

# The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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## "When the Slump Began"

The New York World in an editorial, notable principally for its absurd reasoning and its false inferences, declares that the "slump" in the democratic vote began in 1906 (the year when the democratic party was rescued from Clevelandism). A review of the figures which the World itself publishes answers its own argument.

In 1880 the democratic vote increased 157,150; in 1884 it increased 468,972, in 1888 it increased 627,216; in 1892 it increased 18,685; in 1896 it increased 946,007.

Does that look as though "the slump" began in 1896?

The "slump" really began in 1894, when the men upon whom newspapers like the New York World bestows the title of "real democrats" were in control. Every student of history knows that in the light of the results in 1894 the democratic party showed marvelous recuperative powers in the campaign of 1896 and obtained a popular vote so large that very few shrewd politicians would have dared to predict such a result at the close of the polls in 1894.

In 1892 the democrats carried 22 states, and also received eight electoral votes out of nine from California; five out of fourteen from Michigan; one out of three from North Dakota; one out of twenty-three from Ohio. In that year the democratic candidate obtained a plurality over the republican candidate of 380,810.

In the fall of 1894 congressional elections took place and in most of the states there were state elections. The democratic national administration was clearly the issue in that campaign. As a result only 11 states out of 45 were carried by the democrats and out of the eleven only one, California, was a northern state, the democratic majority there being something over 1,200. Missouri went republican in 1894. Kentucky, then represented in the cabinet by John G. Carlisle, was carried by the republicans by 1,047 on the congressional vote and in that state the republicans elected five congressmen out of the eleven. Maryland went republican on the congressional vote; Illinois went republican by a larger majority than it did in 1900; Ohio went republican by a majority of 137,000, while the republicans carried Michigan by more than 100,000. The republicans carried Connecticut by 17,000. New Jersey, Mr. Cleveland's present home, went republican on the congressional vote by 48,000; New York, with David B. Hill as candidate for governor, went republican by 159,000; Pennsylvania gave a republican majority of 241,000; Iowa a republican majority of 79,000. Massachusetts, 65,000; Minnesota, 60,000; Wisconsin, 53,000; Indiana, 44,000; Maine, 38,000.

The sum of all the majorities cast for the democratic ticket in the eleven states carried by the democrats amounted to 300,744, while the majorities cast for the republican ticket in thirty-two states amounted to 1,383,277. The net republican majority was, therefore, 1,082,533. This was 480,679 larger than the popular majority obtained by the republican ticket in 1896. It was 252,743 larger than the popular majority obtained by the republican ticket in 1900.

As a result of "the slump" of 1894 the congress elected in that year contained only 104 democrats, although the congress elected in 1892 contained 219 democrats. The congress elected in 1892 had 127 republicans, the congress elected in 1894 had 244 republicans. There were 24 states which in 1894 did not elect a single democratic representative to congress. In fact, outside of the southern states, there were, all told, only 18 democrats elected to congress (Missouri being counted with the northern states—she elected 5 democratic members out of 15) and of these one came from California, two from Illinois, one from Massachusetts;

five from New York, five from Missouri, two from Ohio, and two from Pennsylvania.

It is hardly fair to attribute "the tragical rout of 1904" to the good report made by the democratic party in 1896. It is hardly fair to attribute "the slump" to the party's action in 1896 when "the slump" really occurred in 1894 and at a time when the party was under the control of the same elements that dominated in 1904.

## .... HOPE ....

Hope presides over the year's birth and bids us be of good cheer. "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new"—is a greeting which contains infinite encouragement. The page is clean; we can write what we will upon it. Memory whispers, Make it a brighter page than the last one, and Hope answers, I will. Hope is the beginning of reform; and who has passed beyond its need? None so good that they may not improve; none so bad that they might not be worse; none so young but that some false steps have already been taken; none so old but that the remnant of life is worth still further refining.

Tolstoy illustrates both the turning over of a new leaf and growth in righteousness. He was 48 years old when he exchanged the rewards of literature for the delights of moral philosophy, and for twenty-nine years ...s voice, more and more distinct above the hum of business, the discord of politics, and the clash of arms, has been repeating to the uttermost parts of the earth: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself."

Hope stands next to love in the influence which it exerts. With it man's possible helpfulness defies fixed limitations; without it, his power for evil is almost boundless. Victor Hugo has defined the mob as "the human race in misery," and misery might be defined as hopeless suffering. Hope enables us to bear our trials with patience. Might is but the beginning of the day to one who awaits the dawn and the day itself is dark to one to whom the sun is hidden.

We owe it to others as well as to ourselves to make the most of our opportunities, for "no one liveth unto himself." Our lives are so interwoven with the lives about us that no one can fall without hurting his comrades and no one can resist temptation without strengthening his fellows. Through hope we fix our eyes upon the ideal and then we endeavor to make our lives one long ascent toward the realization of that ideal.

No conception of life is a worthy one that is not broad enough to include both the mortal and the immortal and no ideal is a noble one that does not lead to the harmonious development of body, head and heart. The body can not be neglected for it is the earthly tenement of the mind and the soul. It must be strong to do its master's work. The food, the drink, the apparel, the exercise and the recreation that fit the body for the maximum of usefulness are desirable—this is the test. Any less is insufficient, any more would be harmful. All habits of body or mind that contribute to one's usefulness—and all habits either help or hinder—are good habits; any habit which impedes one's progress is indefensible and should be abandoned.

If to "a sound mind in a sound body" we add a sound heart we have a basis upon which to build the highest type of manhood and womanhood. Every consideration of self, of family, of nation and of church impels us to dedicate each new year to greater endeavor and to larger service.

## Democratic Plan Endorsed

It will interest the readers of The Commoner to know that Commissioner Garfield of the bureau of corporations has endorsed the democratic plan for dealing with the trust question. Whether his recommendation will be adopted remains to be seen, but it certainly ought to have the support of all the democratic members of congress.

Commissioner Garfield suggests that corporations engaged in interstate commerce be compelled to take out a federal license, the license to be granted upon terms that will compel the corporations to do legitimate business and prevent the injuries which have resulted from monopoly or attempted monopoly. The states are to be left to charter such corporations as they please and to tax and control such corporations, but when a corporation desires to engage in interstate commerce it must submit to regulations necessary for the protection of the general public. This remedy for the trusts is entirely feasible and is in keeping with the democratic platform of 1900—the plank being partially reiterated in the platform of 1904. The plank of 1900 reads as follows:

We pledge the democratic party to an unceasing warfare in nation, state and city against private monopoly in every form. Existing laws against trusts must be enforced, and more stringent ones must be enacted providing for publicity as to the affairs of corporations engaged in interstate commerce, requiring all corporations to show, before doing business outside the state of their origin, that they have not attempted, and are not attempting, to monopolize any branch of business or the production of any articles of merchandise, and the whole constitutional power of congress over interstate commerce, the mails and all modes of interstate communication shall be exercised by the enactment of comprehensive laws upon the subject of trusts.

This plan has several advantages. First, it is easily enforced. By requiring a corporation to take out license in advance it saves the necessity of hunting up evidence to support a prosecution. By withholding the use of the mails, telegraph lines and railroads until license is secured, the government has it in its power to completely prevent an interstate monopoly. By reserving the right to suspend or cancel a license the government is able to retain control of interstate commerce corporations in such an effective way as to entirely protect the public.

Second, That plan does not interfere with the right of the state to charter such corporations as it thinks best and to control them according to its own interests. The rights of the state and the rights of the federal government are both preserved under this plan.

Third, This plan accomplishes the desired purpose with the least injury. A legitimate corporation will find it no trouble to comply with the law, while it will find its greatest protection in the passage of such a law. It might be wise to make the law applicable to corporations having a certain capital or doing a certain amount of business. Or, better still, the law might be based on the proportion of business done rather than upon the actual amount, for a monopoly is only possible where a single corporation controls a large proportion of the business in that line. If, for instance, the law only applied to corporations controlling one-tenth of the product or sale of the article handled, all harmless corporations would be relieved of annoyance. If the law provided that a license should be refused to all corporations controlling more than 50 per cent of the total product a complete monopoly would be prevented. The license board could be given discretion in regard to the licensing of