

# The Commoner.

CHARLES W. BRYAN, PUBLISHER

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## MUST FACE THE ISSUES THIS YEAR

*"The campaign will be difficult. It is absurd to talk of a walkover for Taft. He himself makes no secret of his belief that Bryan's chances of election are better than they have ever been before. The republicans will know that they have been fighting before the battle is over. They can not bring out their old bogeys. The country is not going to be frightened into rejecting Bryan."--From New York Evening Post, a Taft Organ.*

## MR. BRYAN'S SPEECH OF ACCEPTANCE

Mr. Clayton and Gentlemen of the Notification Committee: I can not accept the nomination which you officially tender, without first acknowledging my deep indebtedness to the democratic party for the extraordinary honor which it has conferred upon me. Having twice before been a candidate for the presidency, in campaigns which ended in defeat, a third nomination, the result of the free and voluntary act of the voters of the party, can only be explained by a substantial and undisputed growth in the principles and policies for which I, with a multitude of others, have contended. As these principles and policies have given me whatever political strength I possess, the action of the convention not only renews my faith in them, but strengthens my attachment to them.

### A PLATFORM IS BINDING

I shall, in the near future, prepare a more formal reply to your notification, and, in that letter of acceptance, will deal with the platform in detail. It is sufficient, at this time, to assure you that I am in hearty accord with both the letter and the spirit of the platform. I endorse it in whole and in part, and shall, if elected, regard its declarations as binding upon me. And, I may add, a platform is binding as to what it omits as well as to what it contains. According to the democratic idea, the people think for themselves and select officials to carry out their wishes. The voters are the sovereigns; the officials are the servants, employed for a fixed time and at a stated salary to do what the sovereigns want done, and to do it in the way the sovereigns want it done. Platforms are entirely in harmony with this democratic idea. A platform announces the party's position on the questions which are at issue; and an official is not at liberty to use the authority vested in him to urge personal views which have not been submitted to the voters for their approval. If one is nominated upon a platform which is not satisfactory to him, he must, if candid, either decline the nomination, or, in accepting it, propose an amended platform in lieu of the one adopted by the convention. No such situation, however, confronts your candidate, for the platform upon which I was nominated not only contains nothing from which I dissent, but it specifically outlines all the remedial legislation which we can hope to secure during the next four years.

### REPUBLICAN CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

The distinguished statesman who received the republican nomination for president said, in his notification speech: "The strength of the republican cause in the campaign at hand is the fact that we represent the policies essential to the reform of known abuses, to the continuance of liberty and true prosperity, and that we are determined, as our platform unequivocally declares, to maintain them and carry them on."

In the name of the democratic party, I accept the challenge, and charge that the republican party is responsible for all the abuses

which now exist in the federal government, and that it is impotent to accomplish the reforms which are imperatively needed. Further, I can not concur in the statement that the republican platform unequivocally declares for the reforms that are necessary; on the contrary, I affirm that it openly and notoriously disappoints the hopes and expectations of reformers, whether those reformers be republicans or democrats. So far did the republican convention fall short of its duty that the republican candidate felt it necessary to add to his platform in several important particulars, thus rebuking the leaders of the party, upon whose co-operation he must rely for the enactment of remedial legislation.

As I shall, in separate speeches, discuss the leading questions at issue, I shall at this time confine myself to the paramount question, and to the far-reaching purpose of our party, as that purpose is set forth in the platform.

### SHALL THE PEOPLE RULE?

Our platform declares that the overshadowing issue which manifests itself in all the questions now under discussion, is "Shall the people rule?" No matter which way we turn; no matter to what subject we address ourselves, the same question confronts us: Shall the people control their own government, and use that government for the protection of their rights and for the promotion of their welfare? or shall the representatives of predatory wealth prey upon a defenseless public, while the offenders secure immunity from subservient officials whom they raise to power by unscrupulous methods? This is the issue raised by the "known abuses" to which Mr. Taft refers.

### PRESIDENT'S INDICTMENT AGAINST THE PARTY

In a message sent to congress last January, President Roosevelt said: "The attacks by these great corporations on the administration's actions have been given a wide circulation throughout the country, in the newspapers and otherwise, by those writers and speakers who, consciously or unconsciously, act as the representatives of predatory wealth—of the wealth accumulated on a giant scale by all forms of iniquity, ranging from the oppression of wage earners to unfair and unwholesome methods of crushing out competition, and to defrauding the public by stock-jobbing and the manipulation of securities. Certain wealthy men of this stamp, whose conduct should be abhorrent to every man of ordinarily decent conscience, and who commit the hideous wrong of teaching our young men that phenomenal business success must ordinarily be based on dishonesty, have, during the last few months, made it apparent that they have banded together to work for a re-action. Their endeavor is to overthrow and discredit all who honestly administer the law, to prevent any additional legislation which would check and restrain them, and to secure, if possible, a freedom from all restraint which will permit every unscrupulous wrong-doer to