

The Commoner

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Wilson and Marshall

As this issue of The Commoner contains the democratic platform adopted at St. Louis, the speech of Temporary Chairman Glynn, and my own speech, and an analysis of the platform, it is not necessary to say more now than that the spirit of the convention presages victory for the party.

The fact that there was no contest for the first place and but little for the second, accounts for the lack of excitement. Even the suffrage plank did not stir up much feeling—the vote was so one sided.

There was enthusiasm whenever emphasis was placed upon the fact that the President had kept us out of war, or when a reference was made to the fact that the nation favors peace. The preparedness plank drew forth but little applause—a good omen. The delegates went home happy and the visitors were satisfied.

Now for the campaign. We must win; let every democrat go to work.

W. J. BRYAN.

THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE'S POSITION

The New York Tribune presents the following as its profession of faith:

"In this time there has seemed to be a strange confusion in the British mind over the situation. It seems to have been assumed in Great Britain that Mr. Wilson was acting in regard to Britain in a manner determined by American sympathy and by the fact that the mass of American public opinion was not only pro-ally, but pro-British, and was willing to see American rights waived, because by the waivers the redress of the wrongs of Belgium, of France, of humanity generally, would be helped.

"This is not the case. Conceivably the mass of the American people should have accepted the British point of view; conceivably the mass of the American people should have sympathized with Belgium and with France so completely as to be prepared to surrender rights or adjourn discussions of injuries. England has felt that America should sympathize with her as the soldier of Belgium. But the truth is that no large section of the American people has accepted this view. The Tribune has.

"Holding this view, however, the Tribune has never imagined that it had with it the majority, or any very considerable minority, of the American people. It has recognized that three wholly diverse elements in the American population contributed largely to the rejection by the American people of the idea that Great Britain is fighting for Belgium and for humanity and is unselfishly and quite chivalrously championing an unfortunate and suffering Belgian nation. These three elements are the native American of revolutionary stock, the Irish and the Germans.

"Whether the mass of the British people like or dislike Americans, their feelings are not founded upon Revolutionary memories. No Briton dislikes Americans because of Revolutionary history. But this is not true of Americans. The traditions which come down from the Revolution and are nourished in all our school books are anti-British. In our histories and our experience tyrant means a British monarch; the stories of Concord, Lexington, Valley Forge and all the rest are stories that are told to our youth, and the telling has built up a

prejudice which does endure. This prejudice has been accentuated by what happened in the war of 1812 and in the Civil war.

"It is not important whether this prejudice be right or ridiculous. It seems to The Tribune utterly ridiculous, but it is a fact."

Here we have it—unneutral and boasting of it. There is no disposition in the United States to recall the wars of 1776 and 1812—but there is a decided objection to a present day disloyalty that subordinates the interests of the United States to the interests of ANY foreign country.

W. J. BRYAN.

TWO OF A KIND

One Illinois preacher, stirred by the preparedness parade, declared himself a believer in the doctrine that "death in battle atones for all previous sins." A few years ago another Illinois preacher called one of his congregation "a fool for going out of the saloon business," said that a man could be "as good a Christian in that business as outside." They are two of a kind, but they are rare in the ministry, and fortunately so.

VOLUNTARY OR COMPULSORY?

Colonel Roosevelt complains because President Wilson would have military service voluntary—the Colonel wants it compulsory. What a transformation! Mr. Roosevelt is naturally bloodthirsty and always brutal, but it never occurred to him while president to recommend universal military training, even of the voluntary kind.

BUT WHAT ABOUT HIM?

A Chicago preacher is quoted as saying "I believe in the baptism of blood—that death in battle atones for all previous sins and that the souls of warriors go straight to heaven." But what about Christian ministers who preach such a doctrine? Where do they go?

Our preparedness is increasing relatively as other nations exhaust themselves. A few more battles like the recent one in the North sea and we will have the biggest navy in the world.

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Hughes and Fairbanks

The republicans have presented a ticket composed of men of high character, acknowledged ability and large experience. No time will have to be spent in defending them against personal attacks—they are immune. They represent stand-pat republicanism—the republicanism that looks after the captains of industry and takes advice from the monopolist and the exploiter. It is a very respectable republicanism but the kind that caused more than half of the republicans to revolt against the party organization. Both candidates belong to the Taft wing of the party. Mr. Hughes vetoed the two-cent passenger rate bill which even a New York legislature was willing to support. He was the only governor who asked a legislature to refuse to ratify the income tax amendment to the constitution. And the legislature, supporting his views by a small majority, denied to the state the glory of the victory. He led Mr. Taft's fight in defense of the trusts against the democratic attack in the campaign of 1908. He is satisfactory to the big corporate interests and yet his semi-independence of the bosses and his advocacy of the primary make him less objectionable to the progressives than almost any other prominent republican.

W. J. BRYAN.

HONESTY VS. THE BLUFF

The course pursued by Colonel Roosevelt at Chicago will teach an important lesson, namely, that honesty is the best policy. If, last February, he had frankly told the progressives that, while he would willingly be the candidate of a UNITED party, he would not, by being the candidate of one party alone, assume responsibility for a democratic victory, there would now be neither humiliation to him, nor soreness among progressives toward him. It would have been a frank and manly way of dealing with the situation. But instead of making his fight for the nomination in this way, he led, or at least allowed, his followers to believe that he would run on a progressive ticket regardless of the action of the republican convention. He permitted, if he did not encourage, an attack on every candidate who showed any strength in the republican party. He consented to, if he did not advise, an attempt to coerce the republicans into nominating him. The progressives were in earnest, but he seems to have been bluffing, and Mr. Perkins seems to have had an inside knowledge of the Colonel's plans which he did not communicate to the confiding convention.

Now, the bluff having ingloriously failed, Mr. Roosevelt leaves the progressives to their fate. His course calls down upon him the wrath of his worshippers while he smarts under the ridicule of the old line republicans whom he tried to frighten into nominating him.

It does not pay to deceive in politics less, if possible, than elsewhere. "Be sure your sins will find you out."

W. J. BRYAN.