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OBSERVATIONS.

Platform English.

Most American citizens, disfranchised or otherwise, conscientiously read and endeavor to understand the two platforms quadrennially issued by the republican and democratic parties in this country. Some sections or paragraphs in the democratic platform built in Lincoln, carried to Kansas City and put together again there, are unusually hard to translate. For instance this one in regard to monopolies, by which a large number of prominent democrats make their living and are profoundly and touchingly shocked by, in public.

We pledge the Democratic party to an unceasing warfare in nation, State and city against private monopoly in every form. Existing laws against trusts must be enforced, and more stringent ones must be enacted providing for publicity as to the affairs of corporations engaged in interstate commerce and requiring all corporations to show, before doing business outside of the State of their origin, that they have no water in their stock, and that they have not attempted, and are not attempting, to monopolize any branch of business or the production of any articles of merchandise, and the whole constitutional power of Congress over interstate commerce, the mails and all modes of interstate communication shall be exercised by the enactment of comprehensive laws upon the subject of trusts. Tariff laws should be amended by putting the products of trusts upon the free list to prevent monopoly under the plea of protection.

In the case of the second Teutonic sentence a fondness for puzzles and conundrums has induced me to study

it. "More stringent laws must be enacted, providing for publicity" etc. (more stringent laws must be enacted) "requiring all corporations to show before doing business outside of the State of their origin, that they have no water in their stock," (more stringent laws must be enacted) "that they have not attempted and are not attempting to monopolize any branch of business or the production of any articles of merchandise." Here the sentence properly ends but some one who has a horror of periods and the momentary pauses they indicate, made this platform, for it goes on after a comma in spite of the dislocation "and the whole constitutional power of Congress over interstate commerce, the mails, and all modes of interstate communication shall be exercised by the enactment of comprehensive laws upon the subject of trusts." The last sentence of the paragraph is happily intelligible. However if all products handled by trusts were put on the free list, such action would not effect the ice trust which is causing more suffering to the people of the largest city in this country than any other combination. Ice and liquid ice, for which the platform expresses such a truly democratic repugnance, have always been on the free list.

The meaning of part of the foregoing is that a corporation must be suppressed when a board or commission decides that it is "attempting" to establish a monopoly or has attempted to establish one. Every business man in Lincoln republican, populist or democratic, is "attempting" to drive his competitors out of business. The advertisers of mens' clothing, drygoods, drugs, furniture, groceries and all other commodities in the market are apparently righteously confirmed in their intention to monopolize a given market. And it is such determined faith that wins, that builds up a community and unconsciously disseminates the blessings of prosperity.

Lawlessness.

The Courier has no excuses to make for a reckless mob of university students, but what denunciation and arrests would follow their firing of the state house cannon fifteen times at one o'clock A. M.? The enthusiasts who secured the powder from the state capitol poured in a pound to a load. The fifteen detonations shook the windows in the neighborhood of the capitol. They wakened the sick and made them fretful for the rest of the night. Moreover it was a curious inaugural for a party whose head insists that he represents wronged people and that his mission is to see to it, that Aguinaldo shall be no longer chased by men with guns, that the Cubans, the Porto Ricans, and the Tagals shall be presented with a bill of rights and surprised and delighted by the withdrawal of all American

troops from what was Spanish territory. Moreover it is the powder belonging to the state that the populists are using to express their joy.

Webster Davis.

A traitor in the camp is more dangerous than a thousand brave enemies, for the one inside can show the enemy how to pass the sentries, he can divulge the plan of the campaign and report the amount of ammunition on hand. It is well for the republicans, therefore and a portentous threat to the democratic cause that Webster Davis has left the former at the opening of the second battle. So far, bad faith has characterized Mr. Davis' history. He has a persuasive tongue and an ingratiating manner. He used both while he was a republican to secure various offices for himself. Office was to him a salary and an opportunity, or a vantage point from which to attack the administration he was serving. By reason, perhaps of some visual defect Mr. Davis has never been able to see near objects distinctly and truthfully. Everything at a distance he sees in a rosy haze and can prove to himself, every time that his friend, the enemy, is all right, and that his friends, who may be suppressing an insurrection which if successful, means the murder of innocent non-combatants, are all wrong. From now on he will see the republican camp from the democratic side and the democrats may depend upon it that its republican proportions will be fairer and its cause more just to Webster Davis than that of the democrats who have welcomed him and actually seem to be trusting him.

The Kansas City Star, in a recent issue, contains a very plain statement of Mr. Davis' life and letters. It republishes a picture printed in 1896, endeavoring to show how he might have been shot through a hat on his head and not shot through the head. According to the picture, it might have been done by a man twelve feet high, by a man three feet high, by a man up a lamp post or a pole, by a man who leaned a ladder against Mr. Davis' shoulders, climbed three feet above him and was very careful how he shot, by Mr. Davis himself while holding the hat in his hand, or by a man in collusion with him who shot the hat while Mr. Davis held it high on a cane. At the time, Mr. Davis came rushing out of a dark alley in Kansas City claiming he had been shot by an assassin, a short man. The relative position of the two holes in the hat and the absence of any abrasion of the scalp of his head indicate that the shot must have been fired from within three feet of the ground, from 12 feet above it, or by Mr. Davis himself. Dramatic license, which Mr. Davis is so accustomed to take, may excuse a man of his temperament for attempting to excite public sympathy. At that time

he was in danger of being entirely forgotten and all his oratorical and dramatic nature rebelled against oblivion. And in the end he was willing to shoot his own hat to escape what he considered premature burial.

Mr. Davis' political history has been a succession of desertions.

Major Warner the leader of the republican party in Missouri in 1892 discovered what he thought was Davis and got him nominated for congress. Warner stumped the state with him. Davis was defeated but he attained what he wanted, the centre of the stage and advertisement. In 1894 he was nominated for mayor of Kansas City and elected, largely through the experience, help and influence of Major Warner. Davis said of Warner at this time: "He will forever be the brightest star in my firmament, for he first recognized my good qualities." Davis' first act as mayor was to insult Warner and to inform him that all was over between them. In 1896 Davis was a candidate for the governorship of Missouri. At a meeting in Kansas City holding the printed declaration of the principles of the A. P. A. in his hand, he indorsed it paragraph by paragraph. The third section opposes the holding of office by any one belonging to the Catholic church.

I maintain now as a young American, caring not one bauble for office in this nation, because God Almighty has given me a clear head and a strong arm, and I can make my living anywhere. I say now, first, last and all the time, I stand for America against any country on earth and I oppose any subjection, whether from England, Germany France or Rome itself. There is no poetry in that is there? Then the third section is all right. Walking across the stage to a group of newspaper men he said, leaning over them: "I want to make the statement now that the newspapers are too cowardly to give American citizens their due.

Then the hat episode. In the spring of 1896, Davis declared that the Journal of Kansas City, which would no longer support him, offered him a bribe of \$15,000 when he was mayor, if he would oust the chief of police. In a month he wrote an open letter denying his statement. In the autumn of 1896 Davis was out of a job and wanted to be governor. The influence of Filley and the A. P. A. was insufficient at the state convention and he was defeated. Then he deserted Filley and the A. P. A. and joined himself to Kerens who was national committeeman. Kerens introduced the flopper to members of the republican national committee and he went through Ohio spellbinding for Mr. McKinley, whom he continually spoke of as "God-like." President McKinley made him assistant secretary of the interior. He immediately began pulling wires to undermine his patron Kerens and get his place as national committeeman. His attempts were proven by letters written to, received and shown Mr. Kerens by influential country poli-