

The Commoner.

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"THE BEST INTELLIGENCE"

The Louisville Courier-Journal is now telling us what "the best intelligence" of the south demands in politics. Does Mr. Watterson speak from inside knowledge or from outside observation? Is he of the best intelligence or has the best intelligence selected him as a mouth-piece? It is too bad that we have anything in the democratic party below the best intelligence and worse still that this inferior intelligence insists upon being consulted in nominations and in elections. Would it not be possible to adopt the Philippine plan for the United States and govern by an appointed commission? But who would appoint the commission and who will select the best intelligence? Can it be that popular government is a failure?

Possibly it might be arranged so that the nominations could be made by the best intelligence and then allow the plebeians to support the ticket.

FREE TRADE AND "IMMEDIATE"

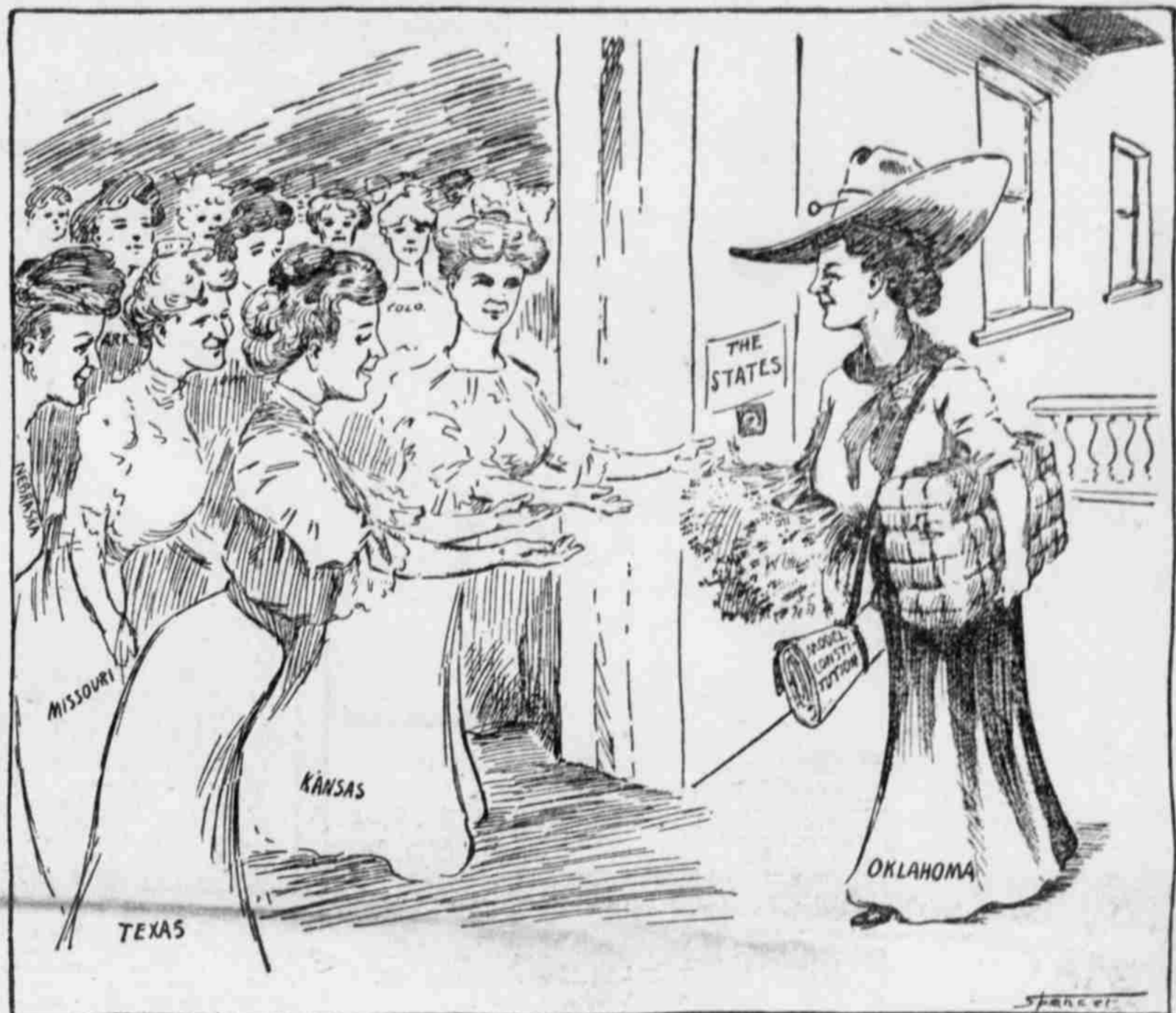
When a republican neighbor shows you an editorial from a republican daily paper either opposing tariff revision altogether or insisting upon postponing revision until after the presidential election call his attention to the resolution adopted by the American Newspapers Publishers' Association in which the republican newspaper owners belonging to that association demand that the tariff upon everything that goes to make white paper—the product in which newspaper publishers are so vitally interested—be "immediately repealed."

There is no high protective tariff in that resolution; it is absolute free trade.

There is no postponement in that resolution; it is for immediate repeal of the duties that press no more heavily upon the newspaper publishers than the duties upon other necessities press upon consumers generally.

WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT

Our government can be made what the people want it to be, and they should want it to be the protector of equal rights and the enemy of privilege. While the professional classes should be farsighted enough to recognize that a just government is a richer legacy to leave to children than any amount of money could be, the wage earner has even a more immediate reason for acting upon this theory, because he often has little to leave as a legacy except the government whose character he helps to determine.



"WELCOME"

The Nebraska Platform

On another page will be found the platform adopted by the democratic convention in Nebraska September 24. The platform states the party's position on the questions at issue and states that position so clearly that no one can misunderstand it. It is an honest platform dealing candidly with each question discussed. It demands legislation which will cleanse politics of its corruption and specifically asks for laws preventing corporations from contributing to a campaign fund and requiring the publication before election of all individual contributions above a reasonable minimum. Are not such laws desirable?

It points out the distinction between the sphere of the state and the sphere of the nation, and condemning the centralization suggested by republican leaders, asks that federal remedies shall be added to the state remedies—not substituted for them. Is that not sound democratic doctrine?

It advocates the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people and declares this reform to be the gateway to all other national reforms. Is it not time to press this as an important issue? The house of representatives has declared for it five times but the senate stands in the way. Nearly two-thirds of the states have declared for it but the favor-seeking corporations prefer the present method because it enables them to pack the United States senate with their representatives. Is it not time for the people, irrespective of party, to demand that the control of the senate be placed in the hands of the voters of the nation?

And what about trusts? Are they not indefensible and intolerable? Ought not the crim-

inal law to be enforced against trusts and trust magnates? Should not the interstate corporations be compelled to sell to all on the same terms? Should not the law prevent the duplication of directors among competing corporations, and would not the proposed license system put an end to private monopoly? The reader will notice that this system does not abridge the right of the state to create corporations or to regulate, as it will, foreign corporations doing business in the state—it is a federal remedy added to the state remedies. It will also be noticed that it does not apply to corporations controlling less than twenty-five per cent of any product in which they deal; it does not interfere with legitimate corporations doing legitimate business but lays its hand upon those who reach out after monopoly, and it absolutely prohibits the control of more than fifty per cent of the product. If we had such a law now, every trust would be broken up. It is a simple remedy and yet an effective one and easily enforced.

The platform points out the distinction between the natural man and the artificial person called a corporation and favors the enactment of such laws as may be necessary to compel foreign corporations to submit their local disputes to the courts of the states in which they do business. This platform is aimed at the corporations which drag their litigants into the federal courts and wear them out with delays and expense.

The tariff plank is short but to the point. It demands a revision downward and an immediate revision at that, commencing with placing upon the free list all articles entering into competition with trust-controlled articles. Does this