

CURRENT COMMENT

The "third party" business will peter out inside of the next six weeks or two months. Very naturally the "Roosevelt republicans" are mighty sore, but they'll get over it in time. Just now they feel like going out and swearing at the servant girl and kicking the cat, but after they have thought over it for a while they will cool off and take their medicine.

But this "third party" business is sheer nonsense. Great and successful parties are not builded upon "splits;" they are builded upon a great and overshadowing issue or principle. The republican party was born of the slavery issue. Upon that issue the lines were sharply drawn. But upon this thing we call "progressiveness" there is no sharp line of cleavage. All men may lay claim to being "progressive." We have "progressive democrats" and "progressive republicans," yet the two are not in harmony on fundamental.

Will Maupin's Weekly anticipated no other result than the one reached in Chicago. Roosevelt was the victim of a steam roller of his own manufacture. Many people talk of Roosevelt as a "game fighter." We've seen something of the fighting game, both in politics and in the padded ring, and we have no hesitancy in voicing our opinion that Roosevelt has yet to learn how to take his medicine. He is almighty game when he is winning, but the Chicago affair convinces us that he is a mighty poor loser. The man who digs a pit for others and falls into it himself cuts a poor figure when he whines about it or attempts to play the role of martyr.

We have a great admiration for Governor Hadley of Missouri. There's a game fighter for you. Hadley emerges from the Chicago convention the biggest man in it, in our humble opinion. Without him the Roosevelt boom would have cut a pitiful figure. It was his generalship that kept it going throughout, handicapped all the time by the utterances and actions of the leader whose cause he espoused. But Hadley lost his fight. Now he refuses to sulk or pout, but announces his intention of continuing the fight, not to organize a new party, but to regenerate the party for which he has fought so valiantly and so well.

And why was not William Howard Taft entitled to a re-nomination? His administration has been free from scandal. No one has ever charged him with being the tool of any interest. It is not his fault that the trust prosecutions have been fiascos. The blame for that must be laid at the doors of the supreme court chambers. True, he is not a "politician" and he is not a "mixer." Neither is he a post-graduate of the game of self-advertising. But he has carried out republican policies as well as any republican president ever did, his intentions have always been above suspicions, and he has played square with his friends. The revolt is not against Taft and his administration; it is against the system that has grown up under republican rule—a system that Roosevelt did nothing to overthrow while he was president, and in which he found nothing to condemn until he became imbued with the idea that to condemn would advance the Roosevelt interests.

The fact of the matter is, the republican party is now going through the identical crisis that fronted the democratic party in 1896, with conditions reversed. Then the "progressives" of the democratic party captured the party machinery; now the "progressive republicans" find themselves outside of the breast works. The reactionary democrats of 1896 tried to organize a "third party," but it was a ghastly joke. When they realized this they got back into the fold and began working from the inside. Then they made progress. This progress was made manifest at St. Louis in 1904. It remains to be seen what will be the result of reactionary efforts at Baltimore.

If the "progressive republicans" hope to accomplish anything worth while they will stay inside the breastworks—or else join with progressive democrats.

The re-nomination of "Sunny Jim" Sherman was a natural sequence. Naturally Taft would have preferred a Hadley or a Johnson or a Deneen, but those astute politicians were averse to being chained to a political cadaver. James Schoolcraft Sherman is a politician of the old school. He is a "standpatter" for fair, and he sees nothing worth while in the present progressive movement. He has presided over the senate with dignity and fairness, but he has nothing in common with the new order of things. "Sunny Jim" is living in the remote ages of politics.

It would be foolish for Will Maupin's Weekly to make any predictions about the outcome at Baltimore. The paper goes to press about the time that convention will get down to real business. It is pretty safe to say, however, that the convention, being made up of democrats, will do the wrong thing. That is a democratic habit. Now that democracy has the opportunity of its whole life to make a "killing," the chances are that it will spit on the fuse.

The logical thing to do, of course, would be to nominate Bryan on a progressive platform and issue a defi to "big business" and the cohorts of protection. But whenever did democracy do the logical thing?

Ignorant partisanship usually exposes itself. Here comes the Pawnee Republican with the astounding statement that "the record shows that Mr. Morehead opposed the initiative and referendum movement in the committee of the whole, where the real work on bills is done." The humor of this will be appreciated by those who understand this committee of the whole business. The g. o. p. press bureau is working overtime trying to discredit Morehead's record on the initiative and referendum movement. It may succeed in deceiving those who dearly love to be deceived, but it will not deceive people who want to know the facts. We defy the Pawnee Republican, or any other newspaper, no matter what its politics, to put its editorial finger upon one line or word in the senate record to show that John H. Morehead opposed the initiative and referendum. We defy it, or all of them, to show by the printed record that Morehead offered a single amendment to the bill. We defy them to successfully deny that Morehead favored the bill, voted for it and stood by it from start to finish.

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Senator Skiles had charge of the initiative and referendum bill in the senate. No one has dared to charge that he was lukewarm in its support or that he sought to "kill it by amendments." All newspaper agree that Senator Skiles was heart and soul for the reform. Yet Senator Skiles voted for some of the amendments offered. And every amendment that Morehead voted for was voted for by the chief sponsor of the bill. John H. Morehead's record on the initiative and referendum is as clean as a hound's tooth, and the efforts of irresponsible publications to make it appear otherwise will not avail.

If our republican friends want to comment upon "candidates of the special interests" we commend them to a careful consideration of the candidacy of Mr. Howard, who seeks election to the position of auditor as a republican. All the insurance interests that are opposing Mr. Howard's candidacy could be blown into a gnat's eye through a mosquito's quill, and never make the gnat wink. And the auditor, mind you, is the big insurance "it" of the state.

In the opinion of this newspaper the most important office in the state is that of attorney general. The attorney general is the legal advisor of the other state officials, and he is charged with many important legal duties. The people of Nebraska are especially fortunate this year in having a chance to make choice between two mighty fine men and able lawyers, Andrew Morrissey, the democratic candidate, and Grant Martin, the republican candidate. Personally, we prefer Mr. Morrissey, but this is in no wise founded upon partisan opposition to Mr. Martin, than whom we have no better friend, and for whom we have a sincere admiration.

We opine that about the happiest republican in Nebraska is Sir Walter George, a personal friend and ardent supporter of President Taft. Mr. George, who seeks re-election as treasurer, hasn't been saying much about national politics lately, but he has kept up a "devil of a thinking."

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