

dependence lost its force and the attempt to name a Republican opponent to the regulation candidate failed.

The Lincoln men, so-called, who were very active three and four years ago, but have been quiescent for the past two years, appear to have entertained the hope that the death of Boss Brayton might lead to a high class Republican nomination for the United States Senate. Of this happy event there is no present evidence.

Notwithstanding the inactivity of the Independent Republicans, the Democratic convention might have seized the opportunity and put an Insurgent Republican into the field. By so doing, the Opposition would have strengthened itself all along the line.

The convention did, however, select an able and well qualified judge as its candidate for Senator; but, being actively engaged in his duties in the United States court, he can make no canvass, and therefore will not draw votes to the Democratic legislative candidates as an Insurgent Republican would have done.



As in Maine, Connecticut and New Jersey, the Democrats of Rhode Island have nominated for Governor of the State an able and well qualified gentleman, who is likely to get the votes of many Independent Republicans.



The feature of the campaign thus far, and the one which is most likely to influence the result, in so far as individual candidates for the legislature are concerned, is the "heckling" of candidates.

The movement to question by mail the candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, senators and representatives, originated with the Tax Reform Association. Its wish was to have two questions asked, the second one relating to home rule for the cities and towns on the matter of local taxation. After conference with other organizations, however, the final decision was to quiz the candidates upon but a single point, as set forth in the following letter:

RHODE ISLAND INTERROGATION ASSOCIATION.
Campaign Committee.

Hiram Vrooman, Secretary, 16 Bridgham Street.

ITS OBJECT.—The object of this Association is to heckle or question candidates for public office and pledge them to the support of the issues involved in the questions presented.

Providence, R. I., October 10, 1910.

To Candidate for the Rhode Island General Assembly:

Dear Sir—The undersigned committee, representing by appointment, the State Federation of Labor, the Prohibition State Committee, the Tax Reform Association, the Interrogation Association, also representative of the Independent vote of the State, beg to request of you a statement of your attitude upon the following public question, and the position you will take towards legislation thereon, if elected:

Question: Will you, if elected, vote for, and do all in your power to secure the passage of a Constitutional Amendment which shall enable a majority of the voters of the State to make changes in the State Constitution by means of the Initiative and Referendum?

Please answer immediately, inasmuch as early publicity is intended.

Neglect to reply will be considered as a refusal to support the legislation asked for.

A. E. Hohler,
President of State Branch of American Federation of Labor.

Hiram Vrooman,
Louis E. Remington,
Lucius F. C. Garvin,
Charles H. Lee.

Answer.....

Signature.....

The question had been sent to 321 candidates up to date, October 26th, and 130 answers had been received, all favorable except four.

Most of the affirmative answers are from Democrats, a considerable number from the comparatively few Prohibitionists, and a few only thus far from Republicans.

Several influential labor organizations have sent out the same questions to local candidates for the legislature.

LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

FINANCIAL DEBILITY.*

Indianapolis, Ind.

Out from Washington city September 25th, there was sent a news dispatch that began: "It is unlikely that there will be any shortage of money this fall anywhere in the United States. This is not to be construed as the promise of any particular individual but is the large impersonal view of the Treasury Department, whose hand is on the pulse of the nation's financial and business life, and represents the opinions of the officials who constantly watch for symptoms of any stringency."

Then followed half a column of so-called reasons which the Treasury officials are said to have given for "their predictions." Among these reasons are assumptions that have no foundation in fact, or if true, no more to do with the quantity of money available for business than the spots on the sun.

It is assumed that Europe "will owe America money," that it "will be paid in gold that will come across in bars," that "the banks will take these bars to the mints or sub-treasuries to be stored" that "gold certificates will be issued to represent it," etc., etc.

This is the character of pretenses by which it is attempted, on the alleged authority of the Treasury Department, to deceive the people concerning financial conditions.



The opinions of Treasury officials are of no more value than the opinions of intelligent students of the subject outside the Department.

But I do not believe the statements contained in this dispatch had a Treasury Department origin. I have had some experience in getting information from the Department. There has usually been no difficulty in getting facts as they are shown by the Department records, but when questions have been asked that required an expression of an opinion or

*See preceding articles by Mr. Van Vorhis in The Public, vol. xiii, pp. 798, 920.

the drawing of an inference the answers have been a courteous refusal to do either, with a possible reference to where the most accurate information could be found.

But on the assumption that the statements in that dispatch were obtained from Treasury officials and that there was some measure of truth in them, editorial comments have been made all over the country. In this way, by the assistance of the Associated Press, newspapers everywhere have been induced to aid in deceiving the public and thus to enable a few unscrupulous manipulators in New York to float schemes for public plunder.

For several years almost every official abstract, particularly if there was about the time of issue any disturbance of the stock markets, has been preceded by an Associated Press interpretation, usually about as far from the truth as this one.

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The information concerning the condition of national banks on March 29 and June 30 last, furnished by abstracts 68 and 69, was not calculated to encourage an optimistic view of the financial situation in New York; and abstract 70, showing the conditions on September 1st, was looked for with some apprehension. Remembering the conditions on March 29 and June 30, there was nothing disclosed by abstract 70 that would be calculated to relieve the apprehension that undoubtedly exists in financial circles.

During the time covered by this abstract the aggregate increase of loans and discounts of national banks was very little more than \$37,000,000. This is less than half the average daily increase for the last twelve years, and about one seventh of the daily increase during February and March. Nearly \$31,000,000 of this increase was made by the 39 New York banks. The loans of the 322 Reserve banks were decreased nearly \$11,000,000, and of the 6,791 Country banks increased about \$47,000,000, so that between them there was a net increase of only about \$6,000,000 in all national banks outside of the Central Reserve cities.

During July and August the holding of bank reserves by the 39 New York national banks was increased over \$14,000,000, and the holding of other funds was increased over \$17,000,000. The total increase was therefore about \$31,000,000, every dollar of which appears to have been converted into loans for the benefit of the stock markets.

On September 1st the New York national banks held over \$251,000,000 of the reserves of national banks outside of New York, and in addition to this they owed outside banks and trust companies about \$950,000,000 not reserves, or an aggregate of reserves and other funds of about \$1,200,000,000.

At the same time the 39 New York banks had in the aggregate less than \$25,000,000 surplus cash exclusive of the redemption fund. Chicago and St. Louis were short.

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Under this state of facts such dispatches as that referred to are almost criminal in falsity and in deceptive possibilities and results.

At the time when this dispatch was sent out there was a pinching money stringency in New York and

all over the country, as is shown by the decrease in loans and discounts. New York is preparing to relieve that stringency by a resort to the act of June 30th, 1908.

This is rather a conclusive demonstration of the error of the Comptroller of the currency when he assured Congress and the country that the large cities would not resort to the issue of an emergency currency.

FLAVIUS J. VAN VORHIS.

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THE PASSION PLAY IN AMERICA?

Rochelle, Ill.

In a Sunday edition of a Chicago daily for August 21, 1910, a lengthy article was printed with the following headlines: "Oberammergau's Sainly Actors Coming to America to Give Their Passion Play."

Let me quote from this article. The second paragraph reads:

Now Oberammergau is to be shifted to East Aurora, New York. Elbert Hubbard, social philosopher and Roycroft creator, backed by a syndicate of wealthy and eager philanthropists, found the means to persuade the players to make the journey. For a month next year the Passion Play will be given in the Hubbard village just as it is given on the banks of the Ammer in Bavaria, and by the same cast. Thither will go Anton Lang, the simple carpenter who has enacted the part of the Savior at three festivals.

This last sentence is not true. Anton Lang is a potter and not a carpenter. This is the second season he played the part of Christus. Joseph Mayr played that part in 1890 and Mr. Lang was chosen for the first time in 1900.

Let me continue the quotation:

Johann Zwink, the Oberammergau blacksmith, and the greatest Judas in the history of the play, will be there, so will his daughter Ottalie, the Virgin of the Passion Play. . . . It will mean the rooting up of a whole little city.

It is unnecessary to quote further. There is something wrong somewhere.

I saw the Passion Play last June and became acquainted with Anton Lang. I was repeatedly informed by the people of that delightful village that they never would play elsewhere and only in Oberammergau every ten years. This they have always adhered to excepting when interrupted by the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. They played six weeks that year, but the next season completed their program of dates. They usually play from May until October. The opening date this year was May 11, the closing date September 25.

However, when I read this lengthy article in the newspaper I was not satisfied until I had had a written statement from Mr. Lang. I wrote him, and in due time received the following letter, which is self-explanatory:

Oberammergau, Sept. 6, 1910.

Dear Sir—Herr Anton Lang has received your letter and wishes me to say that there is no truth whatever in the report that they are going to give the Passion Play in America, neither will they give it here next year or any other year except every ten years, as it is entirely a Religious Service in accordance with a vow made several hundred years ago. Hoping that you will contradict any further announcement of the same kind, I am yours truly.

M. W. for Herr Anton Lang.

Nothing further need be said.

ALBERTUS PERRY.