

There is widespread dissatisfaction with what our legislatures do, and still more serious dissatisfaction with what they do not do. Some persons have said that representative government has proved too indirect and clumsy an instrument, and has broken down as a means of popular control. Others, looking a little deeper, have said that it was not representative government that had broken down, but the effort to get it. They have pointed out that with our present

methods of machine nomination and our present methods of elections, which were nothing more than a choice between one set of machine nominees and another, we did not get representative government at all—at least, not government representative of the people, but government representative of political managers who served their own interests and the interests of those with whom they found it profitable to establish partnerships.

Obviously, this is something that goes to the root of the whole matter. Back of all reform lies the method of getting it. Back of the question of what you want lies the question, the fundamental question of all government, how are you going to get it? How are you going to get public servants who will obtain it for you? How are you going to get genuine representatives who will serve your real interests, and not their own or the interests of some special group or body of your fellow citizens whose power is of the few and not of the many? These are the queries which have drawn the attention of the whole country to the subject of the direct primary, the direct choice of representatives by the people, without the intervention of the nominating machine, the nominating organization.

I earnestly commend to your careful consideration in this connection the laws in recent years adopted in the State of Oregon, whose effect has been to bring government back to the people and to protect it from the control of the representatives of selfish and special interests. They seem to me to point the direction which we must also take before we have completed our regeneration of a government which has suffered so seriously and so long as ours has here in New Jersey from private management and organized selfishness. Our primary laws, extended and perfected, will pave the way. They should be extended to every elective office, and to the selection of every party committee or official as well, in order that the people may once for all take charge of their own affairs, their own political organization and association; and the methods of primary selection should be so perfected that the primaries will be put upon the same free footing that the methods of election themselves are meant to rest upon.

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All who are basing their favorable judgment of Governor Wilson upon his attitude toward direct legislation, must concede that he does not there distinctly declare for it. Although the Oregon plan includes it, the only part of the Oregon plan which he definitely adopts is that which has to do with the choice of representatives. Yet he does not declare against the other features of the Oregon plan, and with reference to the features he declares for, he says that they seem to him "to point the direction." There is, of course, not much significance to be attached any longer to a political leader's coming out for direct nominations. Only with pronounced reactionaries is there any opposition now to that policy. So far, then, as Governor Wilson is to be judged

by his declarations regarding People's Power, it may be fairly said that he has yet to urge the initiative, referendum and recall definitely and distinctly. Nevertheless, let it be observed that his action, insofar as he has been called upon to take any, has been in the direction of People's Power and against further toleration of Big Business in politics. Nor must too much be asked of any man in actual political service in the way of declaring for principles not yet at issue in his own sphere of political influence. Some men must quite constantly give evidence of their devotion to fundamental principles; but as this is likely to put a long distance between them and the masses of the people, tests that properly apply to them may not apply to political leaders. All that can be demanded of political leaders is that they keep abreast of the fighting line of the progressive army. It would seem but reasonable, therefore, to consider Governor Wilson as having intended to advise his followers that, though he may not yet consider it prudent for a progressive political leader in New Jersey to declare specifically for the initiative, referendum and recall, he nevertheless intends to move steadily forward in that direction.

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Senatorial Unobtrusiveness.

Here is an excerpt from the reported proceedings of the Senate on January 30:

The resolution providing for the election of Senators by direct vote of the people was reached today and it looked for a moment as if it might go through by default.

"I object," at last said Senator Kean, unobtrusively.

"The Senator certainly can make no objection to the adoption of that resolution," remarked Senator Shively, inquiringly.

The New Jersey Senator made no reply, but later, when Senator Borah sought to obtain unanimous consent to vote on the resolution on February 10, Senator Penrose filed an objection, thus effectively for the time obstructing disposition of the resolution.

Unobtrusive John Kean! With both parties in his home State of New Jersey demanding popular election of Senators, he "objects." Whom does the senior Senator from New Jersey represent? Possibly his Democratic analogue, "Jim" Smith, and the 1,000 backers allowed him in what Governor Wilson recently called a liberal estimate of his plutocratic faction. If Mr. Kean has 1,000 wealthy Republicans to match "Jim" Smith's 1,000 Democrats, he has just about a month of political life left in which, by "unobtrusive" objections, to see the 1,000 dwindle. For