

The River Press

Published every Wednesday Morning
by the River Press Publishing Company.

FOR STATE-WIDE PRIMARIES.

In view of the conflicting claims of supporters of each aspirant for presidential honors, and the lack of definite knowledge as to the preference of the voters, it is suggested that a state-wide primary is the proper way to ascertain prevailing public sentiment upon this question. The situation is concisely and accurately described by Hon. W. B. Sands, of Chinook, in an open letter to the Missoulian, to this effect:

"The republicans throughout the state are deeply interested in the question of who shall be the presidential nominee of the party.

"The past three platforms of the republican party in this state have declared in favor of a primary election law, but we are still without one. The rank and file of the party are anxious to express their choice but feel that they have but little to say about the nominees of the party under the prevailing convention method. Why not recognize the popular demand and let the voters of the party directly express their choice by a state-wide referendum vote at the party primaries? Why not have the state central committee order a vote taken at each precinct at the time the delegates to the county conventions are elected and the returns forwarded through the county conventions to the state convention. Let the candidate receiving the highest number of votes over the whole state be the candidate for whom the votes of this state at the national convention be recorded. Let the state convention select the delegates to the national convention. It is not very important who the delegates are if they express the will of the people at the national convention. This plan would not be difficult to carry out and would restore confidence in the party. It would not be difficult of operation. It would be very simple indeed.

"The undersigned recently addressed a letter to each of the republican county committeemen in Chouteau, Hill and Blaine counties asking whether they preferred the convention system or the state-wide primary plan. Over half (thirty-four to be exact), have answered and every answer has been in favor of the state-wide plan.

"The state republican committee, consisting of one committeeman from each county, meets at Helena on the 23rd of this month. The old convention method will be adopted unless the republicans of each county get after their representative and impress upon him the importance of recognizing the demand of the rank and file of the party.

"One other suggestion. Why not have this primary election on the same day as the school election, April 6? In a very few country districts the polling places for school and precinct election may not be convenient, but for the great mass of people in the country, the two elections on the same day will be a great convenience and both elections will be better attended and more representative."

The plan suggested by Mr. Sands can be followed without elaborate preparation, and would demonstrate the desire of the voters as to their presidential preference. The verdict, of course, would be advisory as to its effect upon the delegates, but the latter, as the accredited representatives of the voters, would be morally bound to respect their will. In the absence of a state-wide primary law, this voluntary plan of ascertaining public sentiment should be acceptable to members of all political parties who honestly believe in popular government.

EMPLOYMENT FOR CONVICTS.

The question, "What to do with Convicts?" has been discussed until it is frayed at the edges, but an article in Popular Mechanics magazine suggests a solution of the problem. Prison-made goods are opposed by labor organizations in the north, and the convict-contract system in the south degenerated to a degree which made the worst feature of slavery seem desirable in contrast. On the other hand, confinement without any occupation is little more than refined cruelty, as evidenced by the pitiful eagerness with which men in many institutions beg for the privilege of scrubbing a floor and other similar work.

The latest national report, which is for the year 1910, shows there were nearly one-half a million commitments. To be exact, 479,763 persons were that year put behind the bars for periods ranging from one day to life. In a few instances penitentiary prisoners perform some farm work, and this makes the institution partly self-supporting; but on the whole, the law-abiding pay a large price for the punishment, by confinement, of the guilty. Not only the public, but in many cases the convict's unfortunate family, share in the punishment by being deprived of the income—dishonest

though it may have been—of the bread winner. Perhaps some day some philanthropist will discover a practical method by which the convict with a family can be permitted or compelled to earn something during incarceration which will be paid monthly to his dependent wife and children.

The state of Georgia has instituted a plan for the employment of convict labor that is a long step in advance, and which may well be considered and adopted in every other state. The scheme has no substantial objections or difficulties, and meets with general approval. Even the convicts express themselves as well treated and "well fed." The proper county officials may secure from the state penitentiary a certain number of convicts, for a term of weeks or months. These men are put at work building county roads, the county paying the cost of their food. The prisoners sleep in portable jails on wheels, but during waking hours are usually unfettered, though constantly under surveillance. Two guards armed with rifles are allotted to each gang of twelve prisoners. Desperate criminals are not used, and as a rule the men much prefer the outdoor life with its work and certain amount of freedom to the monotonous confinement and doing nothing. I am informed that escapes, or attempts to escape, are infrequent, as capture is very certain and results in a heavy extension of the penal term within the prison walls.

In this way excellent roads are rapidly being constructed at an expense which is trifling. There is demand for all of the available convict labor to be had. The effect on the men themselves is beneficial. The regular outdoor work, with wholesome food, keeps them in healthy condition; their time is occupied; and as they look upon the work accomplished, there is a certain inevitable feeling of satisfaction at having accomplished something worth while. The occupation begets a certain self-respect.

In addition to the securing of good roads at a minimum of cost, there is psychological effect upon the convicts which alone commends the plan. Few things in life are surrounded by greater difficulties than the re-enlistment in self-supporting labor of the man who emerges from our penitentiaries at the close of even a two or three year term. He is entirely out of step—physically and mentally—with honest toil. The change from confinement to freedom is really much harder than his advent to a cell. It is believed that the employment at manual labor in road building will bridge the gulf between the prison discharge and the man's resumption of honest work as nothing else will do. When his term ends, he is not thrust out into the world with a pale face and soft hands, but has only to present himself where work is available and his every appearance substantiates his claim that he is a worker.

FOR THREE-YEAR HOMESTEADS.

There are indications that, despite the autocratic attitude of the Washington bureaucrats, the three-year-homestead act may yet become a law.

Nothing would be of as much benefit to the west as the enactment of this measure and a common-sense enforcement of its provisions.

Gradually the powers that be in America are beginning to understand that the influx of American settlers into Canada has not been due to an overwhelming desire on the part of red-blooded Yankees to transfer their allegiance to King George. Slowly the fact is penetrating official brains that Americans have been going to Canada because of the increased liberality of land laws of the dominion, and the more liberal enforcement of these laws.

As was well stated in the report of the house committee on public lands which unanimously recommended the passage of the Borah-Jones bill, the pick of the nation's agricultural land is gone, and at the present time three years is sufficient for a homesteader to demonstrate his good faith and acquire title to his selection. After he secures title, the new settler then has a basis of credit upon which he can extend his operations and thus become a substantial, wealth-producing citizen.

The amendment of the land laws, however, is not all that is needed. There must be substantial reform in the administration of these laws. The government must abandon its present policy of regarding every settler, every homesteader, as a suspicious character, who must be continually spied upon lest he "defraud" the government out of the land upon which he is trying to make a home.

With the passage of the Borah-Jones bill and the cutting off of the appropriation under which the interior department now maintains an army of detectives whose only duty is to hound the settler, the west can expect the rapid settlement of its vacant lands. —Helena Independent.

Terms of Court, 1912.

CHOUTEAU COUNTY
Tuesday, May 7th.
Tuesday, September 24th.
Tuesday, November 12th.

We Guarantee Every Rambler for Ten Thousand Miles

Subject to the conditions of our signed guarantee which we will give with each car.

Ten thousand miles! Think what it means!

Step into the Rambler in New York and journey across four states to Chicago. Take your bearings and strike due west across seven states to the Golden Gate.

Run down the Coast to Los Angeles. Turn back over the mountains and on through eight hundred miles of desert to El Paso. Then on to New Orleans and back, by way of Atlanta, through eight states to the city of New York.

Strike out again cross country for Chicago. Then drive your car straightway across the American continent to San Francisco. Yet you have not exhausted the ten thousand mile Rambler guarantee backed by a company of known stability.

We give this guarantee to prove to you our unbounded confidence in every single part that goes into every Rambler car.

The first Rambler Cross Country that left the factory made a three thousand mile test trip through nine states, over the mountains of Pennsylvania to New York, Albany, Boston and back to the factory.

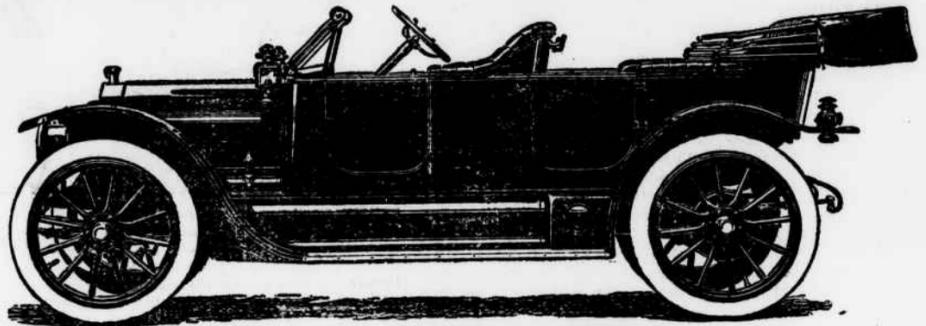
Since then the fame of the Cross Country has spread, and its service has extended to every state in the Union, to every province of Canada, to Mexico, to Australia, South America, Europe and the Orient.

Everywhere this Rambler has gone its performance has strengthened our confidence in its ability to fulfill this guarantee. That is why we do not hesitate to give it.

Eleven years of success in motor car building has so established the stability of this company in manufacturing and financial resources as to make definitely known the responsibility back of this guarantee.

Such a car with this guarantee, backed by such a company whose liberal policy is so widely known, are the reasons why you should have a Rambler.

Just sit down and write us a postal or send the coupon, asking for the catalog. It tells all about the Cross Country and the other 1912 Rambler models.



The Rambler Cross Country—\$1650

Equipment —Bosch duplex ignition. Fine large, black and nickel headlights with gas tank. Black and nickel side and tail oil lamps; large tool box; tool roll with complete tool outfit. Roomy, folding robe rail; foot rest, jack, pump and tire kit. Top with envelope, \$80—wind shield, \$35—demountable wheel, less tire, with brackets and tools, \$30—gas operated self-starter, \$50.

The Thomas B. Jeffery Company

Main Office and Factory
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Fort Benton Dealer

J. Wackerlin.

Fort Benton,

Mont.

Cut out this coupon, sign your name and address and mail to the Rambler factory at once.

THE THOMAS B. JEFFERY COMPANY,
Kenosha, Wisconsin
Gentlemen—Please send me your catalog describing in detail the Cross Country and other Rambler Models for 1912.

Name.....
Address.....

DIXON URGES PRIMARY.

Roosevelt's Campaign Manager is Pleased Over Massachusetts Law.

WASHINGTON, March 19. — "The beginning of the end," is the comment of Senator Dixon, manager of the Roosevelt campaign, upon the Massachusetts legislature's passage of a presidential-preference primary bill. Senator Dixon's countenance was wreathed in smiles when he received telegrams from Massachusetts giving details of the passage of the primary measure.

"We have needed nothing so much as the opportunity to show just how the people of the so-called conservative eastern states felt about the presidential contest," he said. Massachusetts has provided the way to test this matter out and that is all we have asked.

"Massachusetts is the middle of New England. New England is supposed to be the Gibraltar of conservatism, and Massachusetts the capital. If we can prove that the people in Massachusetts are for Roosevelt, we do more than win. We will come pretty near making it unanimous."

Under this act a general state-wide primary will be held April 30. The tory republicans opposed the bill to the bitter end, and it was bitter enough for them, for they recognized that it marked the end of machine rule in their party.

religious fervor behind it," said Senator Dixon. "The truth is that the whole business of nominating presidents has suddenly been reorganized. The national convention of interests and interested politicians is from this time forth an affair of the past. The people are going to run their national conventions, and that is going to be true of one party as well as the other."

Farmer Seeks Damages.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—The claim of John T. Eaton of Great Falls for \$6,000 damages, caused by the overflow of the Missouri river on his lands in Cascade county, was argued in the court of claims this week.

The lands are on the right bank of the Missouri river and Eaton alleges that the government, in improving the navigation of the river, constructed a dike which threw the water onto his lands, beginning in 1897, causing erosion of the soil and damages amounting to about \$6,000. In 1901 he sold the land to W. C. Crabtree for practically nothing because most of the land was washed away and the remainder was threatened by the dike.

Textile Strikers Resume Work.

LAWRENCE, Mass., March 19.—With a rush of mill operatives back to work, the strike that continued for nine weeks is believed to be virtually ended.

So many operatives presented themselves that several mills were unable to accommodate them. Out of the 28,000 mill hands involved in the strike, it is estimated that all except 3,000 have returned to work.

Starr Squirrel Poison

is an economical, effective poison for exterminating Squirrels, Rabbits, Prairie Dogs, Crows, Rabbits, Coyotes, and other pests. It is not mixed with the bait, but is prepared so that this is easily done by the user to suit the requirement. Now is the time of the year to exterminate the pests before there is any grass for them to eat.

We guarantee every can of it.

BENTON DRUG COMPANY
DRUGS OF THE BETTER KIND



Benton :: Stables



HILAIRE LABARRE, Prop'r.
Livery, Sale and Feed Stables.

Light and Heavy Turnouts by the day, week or month. FINE TEAMS A SPECIALTY. Horses, Wagons, Buggies and Harness on hand at all times, and for sale at reasonable prices.

COAL.

Burn Galt
LUMP
and NUT
In Stoves and Ranges.
NELSON LUMP
and EGG
For Furnaces and Steam.

H. LABARRE, Local Agent.
Leave Orders at Benton Stables.

Parties wishing to purchase live stock will find some attractive offerings in our advertising columns.