

UP TO DATE POLITICS

Mrs. Annie L. Diggs of Kansas sat for several hours one afternoon at the populist convention in a continuous debate. Before her were three listeners, one a man somewhat old-fashioned, who seemed surprised, sometimes pleased and sometimes scared at hearing so much speaking from a woman's tongue. The second was a Bryan man, who reinforced Mrs. Diggs' opinions with brief little orations of his own, while the third man, a California delegate, was unconvinced. Mrs. Diggs kept her place, however, in the argument, sweeping her closed fan in the air before her opponent's nose, and finally, when all these failed, appealing to religion.

"I believe," she said, shutting her eyes very tightly, as she does when much in earnest, "that Mr. Bryan is a man raised up from the people for this very purpose by the hand of Almighty God."

"Pahaw!" said the California delegate. "Do you remember the infidel's prayer—'Oh, God, why hast Thou made us and then forgot us?' Bosh! I don't believe in this God business."

Mrs. Diggs was rather staggered, but she began again:

"Oh, the hand of Providence was in all that Chicago convention. We didn't know it would turn out so, but the Lord overruled so that the man should be selected who was the only man that has suddenly fallen."

"I don't believe in the crisis business, either," grunted the unconvinced man. "You've been raking up a crisis every four years ever since I was a boy." And when night fell on the debate he rose still unconvinced.

The true quality of Mr. Bryan as an orator has become a burning question with the democratic leaders. It is conceded that he must go on the stump. The curiosity is great to hear him, and he must indulge a feeling so complimentary to him. And his tour will probably be an extended one. To honor one section at the expense of another would not be good politics. Here, now, will be the test of the man. How will he stand it? He stampered a convention. Can he stamper the country? A new speech will not be expected of him at every point, but can he make at any point a speech that will approach in effectiveness the one with which he secured his nomination? The democrats are anxious about this. They realize that the Chicago speech was made under exceptional circumstances. The hall was packed in his favor, opinion was made up, Mr. Bryan was not called upon to argue anything or to prove anything. Ringing assertion was all that the silver men desired, and it was all that they got. He had only to unbridle his fancy and his vocabulary. He did that, and more. But, as the presidential candidate of his party, he rests under a different and a much heavier responsibility. Instead of unbridling his fancy he must ride it with a curb. Every word he uses must be weighed. He must argue his points and attempt at least to prove them. The question, therefore, arises, what effect on him as a speaker will this sort of restraint produce. Will it retard or increase his capacity as a spellbinder? The Chicago deliverance, or the fame of it, will constantly confront him. His success or failure will be measured by his approach to that. If he fails as an orator he will fall completely, for his only standing in the campaign will be that of an orator, with one tremendous winning to his credit.

The contest between Mr. Arthur Sewall of Maine and Mr. Thomas E. Watson of Georgia is going to be worth watching. Considering the difficulty that will be met in fixing up matters in the electoral college it may be found expedient for one or the other of the gentlemen to "withdraw," and the attitude of at least one of them on this point may be gained from Mr. Watson's latest interview. He said:

"I will accept the nomination. If Mr. Sewall is truly a patriot he will withdraw. Petty selfishness must not hamper great measures."

The public now waits to hear what is Mr. Sewall's idea of the necessities of the situation. Possibly the Maine candidate has a different view as to who ought to do the withdrawing.

William V. Allen is a prompt person. Hardly had the populist convention adjourned when he called his stenographer to him and began work upon a new book of parliamentary practice to succeed "Roberts' Rules," "Cushing's Manual" and "Reed's Rules." The handbook will be employed at all subsequent political meetings. The first chapter reads likethis:

"In the motion to adjourn the pivot blow is barred.

"In offering an amendment to the previous question four-ounce gloves must be used, in deference to the state law in relation to such matters.

"A privileged question must be presented in a fair, stand-up manner, without biting, gouging or choking.

"In the call of the roll any delegate

unable to rise and respond within ten seconds will be declared as voting in the negative.

"In appealing from the decision of the chair no contestant will be permitted to strike a blow below the belt on penalty of forfeiting his right to speak.

"The chairman is at all times the referee, and as such he alone has the right to use slung-shots, brass knuckles, lead pipe or iron bolts incased in garden hose.

"In explaining his vote no delegate will be allowed to kick his neighbor in the stomach, unless by suspension of rules on two-thirds vote.

"In debate no member will be allowed to flee frantically through the hall pursued by his opponent, to the great detriment of decorum and the annoyance of the other delegates, who have a right to expect that speakers will stand still, so as to be more easily reached with argument, brickbats, paving stones and other missiles. A political convention is not a gathering of wing shots."

But it is easy to see what will become of the two statesmen when this fevered dream has passed away under the guiding influence of being both right and president shall have an obese party well known in Gray Gables. It is only reasonable to expect that in a few months after the result has been declared in November the "ten, twenty and thirty" houses of pleasure will be handing out small bills warning people to keep the street clear and not crush too compactly in their earnest clamor to see the great museum and menagerie show just put on the road by the firm of McKinley & Bryan, under the personal direction of David Henderson. The public will read such bulletin-board screamers as this:

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