

# All Sorts of Opinions.

Hereinafter, The Commoner reproduces extracts from editorials relating to Mr. Bryan's announcement with respect to the government ownership of railroads.

The Kansas City Journal (republican) says that Mr. Bryan's statements make him as a socialist and that instead of voting for Parker, he should vote for Debs.

The Des Moines, Iowa, Capital (rep.) says: "Mr. Bryan must at least be commended for his frankness. Those people who have always regarded Mr. Bryan as nothing more nor less than a socialist will now feel that they have been fully vindicated. Certainly no bolder bid for the support of the socialist element could be made. No one denies that there is a constantly increasing socialistic element in this country. It could not be otherwise so long as the tide of foreign immigration continues at its flood. We have no idea that socialism will ever prevail in the United States. It will be met and handled the same as populism and all other isms are met and handled by true Americans. Democracy and socialism will eventually appear under one head and in that form the issue will be fought out in the arena of American public opinion. The prospect may seem to be a gloomy one

to conservative members of the democratic party, but they can not deny that these observations and conclusions are warranted. The democratic party has truckled, and truckled to socialism and pandered to populism. It was less than two years ago that even the democracy of the empire state crawled in the dust before the socialism propagandists and adopted a platform demanding the purchase of the coal mining properties by the federal government. Parties like individuals usually reap according as they sow. The character of future democratic harvests is not difficult to determine."

The New York Evening Post that is now supporting the democratic national ticket, says: "The post-convention utterances of Mr. Bryan have not raised a ripple. The public attitude towards him has been the extreme of indifference—I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody marks you.' Even his yesterday's deliverance has interest only as an individual instance of pathological psychology. While leader of his party, Mr. Bryan did not, so he tells us, feel at liberty to "engraft new doctrines upon the party creed"; but now that he is only a member in the ranks, he feels free to undertake the organization of the radical and progressive element in the democratic party! We have all along harbored the delusion that it was this radical element which had foisted Bryanism on the party in the last two campaigns. A momentary gleam of sanity is to be detected in the avowal that "the people can not be brought at this time to consider the various phases of the money question," but the new issues which Mr. Bryan intends to bring forward leave little hope of his recovering his political health. After two weeks' study of the railroad question, The Commoner declares for public ownership, not by the federal government, but by the states. This plan will avoid the dangers of centralization. But all who appreciate the magnitude of interstate railway traffic will pronounce such a scheme the wildest lunacy. The postoffice, on the other hand, according to Mr. Bryan, is to absorb the telegraph system. How this can be done without giving an impetus to centralization we are not told. Municipal ownership of municipal franchises, for which Mr. Bryan also contends, he fails to define. In fact, his utterances, except for their indication of malevolent spite against the present democratic standard bearer, have nothing to do with present politics."

The Boston Herald says that it was "audacious" for Mr. Bryan to present his reform plan, and said: "Now the majority has gone over to the conservative side. Mr. Bryan meets this condition by proclaiming a new crusade within the party for radicalism, and adds to his former articles of doctrine sundry new ones—government ownership of railroads, municipal ownership of municipal franchises and a postal telegraph system, with reaffirmation of certain parts of the platforms of 1896 and 1900 left out of the platform of 1904 to conciliate eastern sentiment. "He hopes for the election of Judge Parker because that would make a beginning. It would, in his belief, settle two issues. 'It will rid us of imperialism and of the threat of a race issue; and give us greater freedom in taking up economic questions.' This is quite uncertain. It might check or moderate the temper of imperialism in certain executive manifestations; but if he includes colonial government of peoples in the island possessions, it is a matter

about which congress must be consulted. And how is a race issue to be avoided if one race, as a race, undertakes to oppress and degrade another race? Judge Parker's election will no more settle the race issue than Franklin Pierce's election settled the question of slavery extension. It will persist as long as there are different races in America and one or them is treated with studied injustice and wrong. What Judge Parker's election would do would be to put southern democrats with their peculiar views and prejudices concerning the race question, in power for four years to treat with a question which is national in its scope. That might aggravate the issue instead of settling it. Who knows?"

"Bryan's proclaimed purposes make Judge Parker's course more difficult and his prospects less favorable. They make it more necessary for him to utter his own opinions fully, distinctly and emphatically. The country waits impatiently for his expected deliverance, and is more interested than it ever has been before for the first words of a candidate. Other men have been nominated for the presidency of whose political specific opinions little was known in advance; but they were not expected to be really party leaders—only the instruments of a policy formulated by others. That was before the custom of elaborate formal acceptances obtained.

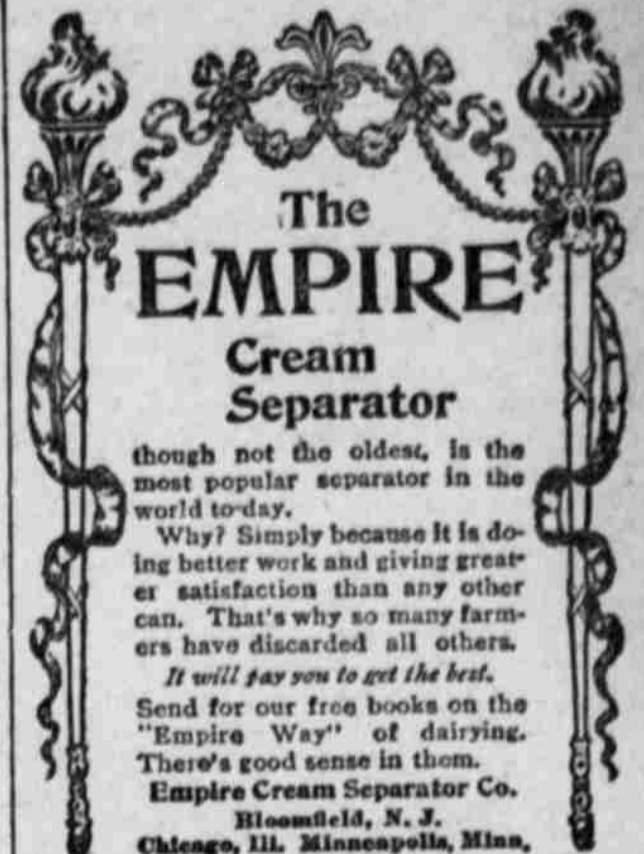
"Judge Parker can not safely follow the example of these. Commotives of gratitude, patriotism and good intentions will not serve for him. His one definite utterance has aroused an extraordinary expectation on the part of all who are undecided concerning their vote in November. They are anxious to learn whether that expression was exceptional or characteristic; whether he is as positive and firmly resolved on all issues as on the one issue regarding which he has spoken. He has made the standard by which he will be judged.

"His nomination does not settle the question of his leadership or his mastery of the democratic party. Mr. Bryan's pronouncement is a challenge, and, from what we know of him, we may expect it to be reiterated. We do not expect Judge Parker to enter into a controversy with Mr. Bryan. We do hope that he will make it quite clear that he has no sympathy with that order of statesmanship and that purpose of politics; that he has no mind to make his administration, if he is elected, serve as the introduction to an experience of Bryan in the white house."

The Boston Evening Transcript (rep.) says:

"Mr. Bryan, who some time ago gave notice that he intends to reorganize the reorganizers if he can, has now favored the public with his program. That program has a decided squint towards state socialism with limitations. Thus, he thinks ownership of the railroads by the states is to be preferred to ownership by the United States. Yet herein Mr. Bryan hesitates, for he declares that government ownership of railroads will exert a tremendous influence toward the destruction of private monopoly, and he is after private monopoly with a sharp stick.

"Mr. Bryan does not pause in the flow of his eloquence to give us his definition of private monopoly, possibly because the term sounds better unaccompanied by an embarrassing explanation. The monopolizing of any



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