

SCRAPBOOK

STARK AND PENDERGAST. (From St. Joseph News-Press.)

Governor Lloyd C. Stark has called on Thomas J. Pendergast at Colorado Springs, Colorado, and following their conversations the Governor announces that he has rejected the recommendations of Mr. Pendergast to reappoint the Kansas City election board, and that he also has declined to reappoint Emmett O'Malley, State Superintendent of Insurance, recommended by Pendergast. The first blow to Pendergast is direct and without a gloved hand, the second is softened by permitting the incumbent to remain until July 1, 1938, unless he acts in a manner of which the Governor disapproves.

The Governor in this matter has handled a knotty problem with a delicacy that is commendable. Here is Tom Pendergast, a Democratic chieftain, head of the most powerful machine Missouri ever has known, an organization that can always be reckoned on for 80,000 to 125,000 votes—honest ones now we mean. Yet this same Pendergast represents an organization that must be offensive to the nostrils of a gentleman of Governor Stark's caliber, an organization that is thoroughly discredited by crookedness at elections, an organization that has been a growing cancer in Kansas City and all Missouri for many months.

There probably are some who will think that Governor Stark has lowered himself by paying that Colorado Springs call. These likely think O'Malley should be thrown out immediately. This class of people would prefer Governor Stark to emulate the example of Governor Joseph Folk thirty and more years ago in this state, wipe his hands entirely of Pendergast and all Pendergast's friends.

But we believe Governor Stark's course will meet the approval of most citizens. In calling on Pendergast at Colorado Springs, Governor Stark has acted as a gentleman. He had a harsh duty to perform toward an elderly man who, misguided as that man might be in many of his methods politically, certainly always has kept the faith, and it was a kindly thing in Mr. Stark to temper the necessary harshness by a personal call.

In declining flatly to reappoint Pendergast's election board or permitting Pendergast to recommend the new board, the Governor acted in the only way he could have in view of the election scandals. To have temporized there would have been a sore disappointment to all good citizens.

As for the O'Malley appointment the year's delay may be the wisest course. Old line insurance people strongly insisted that Superintendent O'Malley was not as black as he had been painted, particularly in the fraternal order imbroglio. As for the fund scandal aired by Representative Francis Smith, no charge of venality ever was hurled at Mr. O'Malley personally, and that his fault, if fault there be, was that he had been the dupe of other men. This always was Mr. Smith's own personal opinion. The year's probation should prove most beneficial.

In wrestling with this Pendergast problem Lloyd Stark has not only shown himself a wise and humane man, but at the same time an executive with a rare brand of courage that in these days of puppy dog politicians makes him stand forth as a towering oak in a forest of bent and gnarled and bark bestrewn cottonwoods,