

# The Fight Against Bryan in Nebraska

I. J. Dunn, of Omaha, the gentleman who placed Mr. Bryan in nomination at the Denver convention, has issued the following open letter:

Omaha, Neb., April 1.—To the Democrats of Nebraska: C. M. Gruenther, manager of Governor Harmon's campaign in this state, has recently had published in the newspapers, statements attacking Mr. Bryan and other progressive democrats.

In an address published March 12, he complained that attacks on Harmon and on himself were founded on an anonymous pamphlet sent out by a Progressive Democratic league of Ohio.

Democrats of Nebraska know who is at the head of the Ohio Progressive league as well as they know who is really responsible for the charges and vituperation of Mr. Gruenther. We can not assume that Mr. Gruenther would voluntarily engage in a campaign of falsehood against Mr. Bryan unless we believe that his professions of friendship for Mr. Bryan in the past were mere buncombe. He says that some democrats have charged that he is actuated by sordid motives in taking up the fight for Harmon. I have not heard that charge, and do not assume that it is true.

If he will make public, however, the size of the campaign fund, which has been or is to be placed at his disposal, and by whom contributed, democrats will be able to judge for themselves just how unselfish and patriotic he is in this contest.

Mr. Gruenther complains that false charges have been made against his candidate; and he shudders to think that any one would stoop to such methods. The charge that Harmon is the choice of Wall street, that he is not progressive, and that big business is supporting him, he denounces as false.

In a statement published March 26, Gruenther said that Bryan is in the habit of denouncing democrats who do not take orders from him as reactionary and tools of Wall street. He quoted Hitchcock as stating that when Bryan is opposed to a man "He first assumes and then asserts that Wall street is for that man." I suppose Hitchcock had Parker, Underwood, Harmon and a few others in mind. Gruenther denounces Bryan's statement regarding Hitchcock as a characteristic bit of Bryan character assassination.

Well, it has been fashionable for many years for those who seek political notoriety beyond the confines of their own county, to be hurling mud and abuse at Bryan. Such persons are usually recognized at once in certain quarters as self-sacrificing patriots. For sixteen years the interests that rob and plunder the people have kept the door leading to their gilded halls of questionable fame wide open, and a hearty welcome ever ready for those willing to join that sacred communion, whose chief purpose in life has been the political destruction, death and burial of one William Jennings Bryan. But he has withstood the assaults of the paid hirelings of the predatory interests, backed by all the power of corrupt millions; and he has grown in the confidence and respect of his fellow men; and he will survive the efforts of those in Nebraska who imagine that their personal spleen will do that which the combined efforts of plutocracy failed to accomplish.

Now let us see how much truth there is in the charge that Bryan denounces persons who disagree with him as reactionary and tools of Wall street. In the Grand Island convention two years ago, Hitchcock was not only opposed to Bryan on the issue of county option, but in addition he returned home and published an interview in his paper praising the speeches that had been made at that convention, a majority of which were little more than bitter personal attacks upon Bryan; and the World-Herald published the next morning in its account of that convention an attack upon Bryan in which it gloated over what it chose to describe as the tearing of the mantle of leadership from Bryan's shoulders and trampling it in the dust.

Did Bryan denounce Hitchcock as a Wall street tool, and as a reactionary? Did he not at his own expense travel over this state supporting Hitchcock for senator? Did Bryan not support every other man on the state ticket that year except Dahlman, and only refused to support Dahlman after he had repudiated a portion of the state platform? Did Bryan denounce Judge Oldham, who opposed him at the Grand Island convention? Did he denounce him as a

tool of Wall street? Did he not put in a month campaigning for Judge Oldham, and the rest of the ticket, when Oldham was a candidate for the supreme bench? Did he denounce C. J. Smyth, chairman of the Grand Island convention, as a tool of Wall street, because Smyth differed with him on the question of county option? Did he denounce Hitchcock in 1904 when he lined up with the re-organizers and supported Parker for the democratic nomination and gave all the assistance he could in placing the democratic party in the nation under the control of Parker's New York supporters? Has Bryan been denouncing Hitchcock and the World-Herald during the last two years as tools of Wall street, while the World-Herald has been opening its columns to attacks upon him, and in denunciation of the principles he has advocated.

Gruenther speaks of the amount of time and energy he has given to the democratic cause, and of his support of Bryan in 1908. Let me suggest that during the sixteen years, from 1896 to 1908 that Gruenther and other democrats in Nebraska, who have held office, state and county, have been the beneficiaries of Bryan's leadership and have received more from the party and from Bryan's labors than he has. His leadership has been the means of securing more offices for democrats in Nebraska than he has either sought or held. Had it not been for Bryan's leadership in Nebraska and in the nation, Mr. Hitchcock instead of having been three times elected to congress and finally to the United States senate, as a Bryan democrat, would probably be still wandering in the political wilderness. As I now remember it Mr. Gruenther was secretary of the democratic state central committee in 1908, and of the Bryan volunteers. I am informed that he had charge of the expenditure of about \$12,000, contributed by the Bryan volunteers, and in addition that he had charge of a campaign fund of several thousand dollars contributed by the brewers of Nebraska to be used in the interest of certain candidates, of which Bryan was not one. That one of the purposes was to elect certain democratic candidates to the state senate, who had been agreed upon by the brewers as their men.

One of the features of the campaign in 1908 is worth mentioning, in view of Gruenther's superb services to the state and national ticket while secretary of the central committee and of the Bryan volunteers. Although Bryan polled approximately from one to three thousand votes more in the state than any democratic candidate on the state ticket, with one exception, in Platte county, Gruenther's county, a strong democratic county, Bryan ran behind every democrat on the state ticket with one lone exception. Every candidate on the state ticket but one received more votes in Platte county than the majority of Bryan presidential electors.

During the years that Mr. Bryan has been the leader of the democratic party, he has held office but four years and then by carrying a strong republican congressional district. He was principally strong for the alliance between democrats and populists in Nebraska, which placed many democrats in state and county offices. No other democrat has carried the state for president. The one campaign in sixteen years when the democratic party repudiated Mr. Bryan's judgment and accepted the advice of those who agreed with Hitchcock as to who should be chosen as the standard bearer of the party, Nebraska went republican 80,000 strong. We are this year, as in 1904, invited to reject the judgment of Bryan and accept that of Hitchcock. The attempt on the part of Hitchcock to shift the issue from that of a vindictive warfare against Bryan, in the interest of Harmon and big business to the cry that Bryan is trying to destroy the primary and defy the will of the people, won't succeed. The contest here is whether democrats favor a progressive candidate and platform, and a delegation that will fight for them, or whether they are willing that the representatives of big business shall again write the platform and nominate the candidate as they did in 1904, when Mr. Hitchcock's views were fully carried out by the national convention of that year.

I. J. DUNN.

## TO SENATOR HITCHCOCK

Fairbury (Neb.) Journal: The World-Herald is not making many friends among the democrats of this vicinity by its avowed purpose of stirring up discord in the democratic ranks,

inspired by a personal dislike of Mr. Bryan on the part of Senator Hitchcock.

The democrats of Nebraska expect better things of the World-Herald. They do not like to see it devote its splendid energies venting the spleen of Mr. Hitchcock upon Mr. Bryan. The latter made a serious mistake, in the judgment of many democrats, in his attitude on the matter of county option in 1910, but he is still the greatest living democrat and nearer to the hearts of the American people than any other man.

The World-Herald and Senator Hitchcock are for Harmon for president, not because they love Harmon more but because they love Bryan less. Senator Hitchcock was elected in 1910, defying the Bryan wing of the party. Let him not suppose, however, that it was because his strength in the party is greater than Bryan's. It was because he was on the right side of the county option issue and Mr. Bryan on the wrong side.

This year Mr. Hitchcock is on the wrong side. Whether it is proven or not does not matter, his candidate, Governor Harmon, is accepted as the candidate of the reactionary wing of the party. If Senator Hitchcock thinks he can lead the democratic party up to the reactionary trough and make it drink, in Nebraska, we kindly refer him to the Parker vote in this state in 1904, for facts and figures to dispel his illusion.

All of the above will also apply to the Hon. Chris Gruenther, in whom we always hoped there was a higher purpose than engaging in a campaign, the sole moving spirit of which is a desire to humiliate Mr. Bryan.

## DIFFERENT

Norfolk (Neb.) Press: Had Hitchcock attempted his assault on Bryan a year earlier, Nebraska senatorial history would read differently today. It is not forgotten that Hitchcock, sr., was a republican; that the World-Herald today is not democratic, but "independent;" that Hitchcock, while an able man, is not a Bryan and never can be.

## BRYAN NOT A BOSS

Lincoln (Neb.) News: Senator Hitchcock and his followers are prejudicial when they cry out that Bryan is now opposed to letting the people rule. That is their interpretation of his statement, but they are hardly looking from the point of view which gives a proper perspective. Bryan has simply said that if a plurality of the democrats instruct the delegates for Harmon he will, if elected delegate to the convention, resign and attend only as a private citizen. Surely that is within his rights. That is not an attempt to block the will of the people. It is simply refusing to stultify himself when he can not conscientiously do what the plurality of the party desires done. It is also difficult to understand just how the epithet "boss" applies to Bryan because of this attitude he has taken. He is not wielding any club or exercising any of the prerogatives of the boss when he announces that he can not support this or that candidate. And no pressure is brought to bear on anyone to force him to change his views in the matter of candidates. It is true that many voters are influenced by the position Bryan takes, but that is a legitimate influence, and it is as different from the influence wielded by the boss as is day from night.

## DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH

Creighton (Neb.) Liberal: Chris Gruenther, campaign manager for Governor Harmon is a master of political detail and figures in Nebraska. When, however, he gets himself sharp shod and attempts to enter the racing lists of great scholars and statesmen on national affairs he over-reaches and calks himself and we fancy that before this campaign is closed that he will be bleeding in all of his political fetlocks.

Senator Hitchcock is not an object of charity. He was left two large fortunes and his father's great name was a fortune in itself. He has had the advantage of an international education and Nebraska visitors to the capitol feel proud that their junior senator has the polish to distinguish him in any society. The atmosphere at Washington, however, is a poor breeding ground for radicalism, and to say that Mr. Hitchcock is by instinct, tuition or self-interest the type of a leader that the outraged populace of the food producing states are asking for today is evidence of perversity or provincialism. If defending a band of stand-patters—better named a band of crooks—just because they call

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