

Progressive Republican Politics in Illinois.

Progressive Republicanism of the Wisconsin and Minnesota type is taking organized form in Illinois. [See current volume, page 417.]

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It has had a renewed impulse from the behavior of the Taft "progressives" as represented by Governor Deneen's supporters at a general "progressive" conference at Springfield on the 18th. This meeting decided to organize on—

the principles of honesty and integrity in public office, the elimination of grafters and jack-pots in politics, the abolition of corruption through bipartisan combinations, and insistence that a majority in either House of the legislature and not the gavel should control the procedure.

When asked by the Merriam element in attendance at the conference how it was intended to accomplish those excellent objects, no satisfactory reply was made. Thereupon the direct question was put: "Do you intend to support the Initiative and Referendum?" The answer was a pronounced negative. Reports of this meeting in the newspapers representing the Deneen element were to the effect that the Merriam element had been told that "they could either go in with the Deneen progressive movement or stay out." In this connection the Chicago Record-Herald of the 19th reported that "Governor Deneen had put the Merriam progressive movement in his hip pocket and sat on it." [See current volume, page 612.]

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The Cook County Progressive Republican League, which represents the Merriam elements, arranged on the 20th for going into the direct primaries of next April with Walter Clyde Jones, the leading Republican progressive in the State Senate, as their nominee for Republican candidate for Governor. Political observers are quoted as saying that this means, with reference to the relations of Illinois politics to national politics, a direct primary contest between Taft and Deneen on one side and La Follette and Jones on the other. The movement is committed to the Initiative and Referendum as the means for preventing misrepresentation in representative government. Senator Jones, in accepting the invitation of the League on the 22nd, said to its invitation committee:

I believe the fight must be made, thoroughly and now, to destroy corruption in political affairs. No permanent good is to be accomplished unless the war is fought to a conclusion in this State, as it has been in other States, like Oregon, Wisconsin, California and New Jersey, to restore actual popular government. To paraphrase the words of Lincoln: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." This government cannot endure half oligarchy and half democracy. It must become all one thing or all the

other. We must make the fight here and now to destroy the oligarchy which has grown up in our midst, based on political bosses with their spoils machines and the special interests with their corrupting money. The issue is clear. It is the restoration of the essential powers of government to the people at the ballot box. This is the progressive movement.

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Lorimer Politics in Illinois.

Under the name of the Lincoln Protective League, the Lorimer following in Illinois is organizing for the April primaries. It frankly opposes the direct primary as "a dream of weaklings," and the Initiative, Referendum and Recall as "devices of political jobbers to overthrow Constitutional government."

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Direct Legislation in Illinois.

The Illinois Initiative and Referendum League held its first public organization meeting on the 21st, at the La Salle Hotel, Chicago. A board of directors was chosen and a committee appointed to draft a platform and program. Towner K. Webster of Chicago is president, Dr. George E. Tupper of Mount Vernon is vice president, and George E. Cole of Chicago is chairman of the executive committee. The secretary, George E. Lee of Springfield, is to canvass the State thoroughly in the interest of the direct legislation platform and for the purpose of promoting the nomination and election to the legislature of those who believe in it. Among the attendants at the meeting who spoke were Willis K. Spaulding (water commissioner of Springfield), Assemblyman C. A. Karsh of Belleville, Howard S. Taylor of Chicago, Robert Eaton of Elwood, and ex-Mayor Dunne and Prof. Merriam of Chicago. The next meeting is to be held at Springfield in October. [See current volume, page 660.]

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"Wet" or "Dry" in Texas.

By a very narrow majority out of an enormously large vote the prohibition amendment to the Texas Constitution was defeated at the referendum election on the 22d. All the larger newspapers, most of the leading politicians, and the money interests, are reported to have fought the amendment. Governor Colquitt was on the stump against it and Senator Bailey's influence went against it. The vote was so close that at first the reports gave the prohibitionists a victory; but later reports give the "wets" a majority of about 7,000 in a vote of 500,000. Opposition to the amendment was financed by the brewers' association, which admits an expenditure of \$1,000,000, but claims that it was expended legitimately for newspaper advertising, speakers, halls, music, barbecues, etc. The prohibitionists charge on the other hand that poll tax certificates were fraudulently bought and used.

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