

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-

andum myself, I requested the Secretary of the Interior [Mr. Ballinger], who, with the Secretary of Agriculture, after full discussion, had agreed in my conclusion, to prepare a letter setting forth the reasons for making the large elimination, so that it might become a part of the record. . . . I wish to be as specific as possible upon this point, and to say that I alone am responsible for the enlargement of the proposed elimination from 320 acres to 12,800 acres, and that I proposed the change and stated my reasons therefor, and while both Secretaries cordially concurred in it, the suggestion was mine. The statement of Mr. Ryan, who had been properly vouched to the Forester by two gentlemen whom I know, Mr. Chester Lyman and Mr. Fred Jennings, and who had produced a letter from a reputable financial firm, Probst, Wetzler & Co., was that the railway company which he represented had expended more than \$75,000 in making preparations for the construction of a railway from Controller Bay to the coal fields, 25 miles away, but that they were obstructed in so doing by the order reserving the Chugach Forest Reservation, which covered all of the Controller Bay shore. He, as well as Probst, Wetzler & Co., gave every assurance that the Copper River Railway Co., owned by Messrs. Morgan and Guggenheim, had no connection with them, and that they were engaged in an independent enterprise in good faith to build an independent railroad. No evidence to the contrary has been brought to my attention since. Of course, it was possible that the owners of the Copper River Railway company [Messrs. Morgan and Guggenheim] might attempt to buy this railroad [Ryan's] when and if it was built. It was possible that Mr. Ryan was acting for the interests of the Copper River railroad, although I did not believe it; but whether this was true or not it was clear that the order of elimination by reason of the restrictions of the act Congress would not permit the owners of either railroad to shut out any other capitalists. . . . The rates of freight for coal to be charged, of course, would always be subject to Congressional control, and if government ownership seemed a wise policy under the peculiar circumstances, ample land for right of way, harbor frontage, and terminals must always remain available under the law for government use, or if it is preferred to take over to the government a railway built by private enterprise, condemnation is easy. . . . No more than 160 acres can be entered in any single body. . . . No location of scrip along any navigable waters can be made within the distance of 80 rods of any lands already located along such waters. No entry can be allowed extending more than 160 rods along the shore of any navigable water; and along such shore a space of at least 80 rods must be reserved from entry between all such claims. Moreover, the statute expressly provides that a roadway, 60 feet in width, parallel to the shore line as near as may be practicable, shall be reserved for the use of the public as a highway. Nothing in the act contained is to be construed to authorize entries to be made or title to be acquired to the shore of any navigable waters. . . . The first limitation . . . would prevent the possibility of any one person or any one interest acquiring an entire tract like that of 12,800 acres. The second limitation is important in that . . . the consequence is that in the 7 miles of the frontage of this eliminated tract

there must be reserved for Government control and use, and such disposition as Congress may see fit to make, and free from private appropriation, a frontage aggregating about 2½ miles and so distributed along the shore in frontages of 80 rods as to make certain of a public frontage of this width having all the advantage that any private frontage can have. . . . These two restrictions necessarily prevent a monopoly of land abutting on the shore. . . . Of the shore frontage which may be appropriated by scrip, there remain six frontages of 160 rods each . . . facing the bay and channel. . . . But there is a third reason why the opening of this tract to settlement and limited private appropriation cannot lead to a monopoly in the Controller Railway and Navigation Company or any one else. The distance from . . . the line of highwater mark to the line of low water mark, is between two and three miles, and the distance to deeper water is about a mile farther, making it necessary . . . to construct a viaduct or trestle three or four miles long from the shore to the channel. . . . The owners of the upland, by virtue of the title they have acquired from the government, do not acquire a vested right of access to the deep water and have no right or easement to build viaducts or trestles across the flats or wharves along the deep channel, which Congress may not regulate or defeat. . . . The order has been criticised because it was not in form a proclamation instead of an order. . . . In law there is in effect no difference. . . . In practice the same publicity is given to each. . . . Each is merely handed to the representatives of the press after being executed, and is sent to the large mailing list of the State Department. That course was here pursued in respect to the Executive order of October 28, 1910. . . . That this was a secret order . . . is utterly unfounded. . . . That it did not contain a provision delaying its taking effect for thirty days after its local publication, as orders restoring land to homesteaders frequently do, . . . was really not important in this case, for in now nearly nine months only the Controller Railway & Navigation Company has made any scrip entries on the eliminated tract, and this although 12,000 acres and about 2½ miles of water front still remain open to entry.

Mr. Taft's message is accompanied with documents, reports, and maps bearing on the case.

+

Gifford Pinchot, as president of the National Conservation Association, issued a statement on the 27th in which he declares that President Taft "leaves the root of the matter wholly untouched" in his denial of the possibility of monopolizing the water front of Controller Bay. Mr. Pinchot explains that—

Mr. Taft, in opening the lands around Controller Bay without notice to the public gave the interests behind Ryan an opportunity to acquire the key to the channel of Controller Bay before the public knew what was going on.

The so-called Ballinger-Pinchot investigation opened the eyes of the public to the extensive and successful efforts which are being made to monopolize the resources of Alaska. The facts developed by this investigation constituted a solemn warning

and a call upon the Executive for special watchfulness in protecting public property in Alaska. In view of the need for a firm and careful policy thus emphasized, it was the President's duty to hold the terminal lands around Controller Bay in government ownership. As with the coal lands, the title to the harbor lands, which are the key to the coal lands, should have been held, in any event, until Congress could act. In the meantime, contrary to the general impression, the very fact that these lands were in a national forest made them fully and promptly available under lease for every proper use, yet held them subject to governmental supervision and control.

The map, which is a part of the President's message, supported as it is by the testimony of Mr. Graves of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, appears to show that the mile and a half of harbor front taken up by Ryan, together with the tracts which the government retains and on which it prohibits private entry, does effectually control the valuable portion of the channel. But whether the President is right or whether the map is right, and whoever Ryan and his associates will be shown to represent, it is true, and will remain true, that the lands about Controller Bay should never have been let go. The public will agree with Col. Roosevelt that these terminal lands ought to have been kept in the public hands.

The President is right when he says that what Alaska needs is development; but no legitimate development of the harbor front on Controller Bay has been and can be proposed that could not proceed as well and as rapidly under suitable lease on government land as on private land. So long as these terminal lands remained in government ownership no one could monopolize the harbor. The moment any of them passed into private hands the danger of monopoly began. The public will not forget that before the Executive order of Oct. 28, Controller Bay was both available for development and safe against monopoly. Now it is no longer safe. This is abundantly proved not only by the general history of commercial consolidation, but in particular by what the Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate has already done in destroying or absorbing possible competitors. The president denies that in granting Ryan's request for the opening of Controller Bay by the Executive order of Oct. 28 there was any element of secrecy, and quotes a press dispatch of the same date announcing his action. But Mr. Taft does not mention that on the day he signed the order and notified the press in Washington, Ryan's surveying party was ready in Alaska, and that by Nov. 1, or four days after the order was made, and before the government officials in Alaska had been notified of the order, they had begun a survey of the Ryan claims on Controller Bay.

The omission of the customary thirty days' notice to the public that the land would be open to entry gave Ryan what he wanted. It cut off all chance for any competitor to locate on the terminal lands until after Ryan had made his selection. No amount of newspaper notice to the country after the Executive order was signed could in any respect interfere with the prearranged work of Ryan's agents or enable any rival to enter a foot of land on Controller Bay

except what was not wanted by the people whom Ryan represented.

It is unfortunate that the friends of conservation, in their efforts to bring about the development of Alaska for the benefit of the people, are continually obliged to expend their strength against the men who ought to be the protectors of the people's property. It looks to me like unnecessary duplication of work —when we must first fight the policemen before we can get a chance to stop the looting.

+ +

The "Dick to Dick" Scandal.

In the same message to the Senate in which he explains this side of the Controller Bay development opening in reply to the Poindexter resolution, President Taft makes specific reply to the "Dick to Dick" postscript which Miss Abbott has reported as having come under her eye in the Interior Department while investigating the Executive order regarding Controller Bay. [See current volume, page 779.]

+

On that point, the President says:

The postscript is not now in the files of the Department. . . . The statement in so far as my brother is concerned . . . is utterly unfounded. He never wrote to me or spoke to me in reference to Richard S. Ryan or on the subject of Controller Bay or the granting of any privileges or the making of any orders in respect to Alaska. . . . Mr. Ballinger says . . . he never received such a postscript. . . . Mr. Richard S. Ryan . . . says that he never met my brother. . . . The . . . letter of July 13, 1910, to which this postscript is said to have been attached . . . was sent to me by Mr. Carr, Secretary Ballinger's private secretary. . . . Mr. Carr saw no such postscript when he sent the letter to me. I did not see it when I read it. No one saw it in the executive office. . . . Mr. Brown states that there was no such postscript in the papers when he showed them to the correspondent and that he never saw such a postscript. Similar evidence is given by Mr. Carr and other custodians of the records in the Interior Department. Stronger evidence of the falsity of the alleged postscript could not be had.

The remainder of the Presidential message on this point is devoted to a general criticism of scandal-mongering. It concludes:

The helpless state to which the credulity of some and the malevolent scandal-mongering of others have brought the people of Alaska in their struggle for its development, ought to give the public pause. For until a juster and fairer view be taken, investment in Alaska, which is necessary to its development, will be impossible, and honest administrators and legislators will be embarrassed in the advocacy and putting into operation of those policies in regard to the Territory which are necessary to its progress and prosperity.

+ +

Government Ownership in the Alaskan Northwest.

Reporting progress upon the Oregon petition for government coal mining and railway opera-

tion in Alaska, the Portland Daily News of the 18th said that although the petitions had been in circulation only a day, the returns already showed "that the State is aroused to its opportunity, and that tens on tens of thousands of names will flood President Taft's holy of holies, each name being the demand of one citizen that the government give a square deal to Oregon, and Alaska coal from government mines at cost." [See current volume, page 782.]

+

Quiet opposition has set in, however, under the leadership of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the Coast. As the Secretary is reported in the same issue of the Portland News, this alliance is "pledged to a scheme to have government coal mined and sold to 'operating companies upon a royalty basis.'" Its policy is reported to be silence. But the News of the 22nd reports that—

Governor Oswald West, hearing that a movement was under way in California and Washington to circulate similar petitions, naming principal ports in those States as places at which government coal bunkers are desired, issued a statement welcoming any aid that the Governors of those two States might offer and inviting the people of the whole Pacific coast to join in this demand on Washington for the rescue of the public coal fields from the maw of the Morgan-Guggenheim octopus. Organized labor in Portland got behind the project solidly, the matter being brought before the meeting of the Central Labor Council Friday night by Councilman William Daly, who was plentifully supplied with petitions. Daly explained the nature of the project, how Congress could, if so disposed, enact a law providing for the forming of a Coal Mining Commission which would have complete supervision over the producing and delivery of Alaska coal to government bunkers to be located here in Portland, from which it could be purchased by the people direct at the cost of production. Then he asked for volunteers to pass petitions and every member of the Central Labor Council responded, each agreeing to circulate one among the members of his organization.

This Pacific coast movement is not reported across the Rocky Mountains by the Associated Press, or if reported the reports are suppressed by the newspapers belonging to that Association.

+ +

Canadian Reciprocity.

After a brief debate the Dominion Parliament has been dissolved, the Laurier ministry having decided that the reciprocity agreement with the United States could not be brought to a favorable vote without an "appeal to the country." General elections are therefore to be held September 21st for the election of a new Parliament to assemble early in October.

+

On the 26th President Taft signed the Congress-

sional bill confirming the reciprocity agreement. [See current volume, page 777.]

+ +

The Wool Tariff in Congress.

A wool tariff bill representing a compromise between the original La Follette measure in the Senate and the Underwood bill of the House, was passed by the Senate on the 27th by 48 to 32. The affirmative vote came from 11 Progressive Republicans, 2 Standpat Republicans (Nelson and McCumber), and 35 Democrats; the negative from 30 Standpat Republicans and 2 Progressives (Borah and Dixon). [See current volume, page 610.]

+

The Senate caucus of Democrats unanimously agreed on the 31st to support the House "farmers' free list bill," and, if defeated, to offer it with a modification excluding from the "farmers' free list" imports from countries which impose duties on American corn, oats, wheat, hay, cotton, horses, cattle and hogs. The Democratic members of the House committee on ways and means decided on the 31st to recommend a conference of the two Houses on wool tariff revision.

+

When the House bill came before the Senate for action, the House bill was defeated, 39 to 39, owing to the defection of Senator Bailey of Texas, he alone among the Democrats opposing it. Senators Brown, Gronna, McCumber, Nelson and Poindexter (Republicans) voted for it; Senator La Follette (Republican) voted against it, but immediately moved reconsideration. His motion being adopted, Senator Kern (Democrat) thereupon moved the amendment of the Democratic caucus noted above, and this amendment was adopted by 49 to 29, the Democrats and the Republican progressives voting for it. As thus amended, the bill was carried by 48 to 30. Joining the Democrats in support of the amended bill were the following Republicans: Borah, Bristow, Clapp, Crawford, Cummins, Dixon, Gronna, Kenyon, La Follette, McCumber, Nelson, Poindexter and Towles.

+ +

Presidential Politics in Nebraska.

Judson Harmon of Ohio was slated for recommendation at the Nebraska Democratic convention as Democratic candidate for President; but when the convention met at Fremont on the 25th it made no recommendations of persons. Its declarations were confined to principles. Pointing "with pride to the leadership the Democracy of Nebraska has taken within the last quarter of a century in reforms already accomplished, as well as those that are in process of accomplishment," the platform recites these in detail in terms that