

WEEKLY COURIER

BEN ED. DOANE, Publisher.

JASPER, INDIANA.

MERCHANTS' PLATFORM

English woman Suffragists think their magna charta a long time in being handed to them.

Now that the Japanese have taken to baseball, we presume their cry of "Banzai" will give way to "rotten."

The millionaire who marries his stenographer never gets any sympathy from the haters of wealth.

An American has been asked to aid the Chinese mint to make metal money. To help the Chinks chink, as it were.

Emma Goldman announces that she is a follower of Satan. And there are times when she seems to be stepping on his heels.

Mrs. Howard Gould says her husband tried to starve her by cutting her allowance to \$60,000 a year. Ever hear of such cruelty?

That domestic who stole \$5,000 worth of jewelry under the very eyes of her mistress in Philadelphia never was born to be a servant.

Wright aeroplanes will soon be on the market at \$4,000 apiece, which shows that high flying is going to be as expensive a game as ever.

Some of the hotelkeepers in Switzerland—presumably not the best—are making war on the stars of commutation in the Baedeker guide books.

One New York newspaper learns that Mr. Roosevelt will receive \$30,000 a year as assistant editor of the Outlook. That isn't such a bad outlook.

A chewing-gum magnate in Ohio has been sued for divorce. Certainly, any kind of a wife ought to be able to make a husband of this sort stick.

When the Englishmen hear that Chicago's smoke nuisance is greater than that of London they will put it down as nothing but another Yankee boast.

Americans, declares Prof. Zuebin, prefer the exclusive to the common life. The man who owns a motor car will be inclined to deny this assertion.

Mr. Edison may be taking a physical rest, but his imagination appears to be working over time when he predicts that he will fly to the North Pole in forty minutes.

Sometimes a bridegroom really attracts attention at a wedding and gets what is coming to him. One at Los Angeles recently was kissed by four hundred girls.

A brother of the "King of Kurdistan" has applied for naturalization papers in this country. Being a brother of the "King of Kurdistan" isn't a very good job, evidently.

When the news came that the Kaiser had invented a new brake, the rest was easy for the newspapers. One and all announced in chorus: "The Kaiser is always making breaks."

President Roosevelt announces that he does not intend to kill more than two elephants during his African hunting trip. Of course, if he scares a few more to death it will not be his fault.

We look forward with keen relish to the time when Editor Roosevelt and Mass Henry Watterson unlimber their vocabularies and start something across the chasm that separates the sanctums.

Russians, Englishmen and Germans are mad at Emperor William because of his recent declaration of friendship for Great Britain. William may as well give up his hopes of ever being able to please anybody.

Dr. Cook, who is looking for the north pole, writes that the boys are looking well and that he has plenty of dogs. No wonder the boys are looking well. Dog in that country is such a pleasant change from a steady diet of canned goods.

It is much to be proud of that on the occasion of the visit of the fleet to Japan not only did the thousands of sailors who were given shore liberty conduct themselves well, but when Admiral Sperry sailed away there was not a single deserter.

Dr. Napoleon Boston, of Washington, declares that the practice of kissing is worse than house flies for spreading disease. Why, if this is true, do so many of our most beautiful young ladies manage to get along until they are married without having poor health?

The possibilities of woman suffrage are illustrated by the fact that a Wyoming man and his wife are running in the present campaign on opposite tickets for the same office. There may be some heartburning over the result, but, whichever wins, the salary will be in the family.

Plank No. 8. Require County Officers to Keep a Public-Fee Book.

The people who pay fees to public officers have a right to know that those fees are accurately charged, properly recorded and accounted for, and that they are turned into the public treasury. Books recording the business of public officers with the public should be public records always open to the public.

Plank No. 9. Require Sheriffs to Feed Prisoners at Actual Cost.

The present law provides that the sheriff shall receive a fixed amount per day for feeding prisoners, and that amount is the same in every county in the State, whether the county is large or small, the jail crowded or empty, the cost little or much. This system is clearly unjust, either to the sheriff or to the public. Any system which affords the sheriff a profit from the feeding of prisoners is a violation of good business principles. Such a system induces underfeeding the prisoners, overfeeding the jails, the padding of accounts, and an outrage on public morale. That the present system is an extravagant one for the public is conclusively proved by the fact that in every case where prisoners are fed in workhouses or jails at actual cost the expense ranges from one-third to one-half of the cost under the present system.

Plank No. 1. Provide a Uniform System of County, Township and City Accounts, and Centralize Their Supervision in the State Auditor.

Modern business methods control the conduct of public business in Federal offices. The admirable results of such methods in securing honesty and efficiency in the conduct of public business show conclusively the value of modern business system for county, township and city offices.

There should be fixed by law a business system and an honest standard which will make irregularity and dishonesty in these offices as difficult as possible, and which will make the detection of either easy and certain. The details of the system should be worked out in the office of the State Auditor, and the system should be inaugurated and the working of the system supervised from that office.

Plank No. 2. Require the Governor to Make State Examinations of the Books of Every County, Township, and City Office.

Examinations should proceed from the highest executive authority in the State, an officer without interest in re-election, divorced from local influences, most prominently before the public, and directly responsible to the people of the State for the enforcement of the law. A department of inspection should be organized to make examination of the books of every county, township and city office; the head of the department should be named by the Governor, under his direction, and responsible only to him. The examination should be at irregular intervals, speedy, without notice, thorough and relentless, following the unarranted remittances of fines and flagrant neglect in collection of fines, fees and forfeitures belonging to the school fund are matters of common knowledge in every county of the State. The present annual loss to the fund on this account amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars. This loss not only gravely threatens the adequacy of the school fund, but it has already caused a material increase in direct taxation for school purposes. Every taxpayer in the whole State is annually paying a tribute in dollars for the long indifference of citizens to this abuse. Correction lies in placing the final responsibility for the collection of all items belonging to the school fund in a State officer.

Plank No. 11. Compel the Collection of Fines and Forfeitures Due to the School Fund.

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Plank No. 12. Put the Prosecuting Attorney and His Deputies on Salary.

The fee of the prosecutor under the present law is fixed, not on the investigation of crime nor on the trial of criminals, but only on conviction.

And that fee is identically the same amount where conviction is secured after weeks of trial in a single case in the criminal court and in the police court where scores of convictions are often secured in a single hour. The prosecutor's fee for a month's trial in the criminal court may be nothing if no conviction is secured. And the chance of convictions is very much less in the more important cases where stubborn defense is made. But the prosecutor's fees in the police court may amount to hundreds of dollars in an hour. The present system, therefore, furnishes an incentive to prosecute minor offenses to the neglect of matters of public interest. And in large cities it greatly overpays the prosecutor.

Plank No. 3. Require the County Auditor to Audit Before Making Settlements.

Settlements made by the county auditor in the receipt and disbursements of money, either with other officers or with the public, should be based only upon such an audit as will assure the regularity and accuracy of the transactions involved. Such assurance can not be had without checking the settlement sheet in every instance with the original entries of receipt and disbursements. Bids, proposals and contracts when required by law should be demanded by the auditor as the basis of every settlement in which they are involved.

Plank No. 4. Pay the County Commissioners Appropriate Salaries and Require Them to Give Bonds.

The county is an immense public corporation and its officers control millions of property and collect and disburse hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Under our laws the county commissioners are the executive directors of this great corporation, and form the active head of the county official machinery.

The necessary qualifications, the grave financial responsibility and the importance of the office demand that the county commissioner should receive an adequate salary, established on a business basis, and that he should give proper bond for the honest and faithful discharge of his duties.

Plank No. 5. Require the County Auditor to Give an Adequate Bond.

Under the present law the auditor of every county of the State gives a bond for the same amount, which is \$10,000.

The treasurer's bond, however, is graded upon the volume of the business in the county.

The control of disbursements in the auditor's office and the responsibility and liability on that account varies with the business of the different counties in precisely the same manner as in the treasurer's office.

The bond of the auditor should be based upon the volume of business and graded in the same manner as the treasurer's bond.

Plank No. 6. Cut Off Extra Allowances to Public Officers.

So long as extra allowances are permitted to public officers under the law, political friends and associates will find a method of voting to each other unearned money. The application of this system to county officers is so general and the amounts to be secured from this course are so great that the inducement exists constantly to increase the list of extra allowances.

Plank No. 7. Forbid Public Officers Profiting From Public Contracts.

The law now prohibits municipal officers from entering into contracts with the cities or towns which they represent. But it does not prevent the officer of one city from entering into a contract with another city, or the officers of a city entering a contract with a county, or members of the legislature from taking profit from public contracts with county, township or city. A broad general law affecting all public offices should make it a felony for any public officer to profit by any contract with the public.

Plank No. 8. Authorize Grand Jurors to Make a Presentment to the Governor When Conditions Warrant and Require the Governor to Institute Special Investigation and Prosecution in Such Cases and to Present the Facts to the Legislature.

The prosecutor not only prosecutes criminals after indictments are returned, but he secures the evidence for the grand jury upon which the indictments are returned, and advises the grand jury as to the law in all matters pertaining to indictments and to their investigation. Therefore, wherever he is legal, inefficient or subject to local conditions and influences he is in a position effectively to obstruct the prosecution of crime.

Under our law it requires the vote of five out of six jurors to return an indictment. Two grand jurors, therefore, may prevent the return of an indictment, even when the evidence seems to the other four conclusively to warrant an indictment.

Where local conditions are such as to obstruct the prosecution of crime, either through the control of the grand jury or the inefficiency, neglect or control of the prosecutor, the people should have a right of appeal to the State. That appeal should go to the highest executive officer of the State charged with the responsibility of enforcing the laws, and he should be required to institute special investigation and prosecution, and empowered to employ special counsel for this purpose.

In order to apply the curative remedy of publicity to cases of this kind, and further, to prevent the abuse of such great power on the part of the Governor, it should be required of him that a full report of all such special investigations and prosecutions shall be presented to the next succeeding session of the legislature.

Plank No. 10. Require the State Auditor to Audit the School Funds.

Under the present law accritions to the school fund are reported to a state officer only when they are collected, but no fiscal officer of the State is furnished a record of the items belonging to this fund at the time such items originally accrue. The only supervision of the school fund by any State officer authorized under the present law is given to the superintendent of public instruction, who is an educational and not a fiscal officer. And the original charges of school fund items are not even reported to him.

The common school fund is a sacred fund, and every item belonging to that fund should be reported to a fiscal officer of the State at the time it originally accrues.

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Plank No. 13. Compel the Payment of All Fees Into the Public Treasury.

The fee system of paying public officers is endured by the public only on the theory that it costs the taxpayer nothing. That this theory is utterly false needs no argument.

The opportunity to make an independent fortune in the public office shows how the public treasury would profit if all the fees were paid into the treasury and the officers were paid a straight salary.

To make a private fortune out of a public office is in violation of the principles of republican government.

The fee system is vicious and obnoxious and should be abolished.

Plank No. 14. Require the Courts to Be Responsible for the Drawing of Jurors.

The law provides with the utmost exactness what shall be presented to the jury, and the court scrutinizes the evidence with the utmost diligence.

Why then should the law not require that the court exercise the same scrutiny in regard to the men who shall compose the jury? Our method of selecting jurors is ancient, ineffective, unsatisfactory and offers opportunity for the protection of official law-breakers and the benefit of special interests.

The judge of every court should be responsible to the people for the character of every jury which tries a case in his court.

The excellent results of the recent New York law proves the value of this method.

Plank No. 15. Require Preliminary Examination of Jurors for Special Venires.

Special juries are drawn on the theory that cases of peculiar importance to the public require an extra effort to secure competent juries for their trial.

The integrity of the special jury can only be secured through a careful oral examination of each individual as to his qualifications before he is placed in a special panel.

This examination should proceed from an officer authorized to cite citizens to appear before him and answer questions as to their qualifications.

Such examination should be made a matter of record and the books placed at the disposal of the court in which the special jury is to serve.

The saving of time to court and counsel and of money to the public for disagreements and mis-trials would more than compensate for a good salary to a competent commissioner to make such examinations.

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