

# "THE CHICAGO PLATFORM STILL LIVES"

The Washington Post is offended because The Commoner said: "The Chicago platform still lives." The Post says that "free coinage at sixteen-to-one was the only vital issue" in the Chicago platform, adding:

"What possible motive can Mr. Bryan's Commoner have for eulogizing the Chicago platform at this time when the democratic factions are trying to get together and elect a democratic house of representatives? A red flag in a bull yard would be no more of a provocation to wrath than is such a performance in the democratic party. What that party most needs is to forget, or affect to forget, the split of 1896. It can win no presidential victories, and therefore, can not take its place—the place it ought to fill as a strong and safe opposition—without the co-operation of the conservative democrats."

The Post forgets that the radicalism of 1896 has become the conservatism of 1906. The Chicago platform did not deal exclusively with the money question. What the Post calls "sixteen to one" was not the issue. Indeed, "sixteen to one" was the bugaboo which republican leaders held up for the purpose of frightening the people.

The Commoner said: "It is no exaggeration to say that in its essential principles the Chi-

cago platform stands vindicated in the court of public opinion." That statement is proved. Recent developments show that men who poured millions of dollars into the republican campaign fund were more afraid of criminal prosecution than they were of free silver. So far from being "a hoodoo," as the Washington Post calls it, the Chicago platform read today in a gathering of American citizens anywhere in the land would call for cheers from republicans as well as from democrats.

The Post says that the democratic party "needs to forget the Chicago platform." Then the democratic party is in a bad way, indeed. How may democrats forget the Chicago platform when republican conventions everywhere are endorsing its essential principles, when newspaper editors that once condemned its statements of fact now admit their error, and when the president of the United States, elected as a republican, wins applause from the masses of the people only as he moves along the lines defined in that platform? Why, you could almost palm off the Chicago platform as a republican editorial in some sections of this country.

It was the quantitative theory of money—not "16 to 1"—which was in fact the foundation of all arguments made in behalf of bimetallism and that foundation is recognized generally today. Even the Post will not now question it.

In every section of the country republicans demand the restriction of the privileges conferred upon the national banks. And that's in the Chicago platform.

In every state in the union a considerable number of republicans denounce the high tariff as "a prolific breeder of trusts and monopolies" which "enriches the few at the expense of the many, restricts trade, and deprives the producers of the great American staples of access to their natural markets." And that's in the Chicago platform.

Many republicans now advocate the income tax, and that's in the Chicago platform.

A republican congress has enacted a law enlarging the powers of the interstate commerce commission. That's in the Chicago platform.

Men, regardless of party, now favor the election of senators by the people, oppose the free pass system, and demand the enforcement of the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law. The Chicago platform reminds us of all these reforms for the men who stood upon that platform have stood faithfully for them. They have lived to see the day when men who, ten years ago, sneered at the handwork of the democratic platform makers at Chicago seek the preservation of the business interests of the country, and the defense of the national honor along the lines laid down by the democratic party in 1896.

## OF COURSE HE'S LOVABLE

Referring to the extraordinary power conferred upon the speaker of the house and the readiness with which Speaker Cannon has taken advantage of that power, a Washington correspondent says that Mr. Cannon "has been showing himself to be a politician of the most ordinary type and a hard taskmaster." This correspondent adds:

"People who used to think that 'Uncle Joe' was a dear, kind, benevolent old chap with certain eccentricities which made him all the more lovable, are now criticising him as severely as any of those who have never thought of him as other than an ordinary man, raised to office and great power principally because of his long service in the house and his 'safety' from the standpoint of the republican machine."

Uncle Joe is "lovable," all right. But without desiring to detract one iota from his high and deserved reputation in this respect we beg leave to remark that almost any of us would be "lovable" if given our own way—and Uncle Joe appears to have had his own way all too long so far as public interests are concerned.

## ASYLUM REFORMS

Recent disclosures show terrible conditions existing in two of the asylums for the insane, one being located in Illinois and the other in Nebraska. It is charged that in each of these institutions patients were subjected to outrageous cruelties. The American people have made small progress in the matter of asylum management. Today, as a quarter of a century ago, the inmates of the asylum for the insane are practically helpless and subject to the tender mercies of their immediate keepers. The complaints they register are not, as a rule, taken seriously. Such complaints are promptly, and too often effectually, met with the retort: "He is crazy and imagines these things."

It is known that in many cases where such complaints have been made the poor creatures have been whipped to silence by brutal keepers, and while they were sufficiently insane to be locked up, they had sufficient intelligence not to repeat the offense of complaining against their keepers.

The governor of a state, or other person in supreme authority over such asylums, has great responsibilities. He should be active in the investigation of such institutions, and every complaint that reaches him should be thoroughly probed. It will not do, however, to depend entirely upon the activity of the governor; for inasmuch as he appoints the head of the asylum he is apt to rely implicitly upon the statement of that officer. A system of inspection should be provided by the state legislature. Some plan should be adopted whereby a commission composed of men and women living outside of the town in which the asylum is located is appointed.

This commission should be chosen by some power other than that which chooses the asylum superintendent in order that there would be no sympathetic reason for the commission to withhold criticism.

Several states have gone to great expense in providing magnificent buildings for the purpose of housing the mentally afflicted, and it is strange that they have not made greater progress in the effort to protect helpless creatures from the brutality of the men and women placed over them.

It is an opinion generally held by practical and observing newspaper men that men and women who remain long in the position of keeper of the insane lose sympathy and often, if not as a rule, become brutal in the treatment of their wards. One person should not be permitted to hold for a considerable period of time the position of superintendent of one of the asylums, and the tenure of office of attendants should be limited. Experience in dealing with these helpless creatures is not nearly so important as sympathy and kindness, and frequent changes in the personnel of the asylum's staff will give to the inmates of these institutions the benefit of that kind and sympathetic treatment which may reasonably be expected at the hands of men and women who have not become calloused by familiarity with asylum conditions.

It is time that reform in the management of asylums for the insane be brought about, and it may not be doubted that there is room for marked improvement in every one of these institutions in every state.

## A GREAT STATE'S PLIGHT

New York, the richest and most populous state in the union, is practically without representation in the senate of the United States. Depew, broken and discredited, has not been present for months. Platt, aged and sick, has appeared but once or twice, and then not for the purpose of representing the people, but for the purpose of guarding the interests of the great express companies. A few days ago he appeared in the senate and made a feeble and futile effort to have the express companies excluded from the "common carrier" feature of the rate bill. Then he returned to New York for "rest," and it is not probable that he will appear again on the floor during the present session.

But the people of New York have no one to blame but themselves for their present unenviable position. They permitted the corporations to select servile corporation tools. They permitted themselves to be grossly deceived by the specious cries of "national honor" and "honest money." They humbly walked to the polls and registered the wishes of the political bosses who were themselves the paid tools of a corrupt commercial and financial ring. For a generation they abjectly acquiesced in schemes that invariably resulted in the corporations electing the senators. Now their state is discredited, their two senators under a cloud, and New York absolutely without in-

fluence in the affairs of the senate. It is consoling, however, that if New York is no longer represented in the senate, it is not as wholly unrepresented as it was when Platt and Depew were actively engaged in doing the will of the trusts, corporations and insurance rings.

## WHEN THE REAL TEST COMES

A Chicago school of domestic science has just turned out a class of sweet girl graduates whose diplomas certify that they are able to keep house on \$10 a week. Unless the young men of today are utterly blind to their opportunities these young women will speedily be given marital opportunities to demonstrate the practicality of their education. If this school is really turning out graduates capable of living up to their diplomas the problem of "why don't the young men marry" may be considered solved. But the real test will not come with the beginning of an effort to keep house on a salary of \$10 a week. It will come when, after living for several months on a salary of \$10 a week, the salary is increased to \$12 a week. The temptation to spend that \$2 a week increase several times over each week will call for all the will power and technical knowledge possessed by the graduate and her young husband. "We've just had our salary raised \$2 per week, so we can afford this," will be the argument. And the same argument will be advanced to justify the expenditure of the aforesaid \$2 two, three, four, perhaps a dozen, times a week. It is to be hoped that these young graduates, when the real test comes, will be able to meet it. If they do, then, indeed, will they and their school be worthy of all praise and support. The world has long needed something of the kind.

## THE DIFFERENCE

Referring to the report that Mr. Bryan accepted a dattoship from the Sultan of Jolo and refused a decoration from the Sultan of Turkey, the Denver Republican asks: "But when was consistency a Bryan characteristic?" The Republican does not shine well when it talks about consistency. If a dattoship was conferred upon Mr. Bryan it was conferred by a very eminent gentleman who is, by grace of a republican administration, upon Uncle Sam's pay roll and compelled to give allegiance to this government. The decoration refused was offered by an hereditary monarch. It is extremely difficult to keep track of the republican criticism of Mr. Bryan. First, they charge him with being too consistent, and then they criticise what they call his lack of consistency. The Denver Republican should caucus with itself and come to an agreement. If it will think a bit—even if the strain is hard—it will soon see that a dattoship is no more like a decoration from the Sultan of Turkey than a republican platform pledge is like a promise designed to be fulfilled.