

which not they, but others may enjoy." Have we found that "somewhere"?

EDWARD HOWELL PUTNAM.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

THE REFERENDUM AS A FIFTH WHEEL.

W. W. Buchanan of Winnipeg, Canada, who has been a public advocate of Direct Legislation for twenty years and of Singletax for thirty years, at a banquet of the Direct Legislation League at Winnipeg on May 9, put one over on the Premier of his Province with an illustration that will live. R. P. Roblin, the Premier, had stated that the Referendum, if not absolutely mischievous, would be as useless as the fifth wheel on a coach, and Mr. Buchanan replied:

"I thank the Premier for a thought-starter toward a splendid illustration. The referendum is certainly like the fifth wheel of a coach, and the use of the maxim in this connection indicates that the Premier is easily ten years behind the time. The coach of today is a motor car, and the man found fifty miles from his garage without a fifth wheel on his automobile would not require a commission in lunacy to help him to gain admission to an insane asylum. Time and the automobile have made the old maxim as obsolete as a wooden gunboat. It is true that we do not change the mechanism of the car, nor put the fifth wheel upon an axle to increase wear and friction. We strap it on behind and cherish the ardent hope that it will stay there. We do not want to use it—until something goes wrong, and then we know where it is, and we are not left in the mud, or sitting by the side of the road, where the races of men go by, to sneer at us. The Referendum will not interfere with the legislative or administrative processes of government, unless something goes wrong, and then it can be used to keep the coach of state moving splendidly forward on the road of human progress."

S. S.

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, June 18, 1912.

The Republican National Convention.

In the Coliseum at Chicago the national Republican convention met on the 18th for the purpose of formulating the party platform and nominating candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, to be voted for at the election on the 5th day of November next. [See current volume, page 563.]



Prior to the assembling of this convention, the

national committee of the Republican party had been in session for more than a week adjusting preliminary details. Principal among the details with which it was charged was the decision of contests for seats as delegates. Under the rules of the party, the decisions of this committee are not final, but under the present circumstances they seemed on all hands to be probably final in effect. For as the temporary roll of the convention is thus made up, and as the convention organizes on the basis of this roll, all its subsequent proceedings may turn out to have been dictated by those preliminary decisions of the national committee. For illustration: Suppose a close race between rival candidates for the Presidential nomination; suppose contests which if decided one way would give to one candidate a majority of the delegates on the temporary roll; but if decided the other way would give it to the other candidate. In those circumstances the faction having a majority on the temporary roll could seat its own choice for temporary chairman of the convention, pack the credentials committee of the convention so as to secure confirmation of the previous decisions of the national committee, name its own candidate for permanent chairman, determine the factional color of all committees, and finally name its own candidates for President and Vice-President—all by the narrow majority given it originally by the national committee's pre-convention decisions on questions of contested seats for delegates. This is what could happen, subject of course to many variations in detail; and this is what the Roosevelt faction asserts that the Taft faction intended to have happen. When the national committee closed its work on the 15th it had completed the temporary roll, which indicated the following distribution of delegates: Taft, 563; Roosevelt, 466; La Follette, 36; Cummins, 10; Hughes, 1; Lincoln, 2; a majority of 24 for Taft.



According to the Roosevelt view, the preparation of this temporary roll showed a bold attempt by the Taft faction to make the convention misrepresent the party. The substance of their argument is that the national committee is a hold-over body, appointed at the previous quadrennial convention (which is true except as to a few vacancies); that most of the members of this committee, such as Crane of Massachusetts and Penrose of Pennsylvania, were defeated both personally and as to their "standpat" policies by the voters of the Republican party at the recent primaries (which is true as to those Taft leaders, and is probably true altogether); that these discredited representatives have decided contests with manifest factional partisanship in favor of Taft by a solid "steam roller" vote of about 36—a majority of something like 20—regardless of the

merits of the contests, and notwithstanding that the other members have voted according to the merits of the contests even when this was against their own factional interests; that the primaries preceding these factional decisions of the committee demonstrated an overwhelming demand of the Republican voters for Roosevelt as against Taft; and that these decisions by the hold-over committee are pursuant to a plan to steal the nomination from Roosevelt, whom the rank and file of the party want, and to give it to Taft, whom they do not want.

Mr. Roosevelt rushed to Chicago to meet the emergency in person, arriving late in the afternoon of the 15th. He was received by an immense crowd, and from the balcony of the Congress Hotel he made the following speech, as reported on the 16th by the Chicago Tribune, which is strongly pro-Roosevelt:

My friends: (Applause.) Chicago is a bad place for men to try to steal in. (Applause.) I wish you to look at that placard of California. The placard says California refuses to try title to property before the thieves who stole it. California's twenty-six votes are mine and shall be counted as such. And, mind you, the receiver of stolen goods is no better than the thief. This has come down to mean a fight for honesty against dishonesty, for honesty against theft. The people have spoken and the politicians, dead or living, who opposed them will be made to understand that they are the servants and not the masters of the rank and file of the plain people of the republic. This is no factional fight. This is a contest between the people themselves and the professional politicians representing all that is worst in the corruption of business. And the people will win. (Applause.) And we had in the primaries (a voice, "Illinois"). Yes, sir, 56 to 2. And from States where the people could express their will we have obtained your votes two to one, three to one, and even eight to one. And now the people are stronger than ever before. Our opponents of that day contain many hundreds and thousands of men who, while they were against us then, refuse to countenance theft and robbery now. It is a naked fight against theft and thieves, and thieves shall not win. (Applause.)

When the convention assembled on the 18th it was called to order by Victor Rosewater, chairman of the holdover national committee, and proceeded to election of temporary chairman. After a spectacular six hours' contest, Elihu Root, the nominee of the Taft majority in the national committee, was named by a vote of 558, as against Governor Francis E. McGovern of Wisconsin, the nominee of Mr. Roosevelt's supporters, who received 502 votes; with 18 votes scattering. The presentation of McGovern's name had been op-

posed in the Wisconsin delegation by a vote of 15 to 11, on the ground that it diverted strength from La Follette.

Socialist Politics.

The first campaign in which the Socialist party has had a complete ticket in every State was opened in Chicago on the 16th, at Riverview Park, where Eugene V. Debs and Emil Seidel, the Socialist candidates for President and Vice President of the United States, made addresses. [See current volume, page 487.]

At the Social Democratic State convention held in Milwaukee on the 16th, Carl D. Thompson of Milwaukee was nominated for Governor, H. M. Parks of Superior for Lieutenant Governor, and Ray Weaver of Beaver Dam for Secretary of State. W. R. Gaylord of Milwaukee was elected State chairman, and Miss E. H. Thomas of Milwaukee, secretary.

The Labor War.

In consequence of the dockworkers' strike in London, the "Majestic," White Star liner, canceled its sailing from Southampton to New York on the 11th. Yet dispatches from London of the same date stated that the backbone of the strike had been broken by the refusal of the dockworkers of Ireland and Scotland and the English cities of Hull and Liverpool to make the strike national. By the same dispatches it appeared that work was going on as usual in London through strike breakers protected by the police. [See current volume, pages 562, 564.]

The Chicago stereotypers' strike figured for two or three days at the International convention of stereotypers, which has been in session at San Francisco. The Chicago union having been suspended by the International officers, the question of its delegates, decided in their favor by the committee but appealed by the International officers to the whole convention, was considered in committee of the whole, and on the 14th that body refused to seat those delegates on the ground that the members of a suspended union are ineligible. On the same day the convention decided against the Chicago union on its appeal from the action of the International officers in suspending its charter. This decision excludes the present Chicago union from the International organization. A committee consisting of W. P. Keegan, Charles Sumner and Elmer Johnson was appointed by the convention to reorganize the stereotypers of Chicago. [See current volume, page 538.]