

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Vol. 3. No. 32.

Lincoln, Nebraska, August 28, 1903.

Whole No. 136.

What About Taylor?

In his letter to the governor of Indiana, President Roosevelt very properly entered a strong protest against lynching. There are, however, in that letter some statements that might be interpreted into a rebuke for the course pursued by the Indiana governor with respect to Mr. Taylor, former governor of Kentucky.

Mr. Roosevelt probably did not intend that anything in that letter should be construed in connection with the Taylor case and Governor Durbin probably did not read the letter in the light of his attitude toward the notorious fugitive. At the same time, however, some of the things Mr. Roosevelt said should be carefully considered by the Indiana governor and should prompt him to surrender the fugitive Taylor to the Kentucky authorities.

Mr. Roosevelt said: "The slightest lack of vigor in denouncing the crime or bringing the criminal to justice is in itself unpardonable. Moreover, every effort should be made under the law to expedite the proceedings of justice in the case of such an awful crime." To be sure, Mr. Roosevelt here refers explicitly to criminal assault, but he would not undertake to say that the rule he has laid down does not with equal propriety apply to every crime.

Mr. Roosevelt said: "It certainly ought to be possible by the proper administration of the laws to secure swift vengeance upon the criminal, and the best and immediate efforts of all legislators, judges and citizens should be addressed to securing such reforms in our legal procedure as to leave no vestige of excuse for those misguided men who undertake to reap vengeance through violent methods." And again Mr. Roosevelt said that "the law must work swiftly and surely and all the agents of the law should realize the wrong they do when they permit justice to be delayed or thwarted for technical or insufficient reasons." Again Mr. Roosevelt said: "We must show that the law is adequate to deal with crime by freeing it from every vestige of technicality and delay."

The present governor of Indiana, as well as his republican predecessor, permitted Mr. Taylor, the former governor of Kentucky, to find refuge in the Hoosier state. Mr. Taylor is charged with being accessory to the murder of Governor Goebel and so far all efforts to persuade the Indiana executive to surrender Taylor to the Kentucky authorities have failed.

Neither Mr. Roosevelt or Governor Durbin would undertake to say that the rules herein quoted and as laid down by the president do not apply to all crimes; and yet while Mr. Roosevelt presents these rules in a very dramatic way and Governor Durbin accepts them as being an indorsement of his course with respect to the Evansville riots, it is not at all probable that Mr. Roosevelt will ever address to the governor of Indiana a letter by way of rebuke for the course pursued in providing protection to Mr. Taylor, the fugitive from Kentucky justice. And it is not at all probable that Governor Durbin, while pretending to adhere to these rules, will withdraw his protection from Mr. Taylor and permit the sheriff to return him to Kentucky in order that he may be required to answer to the serious charge preferred against him.

The Money Question.

The Chicago Tribune reports Senator Daniel of Virginia as saying that "the financial question will be the most important subject before the next congress." The Tribune adds that the senator believes that the question "will precipitate a long debate, which will cover the whole money question with its old issues and bearings on politics," and he is also "strongly impressed with the be-

lief that in the banking and financial issues to be precipitated this winter in congress, the democrats will have a live, powerful issue."

Senator Daniel is correct; the financial issue will be a live one in congress and the democrats have it in their power to put the republicans on the defensive if they will only take up the question and make an earnest fight. But the party is handicapped by the presence of a lot of corporation democrats who have secured office on a harmony platform and these men will, if possible, prevent the party's taking a firm stand against the Aldrich bill and an asset currency.

The democrats who are with the people ought to assert themselves in both the house and the senate and leave exposed to the wrath of the people those who would surrender the treasury into the hands of the financiers.

Barriers to Competition.

In a speech delivered at Creston, Ia., August 10, Congressman Hepburn said: "What are protective duties other than barriers to free competition? When we agree to a tariff schedule imposing duties upon our foreign competitor, we say to him, we do not rely upon your competition to secure diminishing cost for our necessities of life, but we propose to give our own people our entire market and then rely upon their competition, one with another, to secure the just and fair price."

It is not difficult for the intelligent man to understand that the republican party has built up at our ports these "barriers to free competition." But it does not provide among our own people "competition, one with another, to secure a just and fair price."

The republican party builds up "barriers to free competition" at our ports and then fosters the trust system whereby free competition is destroyed at home; the whole tendency of the republican policies being to benefit the few at the expense of the many.

No More Confidence Games

It is apparent that the reorganizers are attempting to play another confidence game, first on the democratic party and then on the public. They want a platform that is ambiguous and candidates who are not openly pledged to anything, but who are secretly pledged to the representatives of organized wealth. Then they propose to collect a large campaign fund from the corporations and use it to buy the floating vote. The word "democrat" is to be used to cover anything that the schemers want and the campaign is to be run on plans approved by modern republicanism. This is what was done in 1892 and the bunco game was fully developed during Mr. Cleveland's administration. Every effort made today in the direction of reform is handicapped by the disgraceful record of those four years and any prominence given to the unrepentant members of that administration gives the lie to all promise of improvement. Will the party travel again through that valley of the shadow of death? Will the honest and earnest advocates of remedial legislation permit the party to be used for the betrayal of the hopes of the people? Never! As soon as the rank and file understand the nature of the struggle they will arise in their might and overthrow the political highwaymen who wear the mask of democracy, but who are bent upon the spoliation of the masses. No more confidence games during this generation, and if the loyal democrats do their duty there will be such a modification in the methods of government that rings will find it impossible to impose on the people longer. The application of the Kansas City platform and the application of Kansas City platform principles to all new questions will keep the party true to its high purpose.

Philo Sherman Bennett

Mr. Bryan has been called upon to mourn the death of another close personal and political friend—Mr. Philo Sherman Bennett of New Haven, Conn. He was senior member of the New York wholesale firm of Bennett, Joel & Co., and was one of the few prominent business men of the east who refused to be intimidated by the financiers in 1896. He began at the bottom of the ladder and worked his way up to a commanding position in the commercial world, and yet he never lost his sympathy with the struggling masses.

The address delivered at the funeral by Rev. Artemus J. Haynes, pastor of the United church, so accurately described the controlling purpose of Mr. Bennett's life that it is given in full:

"The most appropriate words on such an occasion as this are the words of the Holy Scripture, leading our thoughts and feelings out into some simple utterance of prayer. It were better under ordinary circumstances to withhold our testimony of praise until some hour when the mind could dwell more calmly upon the character and achievements of him who has gone. But the circumstances of this occasion are not ordinary; the man whom we honor today was no ordinary man. He was unique by virtue of the opinions which he held, the ideals which he followed, and the type of manhood which he exemplified. Such a life calls for some direct and simple word of appreciation. To go out from this service without voicing the sentiments that have moved you to come to this house today were to tempt the very stones in the street to render tribute to him whom you have known and loved.

"Even had I been well acquainted with Mr. Bennett, it would hardly be fitting that I should enter into the intimacies of his life and character. He whose personality was made beautiful by the rarest modesty, would shrink, I am sure, from having his private virtues shown forth for the admiration of the crowd. The sacredness of personality is not destroyed by the death of the body. In every man's life is a holy of holies; and God alone has the right to enter that inner sanctuary. Of that religious life which is the expression of a man's sense of relationship to his brother the world has a right to take note, but of that life which is hidden with Christ in God the world can know nothing, and into the secret workings of that life no man should attempt to intrude. Jesus spoke to his disciples of their obligations to the brotherhood—that was one side of the religious life, but when he would worship, he went apart into the mountain that he might be alone. Of that side of Mr. Bennett's life which, as I believe, was profoundly religious, that side which had to do with his relation to God, I shall say nothing. The life of faith and aspiration and prayer—only God knows that life, knows its sweetness and beauty. Concerning the other side of his personality, that side which was open to all the world, his relation to the men and women about him, the great brotherhood—concerning that side of his life I would venture to say a few words.

"And that which I would say has defined itself very clearly to my thought. It is not of a general character—the ordinary commonplace which may be attached to every good man who dies—but something definite and distinct. May I come to my thought by way of a much slighted word of scripture? I cannot help feeling that if Mr. Bennett had chosen a text it would have been this: 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?'

"Brotherhood! that was the great word in the language to him. He believed in the democracy of religion and in the religion of democracy. Laws, customs, institutions—nothing was sacred to him