

The Special Interests and the Democratic Party

THE NEW YORK SUN, TOO

The New York Sun, famous alike for the brilliancy of its editorial page and its subserviency to special interests, goes to the support of the New York World in its effort to dictate the course of the democratic party. The story is told in an editorial entitled "Two Ways to Beat Bryan" and printed by the Minneapolis Journal. The Journal editorial follows: "The New York Sun wants to prevent the nomination of Bryan. The New York World also wants to prevent the nomination of Bryan. But they go at it differently. The World demands a candidate against him. The Sun demands a number of candidates against him. The Sun's plan is the most like the Sun. The World's is the most like honest politics. The democratic convention will be bound by the two-thirds rule. That is to say, Mr. Bryan must get two-thirds of the delegates, and get them early, or he will not be nominated. He is in the position of Grover Cleveland in 1892 when Hill secured the New York delegation and went to Chicago to beat Cleveland by showing that he had not the support of his own state. Bourke Cockran made his famous speech, in which he said that Mr. Cleveland was a very popular man in New York on every day of the year except election day. The sneer did not go with the convention. Mr. Cleveland, on the first ballot, secured two-thirds of all the delegates, without New York. Judge Parker won at St. Louis in 1904, tho his task was easier, since he had the enthusiastic support of his own state. But it is conceded that if either had failed to land on the first ballot, he would have been beaten. Can Mr. Bryan be beaten on the first ballot? The Sun says Mr. Bryan's candidacy is hopeless in New York. It believes New York, New England, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware will vote against him. These states have 240 delegates—60 less than one-third. Now if Texas should present Culberson and support him with 36 votes. Virginia Daniel with 24 votes and Minnesota Johnson with 22 votes, in the Sun's opinion the trick would be turned. Mr. Bryan would be stalemated. He could not be nominated, and while none of the others could count on the nomination out of the turmoil, the convention might draw a new man acceptable to all wings of the party. This plan, plausible as it appears, runs up against the objection that the Sun has not stated any reason for its faith that Mr. Bryan would lose all the New England votes. He could not lose them all unless it was so palpably evident that Mr. Bryan was not the man, that he could not get a majority, far less a two-thirds majority of the delegates. It is easy to count up the New England states and the Atlantic states, and say these make a one-third minority against Mr. Bryan. Do they? Won't they vote for him in the absence of strong candidacies elsewhere? This brings the discussion back to the World's plan, which is to pick out a man and make a fight against Mr. Bryan with him. The first man picked by the World is Governor Johnson of Minnesota. But Governor Johnson says he is not a candidate. He says, moreover, that he will not be a candidate so long as Mr. Bryan is. Now, it must be evident that the Bryan opposition cannot rally very enthusiastically round a man who refuses the honor. It begins to be apparent that Governor Johnson must 'fish or cut bait, or row ashore.' The situation is such that he must be either for Bryan or be against him."

NOT A ONE-MAN PARTY

The New York World says: "In the circumstances in which the democracy now finds itself a party would be stark crazy to ignore a man like John A. Johnson and allow a chronic candidate like Mr. Bryan to gain the nomination by default. A one-man party is an evil second in proportion only to a one-man government. As Samuel J. Tilden wrote to Daniel Manning in 1884, 'neither the democratic party nor the republic for whose future that party is the best guarantee is now or ever can be dependent upon one man for their successful progress in the path of a noble destiny.'"

The democratic party is not a one-man party, nor is the nomination going to Mr. Bryan by default. Mr. Bryan will be nominated for the

simple reason that he is the choice of the preponderating majority of the men who constitute the party. There are many democrats of renown who are worthy of the nomination, but it appears that they are not the choice of the party this year. Governor John A. Johnson is a good democrat and a splendid man, but he is a stranger to the great body of the party at this time. In time, possibly, the country may become impressed with his availability and nominate him.

The World is greatly mistaken about Mr. Bryan's strength. It is this strength that accounts for his superior availability. It is conceivable that there are several southern statesmen who would be more acceptable to the mass of southern democrats than Mr. Bryan is, but Mr. Bryan is certainly more acceptable to them than any other northern man mentioned.

It is absurd to talk about a one-man party and still more absurd to belittle Mr. Bryan's strength in all sections of the country—even in the east, where the World thinks he is especially weak. Mr. Bryan is much stronger in the east than Governor Johnson or Judge Gray or perhaps any other democrat who has been mentioned in connection with the nomination.

The World's persistent warfare upon Mr. Bryan is calculated to create the suspicion that it fears he may be elected.—Houston (Texas) Post.

JAMES J. HILL AT THE HELM

In furtherance of its boom for Governor Johnson of Minnesota, the New York World prints this story: "Soon after being elected governor, J. J. Hill, the railroad and financial king of the northwest, called on him. Two farmers, who had been boyhood friends of the governor, had just been ushered into the private office, when announcement was made that the great Hill was outside. 'Tell him I will see him when I have finished with these gentlemen,' said Mr. Johnson. The private secretary urged an immediate audience. Once a year the governor gets angry and swears. That was one of the anniversaries. Half an hour the governor sat with the farmers. Then he went to the outer room to his noted caller. 'Mr. Hill,' he said, 'I never met you before and I appreciate you coming to pay me your respects. I knew you were waiting outside for half an hour, but I would have kept you waiting twenty-four hours rather than have those two men go back to their homes with the impression that John Johnson would turn away the humble associates of his youth and give preference to any man who chanced to possess wealth and power. If you wish to congratulate me, Mr. Hill, now, here is my hand.' Mr. Hill grasped the hand and shook it warmly, saying: 'I like you the better for it.' This same James J. Hill said to the World correspondent a few weeks ago in New York: 'Look over John A. Johnson as a fit man for the White House. Study him and you will find there is alot in him. He has courage, he has ability and he has common sense.' In 1896 and in 1900 Johnson voted for Bryan, but was not one of the fanatical followers of the Nebraskan. His views today are at variance in many respects from those of Mr. Bryan. He does not recognize the divine right of Mr. Bryan to be the dictator and autocrat of the democratic party for all time. He thinks that Judge Gray of Delaware would be an ideal president, combining in one man the experience and ripened judgment of three co-ordinate branches of government—the legislative, the judicial and the executive." Regarding the possibility of his own candidacy, Governor Johnson says that he is attending strictly to his business as governor, conferring with no political leaders, planning no campaign, entering into no alliances and neither spending a cent nor losing a minute's sleep because his name has been mentioned."

THE WELLMAN ARTICLE

Mr. Walter Wellman, Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald and a journalist of wide repute, takes occasion to warn those republicans who are disposed to think Mr. Bryan an easy man to defeat. He says: "Disregard the professional politician and get down among the people—the plain people," Mr. Bryan himself loves to call them—and you will find that the Nebraskan is stronger than ever

before. As I said some time ago, he has worn well. In his honesty and sincerity the people have full confidence. He is the only democrat who stands in a class with President Roosevelt in the affections of the masses. Roosevelt and Bryan are the only universally popular public men we have today, and logically, from the standpoint of the thought and hope of the vast majority of the people, they should be the rival candidates. The point I wish to make is that the men or the party who proceed upon the theory that Bryan is not dangerous as a vote-getter are likely to wake up some time and find themselves sadly mistaken."

How will this strike those democratic newspapers that are in the habit of bewailing Mr. Bryan's weakness? There are many such newspapers in the east and not a few in the south. They regard Mr. Bryan as weak because of the respectable number of voters of independent or democratic tendencies who have voted against Mr. Bryan in the past and who do not like some of the policies he advocates. It is quite true that there is a class of votes that Mr. Bryan can not get, which Governor Johnson, Judge Gray or any other conservative man might get. But what about the much greater number that no conservative candidate can obtain, but which Mr. Bryan can get? These seem to be overlooked and these votes, rather than the others, are likely to determine the result of the election.

Mr. Wellman is quite right in saying that Mr. Bryan is stronger than ever before. If he has lost popularity at all, it is in the south where a dominant conservative element dislike such policies as government ownership. But these southern conservatives are going to vote for him just the same and, with these radical policies omitted from the platform, as they will be, since Mr. Bryan himself says the time is not ripe for them, Mr. Bryan is more acceptable to them than Judge Gray, Governor Johnson or Judge Harmon.

With Taft in the field as the republican candidate, there are in the north, middle west and Rocky Mountain states, tens of thousands of men who voted for Roosevelt who will just as earnestly support Bryan, and there are other tens of thousands who will not support the republican candidate unless there is money to pay them for it.

Altogether, the situation is by no means gloomy for democratic success. If the eastern newspapers that profess to yearn for democratic success will stop their sneering and grouching and support the ticket, they may yet have an opportunity of seeing a democratic administration installed at Washington.—Houston (Texas) Post.

SIMPLY TRYING TO SPLIT THE PARTY

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "The National Democratic club of New York, which has just had its Jackson day banquet, announces that it will have frequent dinners between now and the Denver convention, for the purpose, so its members say, of 'stimulating the growth of true democracy.' And one of the means by which that end can be accomplished projects itself into the favorite son movement by which Judge Gray, Harmon of Ohio, Governor Johnson of Minnesota and others are put forward to keep a third of the delegates away from Bryan, defeat him in the convention, and prepare a feud which will beat their party as badly in 1908 as it was beaten in 1904."

RANK AND FILE WILL CONTROL

If the big corporations and financiers, together with the newspapers they control and politicians that serve them, can name one more than one-third of the delegates to the democratic convention, Bryan will not be the nominee for president. Who would be the nominee, in such a contingency, does not greatly concern these interests. With them it is anything to beat Bryan.

That an effort is being made to this end there can be no doubt. The publicity campaign is in the able and unscrupulous hands of the New York World and New York Sun, and assisting them are found, with but few exceptions, all the large newspapers of the northern states, that, while they call themselves democratic, seldom or never support democratic candidates unless the corporations give the word. The underground work is in the hands of politicians who draw their inspiration from Ryan, Belmont and