

# The Commoner.

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only opposing what they regarded as a financial heresy and a financial heretic. They did not realize that 'free silver' was but the accidental and temporary shibboleth of democracy in that fight, and that the 'gold standard' was the same for plutocracy. Governor Harmon did understand this, as Grover Cleveland did. And, like Cleveland, his opposition to Bryan was only nominally for the latter's 'free silverism'; it was really for the democratic spirit which Bryan's leadership represented. In other words, Governor Harmon was then, as he is yet, a reactionary democrat such as Grover Cleveland was. Throughout Tom L. Johnson's democratic struggle in Ohio, Mr. Harmon tried to thwart his democratic policies, and often did thwart them, by co-operating with the worst 'machine' elements of the democratic party in that state.

In all probability Governor Harmon is supported, and will be supported, by leading Ohio democrats—democratic democrats. But let no one outside of Ohio be fooled thereby. No man in responsible, practical politics can do exactly as he wishes at all times; and one of the things such a man can never do except in emergencies is what democratic democrats of Ohio must do in order to oppose Harmon. They must defy the instructions of their own party convention. By a familiar political trick, Governor Harmon's workers secured for him the presidential nomination of his state convention when he ran for re-election as governor. In view of that fact no recommendation of Harmon by any Ohio democrat can be taken safely at face value. Nor ought it to be taken even if there were no coercion. Though democrats who would want Grover Cleveland for president again if they could get him are quite right in supporting Judson Harmon, nobody else would be. Governor Harmon is the one presidential possibility up to the present time, except Mr. Taft, of whom it can be said that any democratic democrat who votes for him, either at primary

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or in convention or at the election, votes squarely against his own professed convictions."

## SEEN IN OHIO

Waverly (Ohio) Democrat: For reasons not difficult to understand, the Houston Post of Texas goes a good many miles away from home to find a statesman whose promotion to the presidency would cure "all our ills, real or imaginary" and who would refuse to riot in a "wilderness of radicalism" to that end. It locates that man in Mr. Harmon of Ohio. The Post "gets right down to brass tacks" and specifies in detail just how the governor saved the Buckeye state from the demerit bow-wows. It says:

"More eloquent than any speech is the record of deeds which marks him as a great man and a faithful administrator of public affairs. Some of his notable achievements may be enumerated as follows:

"He has secured the passage of a law which eliminates partisanship in the choice of judges.

"He has caused to be enacted a workingman's indemnity law.

"He has caused to be enacted a law limiting the labor of workmen to fifty-four hours per week.

"He has caused the public utilities to be regulated by law.

"He has appointed a commission by which the taxation of all public utilities has been increased from \$300,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000. Homes and factories, consequently pay less taxes.

"These laws did not come about easily by any means. He had to fight powerful influences to get them through but he fought patiently and intelligently and succeeded."

In the first place, it will be proper to state that this valuable information as to how Mr. Harmon has saved Ohio, comes from a newspaper owned by one R. M. Johnson, the right hand man of Senator Bailey the trust's great and good friend; and herewith the cat escapes from the bag.

The Post must certainly be in error relative to the claims of Governor Harmon as to what he has accomplished during his tenure of administration.

If our memory is not at fault, the Post claims credit for Mr. Harmon for several things with which he had little, if anything at all, to do.

So far as the law which eliminates partisanship in the choice of judges is concerned, the honor of that reform belongs to Hon. W. W. Durbin of Kenton, O. It is our recollection that Mr. Durbin proposed a resolution to that effect to the committee on resolutions at the Dayton convention; that Hon. W. L. Finley was chairman of that committee and that Judge David Rockwell and the Hon. Spriggs McMahon were members of the sub-committee, all of whom were favorable to the resolution and were responsible for its final adoption. Mr. Harmon had absolutely nothing to do with it.

Perhaps it ought to be said just here, that Mr. Harmon did prepare the part of the platform relating to national affairs and that he absolutely refused to put anything into it pledging the primary election of senators and that moreover, he was the one man responsible for the convention not making a nomination for senator at that time.

The Post also alludes to Mr. Harmon's responsibility for the fifty-four hours per week for "workmen." No such a law was either proposed or enacted. A law was proposed and enacted that limited a week's work for women to fifty-four hours. But the governor neither urged it nor signed it, as we recall. He did dodge it when it came to him for signature.

But the Post mentions, also, the public utilities bill. Well, what we want to know is, if this bill was a pet measure of the governor, why did he dodge it also? He didn't sign it, as this watch-dog of the peoples' interests recalls and it is only fair to assume that all governors sign bills that they are specially interested in having passed. But let us suppose that Mr. Harmon now believes in this bill. The public utilities have not only been increased in value but all other forms of property have been increased, so that throughout the state, corporations will not pay any more taxes, in proportion to the ability to pay, than owners of small homes in Waverly and Pike county. The reason, of course, that some governors do not sign bills, is, that they get "between the devil and the deep blue sea;" in other words, betwixt the corporations and the people and so they're damned if they do and damned if they don't and lacking the moral courage that should possess

every executive, they hide behind the "no signature" fence and take their chances.

In conclusion, this little rag of freedom out here in the hoop-pole district of Pike county, is going to have the audacity to make an inquiry of the palavering and militant metropolitan dally of Houston.

If Mr. Harmon is such a transcendent good friend of the common people and such a determined and persistent enemy of the moneyed interests of the country, how does it come that Wall street and the trusts and the corporations and the Senator Baileys and the Houston Posts are all lining up for him for president next year?

Six millions of the friends of William J. Bryan want to know, also.

## "BRYAN A REPUBLICAN ASSET"

W. W. Murphy in the Darlington (Wis.) Democrat: An article appeared in a recent issue of the Republican-Journal of this city, copied from the Milwaukee Sentinel of a recent date, referring to Mr. Bryan as "a republican asset," implying that he was valuable in promoting republican success. I am pleased to see these respectable journals according Mr. Bryan some meed of praise, though it be with veiled sarcasm.

As a result of the entrance of Mr. Bryan into the politics of the nation we see the hold of the privileged interests on the nation's resources is being broken and their Belshazzar feast approaches its end. Democracy as expounded by Mr. Bryan is meeting the approval of the nation. His battle in behalf of the people against commercialism is meeting with such unexampled success that the representatives of the people are in control of one branch of the nation's legislature and the privileged interests' representation in another has so lost its power as to render it impotent.

Again we see Mr. Bryan in the forefront (as "a republican asset") when there appeared an article from his pen at the beginning of Roosevelt's term, entitled "Roosevelt's Opportunity," setting forth in forcible terms the dangers that menace our national existence through vast aggregations of capital seeking to control all the avenues leading to the absorption of the nation's wealth. Even the fiscal policies of our nation are not free from their sinister designs, or the judicial ermine untarnished from their desecrating contact.

Mr. Bryan's appeal did not fall on barren soil. It struck a responsive chord in the great heart of Theodore Roosevelt, and we see him sending a message to congress which was a virtual declaration of war on plutocracy that he never ceased waging until he surrendered the reins of government to his successor.

Mr. Bryan was delivering a lecture in New Jersey when the news of the Roosevelt message reached him. He said to his hearers that he hoped all democrats in congress would hold up the president's hands in the good work, and history records that every measure designed for the nation's weal and made effective by democratic support—another instance of Mr. Bryan's having been a valuable asset.

Later in Roosevelt's administration the great anthracite coal strike occurred, in the dead of winter, and great privation and suffering were likely to result. All the usual resources for settlement had been exhausted, when Mr. Bryan suggested the appointment of a national board of arbitration. President Roosevelt, acting on Mr. Bryan's initiative, appointed such a board, without waiting for congress to act, and the board settled the strike. Tally another for Mr. Bryan as an asset.

Passing to the present administration we see its political representative, President Taft, traveling to the confines of the nation proclaiming the doctrine of tariff revision downward, the same doctrine that Mr. Bryan advocated seventeen years ago in a masterly speech in congress, and has continued to advocate since.

Again, we see President Taft convening congress in extraordinary session, advocating reciprocity, a fundamental principle of democracy, which Mr. Bryan, in common with all other democrats, maintains.

Again, we see Mr. Bryan as a valuable asset when, in the name of the people and in the interests of the purity of elections he demanded publicity of the sources of campaign contributions, both before and after elections. Roosevelt derided, politicians scoffed, but the people commended and their voice was potent. Congress heard and heeded and passed a publicity bill. It was signed by President Taft, who had previously criticised it. That was an occasion when Mr. Bryan was an asset; and forced the