

A PAGE OF STATE POLITICS

THE past few weeks have furnished some sensational developments in political circles. It is patent that a strong spirit of independence is rampant in the Republican camp. The clarion call of Harry S. Joseph sometime ago to the Republican rank and file to rally around new colors and clean up the bosses and clean out the crowd at the capitol, stirred up the party members to a high pitch, and the pot has already begun to boil. It was to be expected, of course, that the turbulent gentleman from Salt Lake county would, like the proverbial Irishman, be "against the government" this year, for he has been shooting straight at the heads of the party leaders for a long time and besides, he has a few old scores of his own to even up. Heretofore the odds have always been against him. Sometimes he has been jobbed and sometimes he hasn't, but this year he is bound to get a great run for his money and he is sure to have company. That is, if he will confine his personal efforts to a fight for the sake of principle and not for office for himself.

If the cry for a new deal and for new leadership were coming from a stray insurgent here and there, those in the saddle might well afford to discount its importance just as they have in countless instances in the past. And if the cry were confined to disgruntled politicians and disappointed office-seekers, it might in safety be ignored. But this year the cry is coming straight from the great rank and file of the party, from men and women who have grown weary of the devious ways of arrogant leaders—leaders who would rule or ruin, who would sail the ship or scuttle it. It appears, therefore, that the third-termers, the office-hoppers, and the self-appointed dictators will be obliged to deal forthwith, not merely with patriots for revenue only, but with the outraged mass of the party membership who have nothing personal to gain for themselves, but who are determined at last to make a show-down fight for their right of representation in the party councils and on the ticket.

The situation is paradoxical. The state is normally Republican by a comfortable majority. Ever since statehood the Republican party has enjoyed the confidence of the people and has held continuous control of the state's affairs. The organization and up-building of the state for twenty years tells the story of Republican achievement—a splendid record in itself. And yet, it is manifest that this year Republicans are fearful of success. Why? Ask the independent Republican who would place party principles before personal strife, who owes no tribute to the powers that be, who has no official axe to grind either for himself or another, who has no tottering throne to uphold, but who instead has the courage to stand on his own legs and talk like a free man should, and he will tell you a story stranger than fiction.

In the same breath that he professes allegiance to the fundamental principles of his party, he will fiercely denounce the personnel and practices of the office holders and the bosses. He will tell you how candidates have been "hand-picked," how men continually succeed themselves

in office, how they jump from one office to another, how families are favored, how some of the smaller counties receive approximately as much money in salaries as they pay back to the state in taxes, how high office holders in the party attack the public records of each other in their mad scramble for office, how a bitter personal feud has divided the party leaders into two hostile camps, how this irreconcilable estrangement resulted in the loss of the banner Republican county at the last election, and how this factional fight now threatens disaster to the party unless the control of these leaders is curbed. And when you have heard this story you will wonder how the old party has so long weathered the storm, and you will understand, perhaps, why some men and women have left its ranks in disgust and why others have sulked in their tents.

Nor is this all. The independent Republican will also tell you how these same leaders, utterly unmindful of the storm of sentiment that is now sweeping from one end of the state to the other, are undertaking to arrogate to themselves the right to say who belong in the party and who do not. Moreover, that they would deny to thousands of good citizens the privilege of participating in the party councils and of enjoying its perquisites. These are the same citizens who four years ago left the old party, not to follow new gods, but because they refused to worship false ones. In their honest belief, they were not forsaking the faith, but seeking rather to keep it. Some have returned to the party, and others have made reasonable overtures, but the leaders still call them renegades and class them with the common enemy. They may come back to the old party, of course, but only on probation. They can be the tail to the kite and nothing more.

On the other hand, ask the independent Republican what he thinks of these same thousands of good citizens and he will tell you that there is little if any difference between them and himself. He wants wrongs righted—so do they. He seeks reforms—so do they. He wants a change of

leadership—so do they. They both have a common object in view, but heretofore they have differed as to the means of obtaining it. Divided as they have been, they have accomplished much; united, they can accomplish more. They stand upon common ground and are entitled to equal opportunities within the party.

The story told by the independent Republican is fairly in line with the facts. He has just cause for complaint. He may find favor with the bosses, it is true, but only at the cost of absolute subservience to their wishes. He falls from grace the very moment he ventures an opinion or has an idea of his own, and he is denounced as a traitor when he undertakes to stand on his rights and refuses to wear the ring of the leaders in his nose. So true is this, that only a few days ago a high Republican official, who is bent upon succeeding himself for a third term, openly resented the fact that a portion of his party is disposed to stand for a new deal and a new candidate in opposition to himself. Oh! "the insolvency of office."

We still believe in the old party. We believe that Utah has need for a continuation of its fundamental policies, provided the control of the party is chastened. And most of all we believe in the great mass of men and women in the party—those who have steadfastly remained in the ranks and those who have returned to the ranks—men and women who have faith in themselves and who are firm in their determination to wrest the control of their party from those who have so long abused it.

As usual, the democrats are in no shape to take advantage of the opportunity offered them this year. They are shot to pieces themselves. The leaders are divided into a dozen camps, and every private wants to wear the shoulder straps. Viewed as a whole, the Democratic party at the present time looks very much like a Mexican army. The leaders are working overtime trying to cut each other's throats, and treachery is on foot in the ranks. It's dollars to doughnuts that Brother Wallace gets bumped off the throne, and that the Democratic scramble for places on the ticket this year will resolve itself into the fanciest free-for-all affair ever pulled off in local political circles. The dope is already upset and to gamble on the outcome would be the wildest form of speculation. This because Democrats make politics a personal matter; they never stay put, either before a convention or after, but carry their fight right up to the polls. As a rule, your genuine Democrat hates a Republican less than he hates the Democrat who has bested him in convention, and there you have the reason.

The sensation of the week was the wire from Cuba that Simon Bam-

berger had withdrawn from the race for the United States senate. The announcement dumfounded the Democrats, and startled the community. The fact that he offered no explanation only tended to enliven the situation. Many reasons are being offered by the Democrats for his action but we are not inclined to give them much credence. We do not believe that the ex-state senator quit the race for the nomination because he feared his chances of success. He is too game for that and besides, he appeared to have the inside track over all other candidates in the field. Nor do we believe that, the nomination secured, he feared to face the people at the polls, for he would have had a fighting chance to win this year.

Simon Bamberger is a big man. He stands big in his party but bigger in the community. He is first of all a loyal citizen—intensely loyal to Utah, and if we measure the man correctly he would not consciously become a party to any transaction detrimental to the best interests of the state or to the welfare of its people. And so, we suspect that when he looked far ahead and found how, if elected to the high office he sought, he would be compelled to choose between the marked consistency of his citizenship and loyalty to his party, that then the bigness of the man asserted itself and hence his decision. As a Democratic United States senator from Utah, he could not be loyal to his state and support the tariff policy of his party, and he could not be loyal to his party and oppose it.

And all the while, the Salt Lake county Progressives, a bedraggled bunch, are taking themselves entirely too seriously but are nevertheless furnishing continuous amusement for the community—amusement that savors of the side show variety.

The story is related of a Boston contractor who was startled one morning when his foreman rushed in with the news that one of their new houses had tumbled down in the night.

"What caused it?" asked the boss. "Why, the workmen made the mistake of taking down the scaffolding before they got the wall paper on!" said the subordinate.

Bertha—Ethel's beau calls her the apple of his eye, peach and pippin. Why can't you call me things like that?

Joe—Sure. Ethel's beau is in the vegetable and fruit business, while I keep a fish market!

A minister came to the Episcopal church of a small town to speak.

"Do you wish to wear a surplice?" asked the rector.

"Surplice!" cried the visitor. "Surplice! I am a Methodist. What do I know about surplices? All I know about is a deficit!"