

The Commoner

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The Issue Is Here

Many dry Democrats have hoped that the prohibition question would not enter into the presidential campaign; some have even accused me of disturbing the harmony of the party by calling attention to the activities of the wets. But **THE ISSUE IS HERE, FORCED** upon the party by the friends of the saloon. Governor Edwards of New Jersey is their candidate. The New York Democratic platform makes it impossible for them to support any one else.

The dry Democrats had better get to work at once or they will be read out of the party by the champions of the liquor traffic. Democratic candidates for the United States senate, Democratic candidates for congress, and Democratic candidates for state and county offices—all have a vital interest in preventing the wets from controlling the convention at San Francisco. **A WET CANDIDATE WOULD CARRY THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY DOWN TO OVERWHELMING DEFEAT—IT WOULD BE WORSE THAN THE PARKER CAMPAIGN.** "To your tents, O Israel!" Every delegate ought to be instructed for prohibition. W. J. BRYAN.

HITCHCOCK AND HIS BACKERS

Senator Hitchcock's telegram, published on another page, makes the liquor question the paramount issue in his campaign, and he can expect the active support of the wets who were marshalling under the Edwards' banner when the latter thought he was a candidate. As an original Harmon man and as an opponent of the currency law, he can count on the support of Wall street, but this support is weakness instead of strength because it drives away the dry vote, the progressive vote and the women. The Hitchcock boom is not as promising as the Edwards boom, and the Edwards boom is no more.

DRY REPUBLICANS, GET BUSY

The Republicans can not escape the prohibition issue. With men like ex-Secretary Root in control of the New York convention the question will be ignored in state conventions and delegates selected favorable to the traffic. The Chicago Tribune is out against prohibition. **THE DRY REPUBLICANS WILL HAVE TO GET BUSY.**

ANOTHER AMENDMENT NEEDED

The fate of the treaty hangs in the balance as The Commoner goes to press. It seems incredible that the members of the senate should find it impossible to get together on reservations. Eighty-one senators desire ratification and yet are unable to agree. Shame on the rules that permit a legislative body to so disappoint the hopes of the nation and the world! We need another amendment enabling a majority to ratify. A majority can declare war; a majority should be able to conclude a peace.

W. J. BRYAN.

A PERSONAL WORD

During the last few weeks I have been receiving an increasing number of letters asking me to become for the fourth time a candidate for the presidency. As it is impossible to make personal answer to these letters, I give this one reply to all. I recognize it be the duty of the citizen to respond to the calls of his country in peace or war. Therefore, if the situation became such that my nomination was actually demanded, as in time of war a soldier's life is demanded on the battlefield, I would feel it my duty to consider it, but I hope no such situation will arise, and I do not now see any probability that such a situation will arise. For thirty years I have taken so active a part in public life that the demands upon my time have, to a large extent, denied me the pleasures of the fireside and the companionship of my family. I have been rewarded as few public men have been—not with office, which is the least of rewards—but with the satisfaction of seeing nearly every reform I have advocated written into the unrepeatable law of the land, and now I see my peace plan made the chief cornerstone of the League of Nations. This is reward enough for any man. Who could desire more? I desire quiet and rest, and look forward to a few years of uninterrupted happiness at home.

At home I can devote myself to literary work, long ago planned but crowded out of my busy

life—work that will make a permanent record of what I have tried to accomplish for the American people and the world.

I have not lost interest in public questions, nor shall I while I live, but I prefer to aid younger men with full pulse and tireless energy, who can take up and carry on the people's cause. I have scanned the horizon for such men; I have welcomed them into the arena of politics whenever I have discovered them, and it gives me joy to support them in every way possible while they champion the cause of the masses. We have great issues before us and mighty work for those who are willing to put the welfare of the public above their own ease and comfort and risk all in the protection of the common people from the assaults of privilege. Besides not desiring the nomination, I think it my duty to the progressive Democrats of the nation to go as a delegate to the national convention if Nebraska Democrats desire it and aid them in opposing the reactionaries and friends of the saloon. This is my position, and I conclude with a heart overflowing with gratitude for the loyalty and confidence which my friends have manifested. No American has been more fortunate than I in the character and the constancy of his personal and political friends. It is an honor to have been a co-laborer with them.

W. J. BRYAN.

National Supremacy vs. Nullification

The platform adopted by the New York Democratic State convention, held at Albany, February 26, presents an issue which, in Democratic councils, must overshadow every other issue until it is repudiated or endorsed by the Democratic party of the nation; and, if endorsed, it will become the only important issue in the presidential campaign. The plank, as printed in the press dispatches, reads as follows:

"We are unalterably opposed to prohibition by federal amendment. We believe it to be an unreasonable interference with the rights of the states as guaranteed by the constitution. We feel that the recent enactment was the imposition of the ideas of an active minority against the wishes of the great majority of the American people. We, therefore, declare for its speedy repeal, and to the end that the personal liberty of the people of our state may be thoroughly safeguarded until such time as this repeal may be brought about, we declare the right of our state in the exercise of its sovereign power to so construe the concurrent clause of the eighteenth amendment as to be in accord with the liberal and reasonable views of our people."

It will be noticed that plank begins with a declaration of opposition ("unalterably opposed") to a provision NOW EMBODIED IN THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION and as much a part thereof as the Bill of Rights, the provision for the election of a President and Congress, the provision for declaring war and concluding peace or any other provision of that organic law. It is not only opposition but UNALTERABLE opposition—an opposition that no conceivable reason, logic or condition can change. The reason given for this unalterable opposition is that it is "an unreasonable interference with the rights of the states as guaranteed by the constitution." The excuse given—not the fact or even the reason, but the EXCUSE—is that those who wrote the platform "feel that the recent enactment was the imposition of the ideas of an active minority against the wishes of a great majority of the American people."

Before taking up the next clause in the platform, it is worth while to notice the insincerity of the two sentences, above quoted. The opposition can not be based upon any real belief that