

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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108 IN ONE WEEK

Charles Stephens, Columbus, Kan., writes: Find enclosed money order for \$21.60 for which send The Commoner one year to the parties herein named. This makes 108 subscriptions I have taken and sent in this week. If you could send to each of these parties, as good measure, a copy of The Commoner containing the cartoon "Watching the Clock," I would greatly appreciate it. I think the central committee of every county in the United States should be called together in their respective counties and an organized effort made to immediately increase the circulation of The Commoner. I also think that all state committees should hold state conventions for the election of delegates to the national convention not later than March 15, in order that the country will have an absolute assurance as to who the democratic standard bearer will be.

THE RECORD

The Columbia (S. C.) State shudders to think what the republican party would do to the democratic party in the next election if the position of the two parties were reversed. The State then proceeds to point out the republican record as follows:

"Seven years of profitless, unintelligent malefactor baiting, with not a malefactor yet landed in jail; seven years of wild, excited and loud-mouthed struggle with the forces of 'predatory wealth,' with no better result to show for it all than a senseless and unreasonable panic brought about in a year of big crops and abundant material prosperity; one hundred thousand unemployed in the city of New York alone, with the prospect before the winter is over of the necessary establishment of the free soup kitchen so dreaded by political parties; hard times, 'tight' money and a large degree of business pessimism."

To this the State might have added: "A situation full of peril with no better remedy to offer than no-cent dollars of the asset currency brand; a railway merger declared illegal in the courts but allowed to continue under another name; a trust breeding tariff that the administration dare not touch for fear of being deprived of a fund to finance its campaign; a big stick policy that has had as results only the organization of Ananias clubs, the enumeration of undesirable citizens and the scolding of trained naval officials."

Such a record would condemn the democratic party to deserved defeat. It remains to be seen whether the people will call the guilty party to account.

THE WATER CURE



He has prospered so prodigiously with water saturated stocks that he will not be satisfied until the currency is treated the same way.

THE PARAMOUNT ISSUE

Some of the democrats who have been indifferent to the trust question and the railroad question are now insisting that tariff reform shall be made the paramount issue and that other questions shall be relegated to the rear. Lest this demand shall deceive some of the rank and file of the party, it may be well to recall a bit of history. The men who are so zealous now in their desire that consideration of the tariff shall exclude the consideration of all other questions had a chance in 1896 to show their interest in this subject. Then the republican candidate was the high priest of protection; he had linked his name with the McKinley bill standing for the most ultra protection, and yet some of these who are now posing as the special guardians of tariff reform did not hesitate to support the republican ticket. It is entirely possible that their enthusiasm for a reduction of the tariff has increased since that time and yet it is not at all unlikely that these same men will be found supporting the republican ticket at the next election even if the ticket has at its head a standpat high tariff man. The fact is, and it might as well be recognized, that some who call themselves democrats are so closely connected with railroad interests either as stockholders, legal representatives or financial agents that they resent any attempt at effective regulation of the railroads. Some of these democrats are also connected with trusts, some of them hold stock, others are even directors and others are attorneys for trusts. These men—whether consciously or unconsciously is a matter of opinion—underestimate the importance of the trust question as those connected with the railroad question. They insist that tariff, and that tariff

alone, shall be considered, and yet it is quite certain that no tariff plank could be made strong enough to suit them if the party at the same time took an emphatic position in favor of railroad regulation, and against trusts, and nominated a candidate known to be in sympathy with the platform. They would find some excuse for fearing the disturbance of business or injury to the public, for to them there is no business except that from which they derive a profit and no public except that portion which is engaged in the exploitation of the masses.

The rank and file of the democratic party fully believe in tariff reform and they believe in tariff reform more earnestly and more consistently than these self-constituted guardians of tariff reform who have suddenly become so interested in the successes of the democratic party—a party to whose defeat they largely contributed—but the rank and file know that there are other questions besides the tariff question, and that these questions must be considered. No party can ignore an issue which a majority of the people desire to have considered and any attempt to ignore such an issue is sure to result disastrously to the party. A majority of the American people favor tariff reform and it is probable that a majority would be willing to intrust tariff reform to the democratic party, although there is an element which deludes itself with the idea that reform of the tariff can be secured in and through the republican party. It is to be hoped that during the campaign this element may be brought to understand that the republican leaders are impotent to bring tariff reform. There is also a majority—an even larger majority—in favor of annihilating the