

The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

Yes, Sophronia; the Mr. Perkins now managing the Roosevelt campaign in the interests of "progressive republicanism" is the same Mr. Perkins who assisted the steel trust to gobble up its only competitor, the Tennessee Coal and Iron Co., which gobbling was permitted by President Roosevelt in order to stop a panic started for that very purpose.

"Lancaster" is the postoffice name for the Nebraska state prison. A letter addressed to "The Hottest Democrat in Lancaster, Nebr.," was returned to the writer with the notation: "No democrats in Lancaster." A column might be written, but the simple statement of the fact is sufficient.

It is said that every tone of the human voice, sung into a tube, will produce a different figure, each tone producing the figure of some flower. This being true we opine that the voice from Oyster Bay would make a fine collection of cabbages and cauliflowers.

Mr. Roosevelt insists that his refusal to dine with Lorimer is the direct cause of Lorimer's expulsion from the senate. By the same token Booker T. Washington ought to be wearing a senatorial toga.

If the dissolution of the beef trust means the same results that followed the dissolution of the oil trust, we may be pardoned for expressing the hope that the dissolution will be postponed for a spell.

A few years ago a man who declared himself to be a democrat was immediately asked, "What kind of a democrat?" Not so now. But there seems to be quite a sizeable lot of different kinds of republicans these days.

Trust magnates indignantly deny that they contributed to the republican campaign fund in 1908. They merely contributed liberally to republican state committees for the purpose of securing the electoral votes of said states.

Having previously informed us that there were "good trusts" and "bad trusts," Mr. Roosevelt should now differentiate between steam rollers.

Somehow or other a lot of us wish that the Strenuous One's aversion to amalgamation had found vent prior to that famous panic panacea in 1907.

Various newspaper dispatches are to the effect that in many quarters the "republicans are getting together." This means, however, that they are "coming together."

Judge Hanford's sudden regard for his health is a hint to the people to have other federal judges examined by specialists.

It appears that the republican national committee has been careful to select secretaries and treasurers possessing convenient forgetteries.

George Ade in Collier's Weekly: The Hon. Brad Swivett is home from Baltimore. When he stepped off No. 6 on the stilted wooden platform parallel with the railway tracks cleaving Pigeon Crest, Missouri, he still wore his delegate badge—his alpaca coat pulled tightly over his plump shoulders, for in one side pocket was a book of views, folded concertina-wise, and the other side pocket contained, as a counterweight, two dozen metallic souvenirs for Ella's children.

One of the Lamsey boys took the suit case and Earl Pettit, second son of the county recorder, carried the basket of freestones purchased at St. Louis.

The Hon. Brad catty-cornered to the cool shade along the front of the Commercial hotel. Shaking hands right and left, he moved toward the Gem restaurant and ice-cream parlor, a straggling parade gathering behind him. His cane-seated throne was waiting under the wooden awning. While removing the coat and hanging it on a bunch of bananas, he spoke no word, nor did he smile. Yet those who stood six or eight feet away from him, held somewhat aloof by an instinct of respectful submission, saw the grim light of prophecy in his weary eyes and knew that the compressed lips were holding back a message from the supreme council.

He had been away only two weeks, but he looked five years older and forty per cent more momentous.

Master Busby, in charge of the fountain at the Gem came with a tall and clinking beverage for the political baron of Pigeon Crest. The drink was dark in color and spiced with the secret essence of the kola nut—a subtle invigorant still tolerated in the dry belt.

The Hon. Brad Swivett quaffed it in three gulps, long sustained, and then gazed reflectively at the twinkling globes of ice. Uncle Wes Everill, balancing himself on an upended crate of tomatoes, broke the brief silence: "How about it, Brad?"

And the gallant son of Missouri, still smelling of the smoke of battle, watched the ice melt and spoke as follows:

"We got there of a Monday. Baltimore is a lively town, but a good deal different from Saint Louey. The business part is full of tall buildings and crowded on the order of Chicago, but the residence part, where we camped, is the doggonedest-lookin' place you ever see. The houses are packed in together, without any front yards and all of them cut off o' the same piece. I guess I saw a million brick dwellin's four stories high, all the brickwork lined out in white and a marble flight o' stairs in front of every blamed house. The principal industry of all the niggers in Baltimore is keepin' the steps clean. The hotels bein' so crowded, six of our delegation went to a private family. We got beds and breakfast for five a day, which'll give you some faint and gropin' idea of what it costs to save the country."

Now, all this was clearly unrelated to the recent ordeal of fire. It looked as if the Hon. Brad Swivett was skirting the issue. Uncle Wes spoke what he alone dared say: "We've been wonderin' around here, Brad, how you ever worked yourself up to votin' against Bryan."

The delegate had been expecting it. He shook his head mournfully.

"Boys, I guess you know how far I've been willin' to go for William Jennings on any ordinary proposition. We trailed down there to Baltimore with a good many other tried and true democrats to adopt a platform agreein' in no particular with that crazy-quilt patched together in Chicago and to nominate Champ Clark for president. I s'pose that four-fifths of all us delegates landed there hopin' we could stave off a family row and go through the week without makin' large gray monkeys of ourselves. All the way down we heard distant rumblin's to the effect that William J. was goin' to make a fight on Judge Parker for temporary chairman. We hoped it wasn't so. The judge had been picked out by the national committee and was backed up by a lot of regular bench-workin' state bosses that we needed in our business. Us delegates had nothin' against Judge Parker, personally. He may be a secret agent of Wall street, but he don't look it. I've always figured he was the kind of man that would go along at a Sunday-school picnic to put up a swing for the children. I guess the truth o' the matter is that Bill Bryan was sore as a crab to see his old-time enemies and the New York crowd runnin'

things. You take a man who's used to wearin' the high top boots and crackin' the whip, an' it grinds him to crawl up on the blue seats an' lay quiet. And, of course, I wouldn't make any deposition that Bill didn't have it in the back of his head all the time that if he could head off Parker and get out in front of us and sound a few clarion blasts on the old dented e-flat bugle, mebbe we'd forget our instructions and buck through the wire fence and go on a regular 1896 stampede. Dang it all, you can't blame him. I s'pose the one plank in his platform that's never been planed down or dovetailed or changed in any particular is the one that specifies him as the lad to straddle the white horse and lead the procesh. If I had been grubbin' and waterin' around a patch for sixteen years, watchin' a melon get ripe, I wouldn't feel like givin' three hearty cheers when some neighbor emerged from the corn-field and picked the melon."

"He said the money kings and the bosses they own, body and britches, was tryin' to steal the convention," suggested Ory Cramp, from the doorway. Mr. Cramp is proprietor of the Gem and corresponding secretary of the Jackson club.

"That's what made it hard for us. We're accustomed to takin' his word on any proposition derogatory to or of Wall street. But listen, men. We needed considerable over 700 votes to land Champ. That bunch of 90 votes from New York looked bigger than a haystack to us. Could we say to Mr. Murphy: 'Please don't vote for our man becuz you're under suspicion?' I'm for the west against the east, but I'm for votes wherever they're to be obtained. Of course, us plain delegates may not have got on to all that was bein' cooked up in the back rooms, but it galled us to have even Bill Bryan hint around that Champ had hooked up with the same New York millionaires that he's been toastin' for twenty years."

"I'll bet Bryan made 'em set up and take notice," said Uncle Wes.

"Yes," replied Mr. Swivett, "the only thing we felt sure of at all times was that Bill would make another speech in a few minutes. He seemed to come under the head of unfinished business. No matter what was before the house, Bill was able to jump in an' prove that he was the only thing before the house. Tuesday mornin' we went up to the Armory, a half mile from where we lived, our badges flutterin' gayly and hope singin' in our hearts, so to speak. We were all deluded into the belief that we could jam through a harmony program and name Clark on the second ballot. By the way, I s'pose that Armory is the biggest building in the world. It's made of stone, with a hump-backed room, and bein' entirely surrounded by little squatty houses where the niggers live, it was just like Jumbo standin' out in a field with Shetland ponies all around, knee-high. We packed her to the roof and gave a few preliminary hollers an' had a prayer, an' then before we could turn a wheel William Jennings was up in the tall pulpit makin' a fight on the New York crowd. There we sat, achin' to holler for him and half-believin' everything he said, but not darin' to make a move against the fellows we counted on to help us nominate Champ. After he got turned down that day, the word went around that he would be allowed to doctor the platform to his heart's content. In fact, he could have anything he wanted except the nomination. They started in to placate and the more they placated the hotter he got."

"He was fightin' for a great principle," suggested Uncle Wes.

"Well, about half the delegates thought so, and the other half figured that the hot weather and the sight of that nomination hangin' some two feet above his reach had worked together to loco him. Still, when it come around to Thursday evening things looked purty harmonious. The contests was settled and the platform was on the fire, and all we had to do was listen to the wind-jammers, nominate Champ, and start home. I s'pose you read about it. The hall looked as if it had a million people in it that night. Another million collected outside and tried to keep us from gettin' in. I never saw so much illumination. Every part of that big amphitheatrical arena was just one flare and glare of light, like a tableau in school hall. We had our usual prayer, and then, before we could settle back, William J. had plunked in again with that dynamite resolution against the con-