

The Dick Bill

(Continued from page 13.)

Sec. 23. That for the purpose of securing a list of persons specially qualified to hold commissions in any volunteer force which may hereafter be called for and organized under the authority of congress, other than a force composed of organized militia, the secretary of war is authorized from time to time to convene boards of officers at suitable and convenient army posts in different parts of the United States who shall examine as to their qualifications for the command of troops or for the performance of staff duties all applicants who shall have served in the regular army of the United States, in any of the volunteer forces of the United States, or in the organized militia of any state or territory or District of Columbia, or who, being a citizen of the United States shall have attended or pursued a regular course of instruction in any military school or college of the United States army, or shall have graduated from any educational institution to which an officer of the army or navy has been detailed as superintendent or professor pursuant to law after having creditably pursued the course of military instruction therein provided. Such examinations shall be under rules and regulations prescribed by the secretary of war and shall be especially directed to ascertain the practical capacity of the applicant. The record of previous service of the applicant shall be considered as part of the examination. Upon the conclusion of each examination the board shall certify to the war department, its judgment as to the fitness of the applicant, stating the office, if any, which it deems him qualified to fill, and, upon approval by the president, the names of the persons certified to be qualified shall be inscribed in a register to be kept in the war department for that purpose. The persons so certified and registered shall, subject to a physical examination at the time, constitute an eligible class for commissions pursuant to such certificates in any volunteer force hereafter called for and organized under the authority of congress, other than a force composed of organized militia, and the president may authorize persons from this class to attend and pursue a regular course of study at any military school or college of the United States other than the military academy at West Point, and to receive from the annual appropriation for the support of the army the same allowances and commutations as provided in this act for officers of the organized militia: Provided, That no person shall be entitled to receive a commission as a second lieutenant after he shall have passed the age of thirty-five, as captain after he shall have passed the age of forty, as major after he shall have passed the age of forty-five, as lieutenant colonel after he shall have passed the age of fifty, or as colonel after he shall have passed the age of fifty-five; and provided further, That such appointments shall be distributed proportionately, as near as may be, among the various states contributing such volunteer force; and provided further, That such appointments shall be distributed proportionately as near as may be, among the various states contributing such volunteer force; and provided, that the appointments in this section provided for shall not be deemed to include appointments to any office in any company, troop, battery, battalion, or regiment of the organized militia which volunteers as a body or the officers of which are appointed by the governor of a state or territory.

Sec. 24. That all the volunteer forces of the United States called for by authority of congress shall, except as

hereinbefore provided, be organized in the manner provided by the act entitled, "an act to provide for temporarily increasing the military establishment of the United States in time of war, and for other purposes" (approved April 22, 1898.)

Sec. 25. That sections sixteen hundred and twenty-five to sixteen hundred and sixty, both included, of title sixteen of the Revised Statutes and section two hundred and thirty-two thereof, relating to the militia, are hereby repealed.

Sec. 26. That this act shall take effect upon the date of its approval.

Opportunism

In criticising what it is pleased to term "Mr. Bryan's premature plan for the 'reorganization' of the democratic party," The New York World asks:

If the president succeeds in forcing a reasonable revision of the tariff; if he adopts vigorous measures for the enforcement of the Anti-Trust and Interstate commerce laws; if he promotes the cause of ultimate independence for the Filipinos, and does not try to spend more money than the government can collect, what will be Mr. Bryan's paramount issue?

"It is not consistency," the World declares, "but intelligent opportunism, that gives to a political party savor and virility." "Intelligent opportunism" has its place, but if the democratic party should "lay low" until the Roosevelt administration shall have completed its policies and then antagonize them, the result undoubtedly would prove quite as disappointing to the opportunists as the results of the last election proved to them.

The World's query suggests that it conceives that the principal purpose of the democratic party's existence is to serve as an opposition party. If such is to be its purpose, it can not die too soon. If it is to continue a living political force, it must become constructive—adopt constructive policies and stand for something besides mere negation. If it shall wait for "something to turn up;" if it shall guide its course negating the course of the Roosevelt administration, regardless of its policies, with what force could it appeal to the American people?

If the republican party shall become democratic under Mr. Roosevelt's leadership, in the very nature of things it would drive the supporters of republican policies out of the republican party. Where would they find refuge? In the democratic party? Not if it remained democratic. Intelligent opportunism would suggest that the democratic party continue to be democratic in any circumstances. There is not the slightest probability however, that Mr. Roosevelt will be able to reverse that attitude of the republican party, even should he desire to revolutionize it. The forces that control it are more powerful than any one man. In such a contest, Mr. Roosevelt would be broken, as surely as Grover Cleveland was broken when he took issue with the democratic party and sought to make it the creature of plutocratic interests.

The proposal to reorganize the democratic party on a democratic basis is not premature. It is belated, as the enormous loss of democratic votes in the recent election discloses. Roosevelt's vote was little larger than McKinley's, but Parker's vote was less by 1,500,000 than the vote that was cast for William J. Bryan in 1900.

In view of the results, it does not appear that the democratic party is so much in need of a "paramount issue" as it is in need of the consistency that will beget confidence and create character.—Milwaukee News.

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