

by the democratic platform is entirely different in purpose and operation. It does not surrender any of the rights of the state, but adds a federal remedy to existing state remedies."

"But our supreme court objects only to 'unreasonable' restraint of trade, and no one should find fault with that."

"Suppose it does. At present no corporation official can tell with certainty whether or not he is violating the anti-trust law. Since the supreme court has introduced into the law the word 'unreasonable' its enforcement is made practically impossible. Who can tell without legal or judicial definition whether or not he is exercising 'unreasonable' restraint of trade? I believe that congress should at once declare by specific legislation that any attempt at restraint of trade should be considered unreasonable. Such a law would repair the damage that the supreme court decision has done to the anti-trust law."

"Would that settle it?"

"Not of itself. We need something more. We need a specific definition, so that the business man may know when he violates the law. The democratic plan is a license for corporations which control twenty-five per cent of a total product. This would leave unmolested nearly all corporations engaged in legitimate business. Only a few—probably not more than three or four hundred in the entire country—would have to take out a license. These licensed corporations would be supervised by federal authority and prevented from employing business methods usually employed by the trusts. It is suggested that a maximum of fifty per cent be made—that is, that no corporation should be permitted to control more than half of the total product. This would leave the remaining fifty per cent to be controlled by one or more corporations, thus enabling competition."

"Are these percentages a matter of faith, a matter of doctrine, or of suggestion?" I remembered Mr. Bryan's tendency to make positive declarations, and it was interesting to see that he was willing to modify the statement.

"The percentages are not so important as the principle," said he. "We might commence with high or low percentages and change later as experience suggests; but as the power of monopoly depends on the percentage of control, the percentage would seem to be the thing to be considered. Legislation based merely on the size of the corporation would not reach the desired end, for a corporation with a capital of only \$10,000,000 might absolutely control one product, while a corporation of \$100,000,000 capital might not be able to control another."

Probably no one political feature is so much discussed the country over as the possible alliance in the next campaign of the progressive republicans and the democrats. I was curious to see how Mr. Bryan looked at the proposition.

"We hear a great deal about progressive republicans; is there such a thing as a progressive democrat?" I began.

"It is hardly fair to compel a progressive democrat to designate himself by an adjective," was the reply, with firmness that indicated his own position. "The democratic party itself is progressive. The democrat who is not progressive is a reactionary. It is different with the republican party; it is a stand-pat organization. The republican who rebels against the do-nothing policy of his party properly calls himself 'progressive' or 'insurgent.'"

"Is there any difference between the progressive democrat and the progressive republican?" This seemed to be the real point of the matter.

"The main difference is on the tariff, and there it is more theoretical than real. The progressive republican calls himself a protectionist, but he is more likely to be with the democrats than with the republicans on any given tariff schedule. Progressives, both republicans and democrats, agree on the fundamental proposition that the government should be administered in the interest of the whole people and not in the interest of the exploiting class. The stand-pat republican, if we can judge him by his vote, believes that society is constructed from the top, and that the captains of industry should be allowed to enrich themselves by law and then distribute among their dependents such part of their wealth as they can spare. It is aristocracy, permeated with plutocracy and glossed over by hypocrisy." His features told how satisfied he was with the sentence.

"Do you expect the progressive republicans and the radical wing of democracy to work

together in the campaign of 1912? Many politicians would like to know just what is to be done."

"Progressive republicans and progressive democrats can work together better in legislative bodies than they can in campaigns. Our campaigns are fought necessarily on party lines, and it is difficult for a vast majority of the American voters to forget their instinctive adherence to their party organizations."

"It is a general impression that democracy is becoming somewhat divided itself. Does it propose to present a more united front than the republicans when the next campaign opens?"

"The democratic party, like every other, has its conservative and radical elements." Mr. Bryan was very careful of his words. "Conservatism and radicalism are relative terms. You will find these two elements in every group of any size, and no matter what subject is considered. In the democratic party the radical element far outnumbers the conservative, but the latter controls nearly all the large newspapers and includes in its numbers most of the democrats who are engaged in large business enterprises. In the republican party the conservative element is relatively much stronger than in the democratic, not only because the large majority of men in 'big business' are republicans, but also because individual republicans are not so well informed on progressive measures as individual democrats. Ignorance is the chief ally of conservatism; that is, the radicals can only count on those who are convinced by investigation. Those who do not know anything about the subject naturally oppose a change."

"Yes; but what I want to know is, which element is going to control democracy in 1912?"

"In each of the last four campaigns there has been a clear-cut conflict between these two elements of democracy. The radicals won in 1896, 1900, and 1908. The conservatives won in 1904. I think that the radicals will win this year, though it is too early to speak with certainty."

"What about their leaders?"

Again Mr. Bryan weighed his words cautiously. "Governor Harmon will doubtless have the support of the reactionary or conservative element. The progressive democrats are divided among several candidates. I hope, however, that they will be able to agree in each state upon the progressive who is strongest in that state, and thus prevent a united minority from triumphing over a divided majority. That is the chief task before the progressive democrats in the next few months, and I have confidence enough in their wisdom and earnestness to believe that they will get together."

I noticed that he avoided reference to Wilson or Clark. With some curiosity to see how he would take it, I suggested, "They might get together on you."

"In addition to many other reasons why I should not run again for president," said Mr. Bryan, jokingly, a smile lighting up his broad face, "is that, one republican president having used portions of my platform and another republican president having used it in part, I am afraid, if I became a candidate again, the republicans would bring the third-term charge against me and say that I had had two terms already."

"Another thing that puzzles the average man is this: What chance have the progressive republicans of controlling their party?"

Mr. Bryan did not hold out much encouragement to the insurgent republicans. "It will be much harder for the progressive republicans to control the republican convention than for the progressive democrats to control their convention," said he, "for the reasons I have stated. However, I would not want to risk a prediction, for two reasons: another term of congress will have an important influence in determining the relative strength of the progressive and stand-pat republicans; second, the progressives have but few large papers to herald their principles, and therefore their voting strength may be underestimated."

"Something depends, too," he added, after a pause, "on the attitude of Mr. Roosevelt. If he throws his influence to the progressives, he can greatly increase their chances of success. If he goes with the stand-patters, the progressives will have a harder fight to make a showing."

"Suppose he keeps still?"

"That he would find difficult to do. He is not disposed to avoid a fight." He added a story of an Irishwoman on the witness stand, who, asked what nationality her people sprang from,

replied: "They didn't spring from anybody, they sprung at 'em!" leaving me to make my own application.

"There are those who think reciprocity will come back to haunt the next campaign. That will have a great influence on the western farmer vote."

"Reciprocity is not likely to be resuscitated until Canada asks for it," he replied, positively. "The hostile feeling aroused across the line is likely to prevent for many years any further consideration of reciprocal relations."

"Will the recall of judges as a political principle be influential in 1912?"

"I am in favor of the recall, but it is not a national issue, and not an issue at all in many states. It would not even be a subject of national discussion except for Mr. Taft's veto of that feature of the Arizona constitution. So with the initiative and referendum; they are not national issues, though more states are considering this phase of popular government than are taking interest in the recall. The direct primary is also a state issue, and, while I favor it, I realize that there is much yet to be done in perfecting its details."

"Well, then, what about conservation? Is it a state or a national issue?"

"Conservation is not likely to be an issue between state and nation except where predatory interests attempt to use one or the other against the interests of both state and nation."

"Surely the railway question is of national interest." I began to see various planks of the national platform eliminated. "What phase of it do you consider of most importance?"

"Just now the most important question is whether the railways shall control the appointments of the inter-state commerce commission and United States judges. That is the basic problem which directly concerns the ultimate relation between the railways and the people."

"But can the railways control these officials?"

"Yes, they can—by controlling the president; and to this end the railway interests are concentrating every possible power they possess. There are some other questions likely to come up soon which are of direct interest to the people. One is whether the railways shall be permitted to charge a higher price for an inter-state ticket than for an intra-state ticket covering similar distance. Some do it now, but they ought not. The relation between the express companies and the railways demands attention. Railway officials have been profiting by their connection with the express companies that use their roads. There are many questions to arise regarding rates and regulations, but the most important thing is that inter-state commerce commissioners and federal judges shall not be under obligations to the railways for their appointment."

"Is the liquor question likely to cut a figure in the campaign?" I asked. He did not seem hopeful, and there was manifest in his expression some discouragement on the problem in its national relation.

"Two phases of the liquor question may come before congress, but the liquor lobby is so powerful that I do not know how soon public sentiment may be able to control congressional action. The effort to prevent the issuing of federal licenses in 'dry' territory is one of these. The same end, however, might be reached by requiring applicants for federal licenses to advertise the fact of their applications, and serve notice of same on the authorities. An effort is being made, also, to prevent the use of inter-state commerce for the violation of state laws on the liquor question. It seems to me that a state which can be trusted to decide questions of property, questions relating to domestic relations, and questions involving the life of individuals, ought to be able to deal with the liquor question. But some who are quite tenacious of state rights on all other subjects are silent in the presence of the liquor lobby." It was with a sharp emphasis—this last sentence.

"Are you an optimist or a pessimist?" I asked. "Sometimes I think you the one, and sometimes I think you somewhat disposed to the other. You see so many faults in our government that it is a little discouraging."

"I am an optimist, but I believe that nothing good comes without a fight; and no man ought to expect others to be more courageous than himself, or more willing to assist every righteous cause."

"Again you are somewhat general, rather than specific," I replied. "What is needed most, from your point of view, toward bettering social and economic conditions?"

"A greater appreciation of the dignity of