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GRAFT IN COUNTY OFFICES MAY BE ELIMINATED BY LAW

Indianapolis Merchants' Association Has Drawn Up List Of Changes Which Should Be Made.

SUPPORT PLEDGED BY STATE LEGISLATORS.

Adoption of Suggestions Will Be Means of Wiping Out Easy Opportunity for Graft And Plunder.

Ellis Seales.

Indianapolis, Nov. 18.—The Indianapolis Merchants' Association is receiving encouragement from all over the state in its agitation in favor of the passage by the legislature of laws that will reform the methods employed in conducting county business. If the plan is carried through as contemplated by the Merchants' Association, it will be the means of placing the business of the counties on a strictly business basis and wipe out the easy opportunities for graft and plunder that now exist.

The latest bit of encouragement comes from Evansville, where the commercial bodies have considered the platform of the Merchants' Association and decided to give it all possible support.

The platform of the Merchants' Association includes recommendations for the following changes in the laws:

1. Provide a uniform system of county, township and city accounts and centralize their supervision in the state auditor.

2. Require the governor to make stated examinations of the books of every county, township and city.

3. Require the county auditor to audit before making settlements.

4. Pay the county commissioners adequate salaries and require them to give bond for the faithful performance of their duties.

5. Require the county auditor to give adequate bond.

6. Cut off extra allowances to public officers.

7. Prohibit public officers profiting from public contracts.

8. Require county officers to keep a public fee book.

9. Require sheriffs to feed prisoners at actual cost.

10. Require the state auditor to audit the school funds.

11. Compel the collection of fines and forfeitures due to the school fund.

12. Put the prosecuting attorney and his deputies on salary.

13. Compel the payment of all fees into the public treasury.

14. Require the courts to be responsible for the drawing of jurors. The atrocious miscarriage of the jury system calls for radical reform.

15. Require preliminary examinations of jurors for special venires.

16. Authorize grand jurors to make a special presentation to the governor when conditions warrant, and require the governor to institute special investigation and prosecution of such cases and to present the facts to the legislature.

When the Merchants' Association adopted this platform and gave it to the public, it aroused much discussion. But within a short time after it became public a large number of members of the legislature had pledged themselves to it and promised to enact laws along the lines suggested in the platform.

Every democratic and republican candidate for the legislature in Marion county, without a single exception, promised to support the reforms and many members of the legislature from other counties offered their support. So it seems likely that these measures will have strong backing at the next session and that they will be enacted.

The agitation for these reforms was started as a result of the graft exposures in Marion county more than anything else. The exposures are well remembered all over the state. It was claimed at the time they came to light that the methods of conducting the business of counties was loose and uncertain and it was due to this laxity of the law more than to the criminal intent of the offenders that such grafting was made possible. The Merchants' Association holds that if the opportunity for crookedness in public office is wiped out, the officers will be conducted on clean lines and the people's money will not be stolen.

One of the most important of the recommendations made by the Merchants' Association is the one referring to placing all officials on straight salaries and requiring all fees to be paid into the public treasury.

This, it is explained, will enable a man to know just how much he is going to make out of an office and will prevent his making any more than that. If a man is not willing to take an office for the salary offered by the law he cannot take it at all. If he does take it and makes out of it more

FIFTY PEOPLE GIVEN EMPLOYMENT

Work Resumed at Richmond Mfg. Plant.

Work was begun in the lamp shop of the Richmond Indiana Manufacturing company's plant today. About fifty persons are employed. A portion of this number is girls and women. The bed shop will be opened up again within a short time. The lack of material has prevented the resumption of work in this factory at this time. The same management will continue in control. Practically all of the former employees will be given their positions back. It is expected the plant will be run throughout the winter season.

COMPANY INCORPORATES.

Claypool, Stimson and Judson Are Directors.

The Richmond Manufacturing company was incorporated at Indianapolis today. The firm will appear as successors to the Richmond Indiana Manufacturing company. The capital stock is placed at \$50,000. The directors are E. H. Claypool, of Indianapolis and Robert Stimson and James Judson of this city. The company will occupy the plant of the Richmond Indiana Manufacturing company in West Richmond. The manufacture of lamps and iron bedsteads will be engaged in.

HOPES TO LIVE TO BE CENTENARIAN

John Fletcher Medearis Celebrates 99th Birthday Anniversary.

OLDEST MAN IN COUNTY.

HAS USED TOBACCO GREATER PART OF HIS LIFE—READS WITHOUT GLASSES AND IS HEALTHY CONSIDERING AGE.

Greensfork, Ind., Nov. 18.—Does the use of tobacco shorten the longevity of a person's life? John Fletcher Medearis says it does not. Probably he ought to know something about it, as he is only one less than 100 years old. Mr. Medearis celebrated his ninety-ninth birthday anniversary Monday. He has used the weed since twelve years old. He says he wants to live to celebrate his centennial and expects to continue to be an advocate of the use of tobacco. The venerable gentleman is one of the best liked men of this community. He has made his home on North Green street, this place for the last six years. Formerly he resided on a farm south of Olive Hill.

When America first was recognized as existing other than as rebellious British colonies in 1812, John Fletcher Medearis was a three-year-old boy down in Guilford county, North Carolina. When the civil war broke out in 1861, Mr. Medearis was too old to enlist. When thousands of men then in their prime of youth were marching off to the Southern fields, Mr. Medearis was only 52. Thousands of these same veterans since have died at "ripe old ages," but this Greensforker laughs at time. When America celebrated its centennial of the declaration of independence, Mr. Medearis was 67 years old. When the great world's Columbian exposition was held at Chicago, Mr. Medearis was old enough to have been called a pioneer of the pionneers. He was eighty-four, but that was fifteen years ago.

Mr. Medearis holds the distinction of being the oldest man in Wayne county, and probably the oldest man in the state of Indiana. He remembers vividly that when he lived in Salisbury, the first settlement in Wayne county, a town that exists now solely in memories and county histories, the Indians were roaming about the site of the present town of Centerville. At that time Mr. Medearis was twenty years old.

A republican from the creation of the party, and a Whig before that time Mr. Medearis has had the remarkable record of casting a vote for nineteen presidents. The vote he cast for Henry Clay he regards as one of the best efforts of his life.

The wife of Mr. Medearis died six years ago, when she was almost 80 years old. Mrs. Medearis, the mother of Fletcher Medearis, died at the age of 94. Mr. Medearis has been the father of thirteen children, nine of whom are living. There were six girls and three

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THE WEATHER PROPHET.

INDIANA—Fair Wednesday night and Thursday; strong winds, mostly southwest.

OHIO—Partly cloudy Wednesday night; warmer in north and east portions; Thursday fair; slightly cooler in north and central portions; strong southwest to west winds.

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CALL TO ARMS IS SOUNDED BY OPTIONISTS

Citizens' Meeting Will Be Held To Discuss Advisability of General Attack on the Saloons.

SPECIAL ELECTION WOULD COST \$4,000.

Same Routine as in General Elections Would Have to Be Followed—The Law's Contents.

Dear Sir:

You are respectfully invited and urged to attend a meeting of representative citizens of Wayne county, to be held at the South Eighth Street Friends church this Thursday, November 19, 1908, at one P. M., to discuss the advisability of proceeding at once with the circulation of a petition in order to secure at least 20 per cent of the voters, for the purpose of holding a county local option election.

A representative of the Indiana Anti-Saloon league has been invited to be present. If you cannot come, send some one to express your opinion.

Yours truly,

A CITIZENS' COMMITTEE OF WAYNE COUNTY

Richmond, Indiana,

Nov. 18, 1908.

Copies of the above letter have been sent to about three hundred Wayne county people known to be actively interested in furthering the movement to drive the saloons out of Wayne county.

This is the first step taken by the Ministerial association and the Wayne County Civic league in the crusade it is preparing to wage against the saloons of Richmond, Cambridge City and East Germantown, the only wet spots in Wayne county.

The county local option law, which is not yet in effect, requires that the petition for holding a local option election shall not be presented to the county commissioners, who set the date for the election, unless the petition has been signed by at least twenty-five per cent of the voters of the county wherein the election is held. There are, judging from the vote cast at the last election for the first elector on the republican ticket and the first presidential elector on the democratic ticket, 11,163 voters in Wayne county. It would be necessary, therefore, to secure the signatures of 2,234 voters to a petition for a county local option election.

Liberals Active.

It is understood that the "liberals" have been as active as the temperance workers in preparing for the struggle over the "wet" or "dry" proposition and, it is said, if a local option election is ordered the "liberals" will not be found unprepared. Some of their most active workers state that many business men who were thought to be in favor of driving the saloons out of the county have announced that they will vote "wet," fearing that a city the size of Richmond would suffer loss of business should the county be voted dry.

Active workers for the temperance cause state that it is an assured fact that the county will be voted "dry" and that they are daily securing recruits to their cause.

ELECTION COST \$4,000.

To hold a county option election in this county would cost approximately \$4,000 or very near the same expense as the recent general election. The same number of precincts and voting places would have to be provided. It is the kind of an election, the cost of which might be diminished by the use of voting machines. There would have to be election commissioners, sheriffs, clerks, judges and all the other officials such as provided for by the general election laws.

The petition for the election must be signed by not less than twenty per cent of the aggregate vote cast in the county for secretary of state at the last general election. No voter can sign his name to the petition after it is filed, nor withdraw his name after the petition has been filed. The election commission shall be composed of the county auditor and two resident freeholders, one known to favor the use of intoxicants for use as a beverage and the other to oppose.

Whenever an election has been held under the provisions of the act, no subsequent election shall be held there under until the expiration of at least two years from the last preceding election.

If a majority of the legal votes cast at the election shall be in favor of prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, after ninety days from the holding of the election all licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquors granted in the county after the passage of the act shall be null and void. The holder of the license shall be liable for any sale of liquors made by him thereafter the same as if no license had been issued him. If the holder of the void license surrenders it within ninety days the county, city or town issuing the license shall refund a proportionate amount of the money paid.

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MEN WHO FIGURE IN GREAT SAN FRANCISCO GRAFT CASES

Francis J. Heney, the prosecutor in the famous San Francisco graft cases is shown in the large picture. At the top, to the left, is shown the late Senator John Mitchell of Oregon who was convicted and sentenced for complicity in Oregon land frauds. At the left of the sketch showing the matter of shooting is former Mayor Eugene Schmitz of San Francisco who was convicted of bribery. At the bottom is Abraham Ruef, whose second trial is now on. Heney was shot in the court room by Morris Haas, the ex-convict, who was exposed by Heney in the former trial of Ruef.
