



Whether Common or Not

By Will M. Maupin.

Keep Cool!

If the politicians roar,
Keep cool!
When they holler more and more,
Keep cool!
Don't get worked into a fret;
Don't mill 'round until you sweat;
Country's pretty solid yet—
Keep cool!

Don't get mad in politics.
Keep cool!
Good sense with your thinking mix.
Keep cool!
And no matter where or when
Study principles and men,
Hold your thinker straight, and then
Keep cool!

If the other fellows win,
Keep cool!
Then dig in and try again.
Keep cool!
Don't get hot around the neck;
Keep your temper well in check;
Country isn't going to wreck—
Keep cool!

Other men are honest, too.
Keep cool!
Others think as well as you.
Keep cool!
Show up strong beneath defeat.
That makes victory taste more sweet.
And amidst the campaign's heat
Keep cool!

Campaign Memories

How I used to love to sit and listen while father told about the famous "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too" campaign, or while mother sang the old songs she sang as a girl during that famous struggle. "Wait for the Wagon," "Keep the Ball a Rolling On," and all the rest of them. I am violating no confidences when I say that I was born of republican parents—Missouri born republican parents, although they were whigs first. And I can remember the intensely exciting and woefully partisan presidential campaigns immediately following the war between the states. My first recollections of a political parade go back to the time when Grant and Wilson defeated Seymour and Blair. My, but that's going back some, isn't it? We lived in a little Illinois village in Macon county, and father took me with him to a big rally at Decatur. That was some rally, believe me! It seemed to my boyish eyes that the parade of men wearing oilcloth capes and fancy hats, and carrying smoky kerosene torches was endless. It cost something in those days to burn kerosene, too.

Father being one of the "orators of the day," I was privileged to sit with him on the reviewing stand, and I just know that I was the envy of every republican boy in the county—and utterly despised by the few democratic boys. But there weren't very many of the latter then. I can not remember what the "orators of the day" said, but I can remember that they didn't say much if anything good about the opposition. That occasion was my first introduction to the word "copperhead," and it took me a long time to disassociate the word from the toes of my shoes. Remember those old coppertoed shoes?

By the time the Grant and Colfax campaign against Greeley and Blair—and a half-dozen other fragments of the democratic party—I was big enough to carry a torch, and then I was proud. We had strict orders to return our torches to the empty store

room after the parade, but when the parade was over I managed to be nearer home than the store, so I decided to wait until morning to return mine. For fear some one would steal it—which would have been a crime—I hid it under the ash hopper in the back yard. Then I forgot to return it the next day, and as the man in charge didn't miss it I just kept on forgetting. Mother used to wonder what became of the kerosene, saying that it didn't seem to be as good as that she used to get because it burned out faster. But that torch made me some personage among the boys of the town.

The campaign of 1876 left an indelible impression upon my mind. As for that, it left an impression upon several million minds—and it hasn't worn off yet. There were more democrats in that campaign than there were in the other campaigns I remembered. And I can yet remember the tense feeling, the apprehension, that pervaded the minds of men during all those troublous days between election day and the day that the electoral commission handed down its decision. Of course I didn't know the difference between an electoral commission and a court of last resort. But one thing happened during that famous campaign that I'll never forget. The orator of the day for our Fourth of July celebration that year was Schuyler Colfax, ex-vice president—and even ex-vice presidents were somebody in those days. He gave me the first silver quarter I ever saw. Father suggested that I keep it for a pocket-piece, and I did—for almost an hour. Then I succumbed to the temptation offered by those wonderful fire-crackers.

By the time the 1880 campaign rolled around I was interested in politics, and I read with intense interest everything I could get hold of about the Degolyer business, and the Morey letters, and all that sort of thing. And by this time I was discussing the tariff and making myself generally obnoxious by my wisdom. More torchlight parades that campaign, but I could even then see that the parade business was on the decline. Appeals to passion and prejudice were not taking hold as formerly, and now and then we'd meet up with a man who had changed his party allegiance. The campaign of 1884 not only brought me my first vote, but it introduced me to that campaign abomination known as the flambeaux. That was a torch with a hollow handle through which you blew a foul-smelling chemical into the blaze and made it flare up high. The flambeaux promised to give the torchlight parade business a new lease, but the promise failed. I was running a country newspaper then, and believing that James G. Blaine was the biggest man the country had produced with the possible exception of Abraham Lincoln—and I had my doubts about that then—I made my paper a regular screamer. I thought the government had gone to pot when the returns conveyed the information that my political idol had been defeated.

The last torchlight parade I ever saw was during the campaign of 1890. It was a republican parade, but by that time I felt my political feet slipping, so I wasn't in it. I "bolted" that year for the first time, not wholly from political reasons, but chiefly because I was carrying a card in the printers' union and one of the

G. O. P. candidates was the editor and proprietor of a big daily newspaper that was, as we termed it, "rat." That campaign set me to thinking independently, and I began wondering if, after all, I had not been voting for prejudice instead of for principle.

And then came the campaign of 1896! Then I could understand how heated the "Tippecanoe" campaign was. Men were thinking then. I doubt if the country ever will have another campaign like it. And certainly I hope that its record of bribery, intimidation and coercion will never be equalled, or even nearly approached. We had no torchlight parades that year, save one here and there in which the paraders usually got paid for marching or had to march to hold their precarious jobs. That there were such men I have undisputed proof. And I personally know scores of men who carried torches in republican parades and then voted for Bryan with a prayer in their hearts.

But this brings it down near enough to date for the youngest voter to remember. By the way, I almost forget to tell about the longest political parade I ever saw. It wasn't in a big city, either. It was away out on the prairies of central Nebraska, and it was pulled off in mid-summer of 1890. The Farmers' Alliance was in the hey-day of its glory then, but when its managers announced that the alliance candidates for state office and for congress would speak in Kearney, and that the day would be opened with a parade, we anti-alliance men laughed. We could imagine what figure a handful of farmers would cut trying to make a parade, so we waited on Central avenue prepared to laugh again. It was a good thing we laughed before the parade, for we had no chance while it lasted, or after. The head of that parade came over the crest of the Platte river bluff a mile and a half west of town about 9 o'clock in the morning. When I went to lunch at 12—I was a daily newspaper reporter then—it was still coming over the crest of that hill. And it wasn't strung out to make length, either. It was closely formed, for the paraders were anxious to get to the speaking in the afternoon, and they wanted to feed their teams and eat a bite themselves. Farmers drove

for more than a hundred miles to get into that parade. Vehicles of every description; men and women on horseback; more than one ox team—and many a farm wagon containing a cottage organ and a glee club singing "Goodby, old parties, goodby!" That song sounded like a funeral dirge to a lot of republicans and democrats before the day was over.

That's all—but I wish some of The Commoner readers would send me the words to some of those old songs they sang in the "Tippecanoe" campaign.

Shameful

"It's shameful the way some of these automobile maniacs violate the speed law!" exclaimed Jibbens. "Somebody come near running over you?"

"No, I should say not. But Snibbens ran his machine sixty miles an hour all the way from Smithville here, and I had mighty hard work to keep him from passing me."

Nomenclature

In days gone by we often heard From far-off Oyster Bay; And then we harkened eagerly To hear what he might say. But times have changed, and so have names, And people, too, I vow. No longer is it Oyster Bay— We call it Blue Point now.

Brain Leaks

Who says we are not progressing? There has not been a presidential torchlight parade in the country for twelve or sixteen years.

Time was when we got all het up over politicians. Now we devote only our spare time to them.

Satan works overtime when he sees a church closed for the summer vacation.



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