

Wilson. Although Mr. Bryan has said he will not push himself forward, his name is placed first. This is because, with democratic success indicated on a radical platform, Mr. Bryan is the logical leader of the democracy. The boys down in Washington are recognizing this fact right now in letting him dictate the democratic legislative program. In case, however, the stigma of three defeats should be considered a hopeless handicap, Mr. Bryan would have to choose between Clark, of Missouri, and Wilson, of New Jersey. Whether Clark will be in the eligible list next year would seem to depend on what happens in congress in the meantime. If Mr. Clark could go through the extra session with the same degree of credit with which he started he would have much stronger claims to the nomination than Wilson, who will have been working in a limited field. And even if Clark should stumble, there is no certainty Wilson will be able to qualify for the Bryan 'O. K.' Wilson is a sophomore in politics and an aristocrat rather than a commoner. If both Clark and Wilson should fail to qualify Mr. Bryan, however reluctant, might have to veto both and put it up to the convention to nominate a tried and true radical leader. In that contingency he might be forced to take a fourth nomination, and it might not require the expenditure of a vast amount of force."

#### BRYAN IN THE HOUSE

Washington dispatch to the New York Times: "Half an hour before the sound of the gavel would be heard calling the house of the Sixty-second congress to order William Jennings Bryan came into the chamber from the speaker's lobby, smiling benevolently and easily at home in the midst of applause. He made his way forward to the diagonal aisle and advanced to the seat once occupied by his political godfather, William M. Springer of Illinois, the man who opened wide for him the door of opportunity when he made his advent as a new member in the Fifty-second congress in 1891.

The doors had hardly swung shut behind Mr. Bryan before scores of members saw him and a shout went up that made forty-five glass coats of arms in the ceiling quiver. Everybody rose to his feet, and the scene began to look like some of those that the peerless and his democratic brethren have gone through in numerous national conventions. For the next twenty minutes members crowded around him and shook hands with him, while he greeted one after another in rapid succession.

Washington dispatch to the New York World: "And over on the democratic side in his old seat was William Jennings Bryan. He was looking much older than his latest familiar photographs. His hair is whitening. He, in common with the other democrats on the floor, had a little flag and waved it. He waved it with a big display of vim. He had come to Washington as champion, Nestor and Warwick of Champ Clark. He has made it apparent that he would like the new speaker to be the new president in 1912, always presuming, of course, that the party couldn't be induced to give him a fourth start in the white house race.

"So there Bryan sat in the house with the most benign of approving expressions, studying and applauding Champ Clark."

#### FROM THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEDGER—REPUBLICAN THE WRECKER

"Mr. Bryan rounds out his last few days' delightful political activity by calling on the president. Mr. Taft, presumably interested, as a good party man in the success of his party, ought to make much of Mr. Bryan. He is a genuine ray of hope for the republicans. Their courage and confidence visibly grow as his activities increase at Washington.

"He invades the floor of the house and counsels congressmen as to the right principles and policy. He seeks democratic senators and warns them that they must not take such and such leaders. They must be progressive; they must shun democrats who look like republicans; they must have a forward policy; they must be Bryanistic. Democrats have an opportunity for the first time since 1893, is the Bryanistic message. Let them beware of the conditions under Cleveland and avoid those perils. Let them remember the long, lean years from 1896 to 1911.

"The republicans will remember them and regard with something like affection Mr. Bryan and his present efforts. But will the democrats remember them and Bryan, the wrecker?"

"If memory is not fallacious the democracy had formed a habit of winning elections under

Cleveland, and then the blight fell. Its name was Bryanism. It split the party; it menaced the country; it caused a fear so great that no republican folly and no republican abuse was too shocking to prevent the country from averting its countenance and vote from the democracy. The struggle back to confidence for the democracy was a long and hard one, and success came just in proportion, as it was evident that Bryan was receding into the dim distance, into the Cave of Adullam with the recognized Adullamites.

"Can he 'come back,' and will the democrats permit him to come back? The republican party awaits the answer with breathless interest. An enthusiast from Memphis, Tenn., pleads with Mr. Bryan to come to Memphis to live, and declares that he is sure \$2,000,000 could be raised to capitalize Mr. Bryan's printing plant and Mr. Bryan if he would only come. Bryan thrust the offer aside as if it had been stage money. No wonder; it's a trifle; it's an insult. Bryan is worth billions—billions to the democrats if they can shake him off; billions to the republicans if the democracy can't."

Thomas McCarty, Des Moines, Ia.: I enclose you a clipping, taken from the Des Moines Sunday Register and Leader of April 9, which gave me great pleasure to read, and, feeling that it would give equal pleasure to the other readers of The Commoner, I send it to you for publication through its columns. I hope you will not consign it to the waste basket.

#### FROM THE DES MOINES (IOWA) REGISTER AND LEADER

"Washington, D. C., April 8.—Developments of the past several days in Washington have made clear one great fact with respect to the democratic party. This fact is that the strongest single individual force in that party is William J. Bryan, of Nebraska.

"It is a strange and unprecedented situation. That a man three times defeated at the polls for the presidency should still loom up as a powerful factor in his party hardly seems a possibility. It is against all the laws of politics, as men are accustomed to read them. But Mr. Bryan appears not to be amenable to the ordinary political laws. He is a law unto himself and it is an amazing fact that in spite of his repeated defeats he was never more of a factor in affairs at Washington than he is at this minute.

"Not many months ago, they were saying here and elsewhere that Bryan was dead. His defeat in the 1908 campaign, followed by his rejection at the hands of the democratic machinery of his own state, as many people viewed it, ended him. But Mr. Bryan is one of the few politicians who are not overcome by defeat. On the contrary, he has learned the lesson that defeat is oftentimes good fortune in disguise.

"At any rate, a series of defeats has not served to lessen the hold he has on vast numbers of the democratic voters of the country. And because he has a hold on the voters, he is regarded with tender consideration by the democratic members of congress, especially by that element that classes itself progressive and is responsible to the progressive sentiment of its constituents.

"Mr. Bryan has a greater influence with the democratic party of the congress of the United States today than any other living man. He has been twice in Washington this year to confer with the democratic leaders in house and senate. He has advised with the leaders about the legislative program and he has urged that the committees in the house be headed by progressive democrats and not by conservatives or reactionaries. He made a fight on Fitzgerald for chairman of the appropriations committee and was not in favor of Adamson for chairman of the interstate commerce committee. It is true that he did not succeed in preventing these men from getting their chairmanships, but to a large extent the democratic program in the house was shaped as he wished, and on the whole he had influence in pushing the radical or progressive democrats to the front on committees and holding back the conservatives. He mixed up in the fight between the two factions of senate democrats, and though he did not succeed in preventing the election of Martin as minority leader, he at least has given much encouragement to the progressive democratic group.

"No democrat in congress by this time has any doubt that Mr. Bryan holds the key to the 1912 situation so far as the democrats are concerned. He can destroy the chances of democratic success if he will and the result is that

no man is likely to be nominated for president who has not the Bryan approval. That is why Governor Judson Harmon of Ohio has a rocky road ahead before he encompasses the nomination.

"Nor is it beyond the possibilities that Bryan himself will once more be nominated and that he will be the candidate in 1912. Mr. Bryan is in fine physical health.

"He is almost as young as ever. He expects democratic victory in 1912, and he would not be altogether human if he did not look longingly on the nomination. Strange stories are afloat here that close friends of Bryan in various parts of the country are holding aloof and are not committing themselves on the presidency until they find out definitely what the Peerless Leader wants.

"The political vitality of Mr. Bryan in itself is enough to stamp him as a man of extraordinary capacity and character. His enemies will never get over the habit of sneering at him as a man of showy but limited talents, as something of a charlatan, something of a dreamer, but as lacking in depth and solidity. Be that as it may, one runs through the history of the republic in vain to find a man who has shown such power to attract and hold men to him as this man. Roosevelt, indeed, has a wonderful faculty for attracting men to him. But for the most part Roosevelt has held them to him in success and not in adversity.

"Something of the hold Bryan has on the house may be judged from the experience he encounters whenever he sets foot inside the chamber. He has never appeared on the floor but twice since he was a member of the body. Having been a member, he has the floor privilege. Early in the winter of 1896, after he had been beaten, he came in on the floor. The democrats arose as one man and the roof resounded with the echoes of the old rebel yell. The official reporter made a note of it in this wise:

"Mr. Bryan appeared on the floor and was greeted with great applause."

"The next morning Speaker Tom Reed read this in the Record. His republican blood boiled and he reprimanded the reporter. The observation as to Bryan's appearance was stricken from the Record. Bryan did not feel kindly about it, naturally enough, and he has never since appeared on the floor of the house, though he has been in the cloak rooms, until Tuesday, the opening day of congress. Then, he made his appearance in a democratic house and was given a demonstration calculated to warm the cockles of his heart. The rebel yell mingled with the cheers and applause of northern democrats and there was no Speaker Reed to frown down upon it. It was just one more reminder that none need to try to measure the democratic situation or to scan the democratic prospects without keeping an eye on Bryan."

#### FROM MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER—ANYTHING TO BEAT BRYAN ORGAN

"Why should William Jennings Bryan attempt to overawe the democratic caucus of senators, and to browbeat the democratic caucus of representatives in the house? By what right does he appear in Washington as a dictator of the democratic party to force his views upon the men who are at present entrusted with the destinies of democracy?"

"The greatest single menace to the future of democracy is William Jennings Bryan in the role of a dictator. The one thing which can prevent democratic success in 1912 is the absolute domination of the democratic party by the thrice defeated candidate for the presidency. Without a commission and in the role of a marplot, he is now in Washington sowing dissension in one of the greatest hours that the democratic party has known since 1896 when he was nominated for the presidency. Victorious in nearly every pivotal state because the independent voters believed that the party was rid of Bryan, democracy was given last November its first victory since 1892. Now Mr. Bryan appears on the scene to spoil the democratic party's chances of success next year, by insisting that the democratic senators follow his dictation, and that the democratic house carry out his policies."

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