

### Encouraged by Political Conditions Throughout the Nation

By John R. Ball, staff correspondent of the Pittsburgh Post: Chicago, March 19.—Believing that the views of William J. Bryan, on the democratic situation throughout the country, would not only be of interest to followers of the party at this time, but would reflect the opinion also of those leaders, with whom Mr. Bryan has been associated, and show the trend of this particular influence,

the Post determined to get some expression, if possible, from the man who was thrice the presidential candidate of his party.

Mr. Bryan was located last Saturday at Madison, Wis. In response to a message, sent that night, Mr. Bryan replied that he would be glad to meet the Post correspondent in Chicago on Monday afternoon. The "commoner" reached Chicago short-

ly before 5 o'clock, the hour he was to leave again on his journey homeward to Lincoln, Neb.

He was looking well and appeared to be in the best of health. He had just closed a 10-days' tour of speech-making through Ohio and Wisconsin and was eager to get to Lincoln. Having made his arrangements to leave Chicago on the 5 o'clock train, there was nothing for me to do but proceed farther west with him. As soon as we boarded the train I outlined to Mr. Bryan just what the Post would like to have him talk about. He was in a very cheerful mood and agreed to discuss the political situation.

I accompanied Mr. Bryan to Aurora, Ill., more than an hour's ride from Chicago. He outlined his position in regard to the candidates for the democratic presidential nomination and stated frankly just what course he thought the party should follow in the present campaign. He spoke freely on the subject and declared he was glad to give the democratic voters his views at this time, through the Post.

#### Commoner Willingly Discusses Situation

During the discussion Mr. Bryan stated that he probably would make a speech or two in Pennsylvania before the primaries of April 13. He was arranging to be there on April 16, but when informed that the primaries preceded that date, he declared he would try to change the schedule. He will make several speeches in Ohio on the same tour.

On the democratic situation in general, Mr. Bryan said:

"The democratic situation is very encouraging. It looks as if it would be hard for the party to defeat itself if it tried to do so. But things are so chaotic that we can not afford to take any chances. The country has moved up to the democratic position on a number of questions and I believe the voters are ready to entrust the federal government into the hands of the democrats, provided our party shows itself alive to progressive thought and ready for the progressive action that the country demands.

Fully four-fifths, if not nine-tenths of the democratic voters are democratic on all questions. It looks as if nearly, if not quite, one-half of the republican voters are also, and that would seem to make the election of a progressive president certain, but for the fact that this division is not uniform throughout the country.

"The reactionary element, with all the patronage and ample campaign funds at hand, seems likely to control the republican party, although no one can speak with any positiveness upon a situation so uncertain. The reactionary influences in the democratic party have powerful support in subsidized newspapers and in sinews of war. Their first choice is Governor Harmon, of Ohio, but there are very few states that he could carry at a primary. The second choice of the reactionaries is Congressman Underwood, of Alabama. He would be equally satisfactory, if they thought his nomination possible.

#### Outlines What He Believes is Reactionary Plan

"The plan of the reactionaries is to get Harmon instructions in the east whenever possible and Underwood instructions in the south and then work in as many reactionaries as possible in other delegations pledged to a progressive, with the expectation of having these delegates support a reactionary candidate, after the one for whom they may be instructed, is out of the race. It behooves the progressives, therefore, to put none but the faithful on guard. No reactionary should be sent as a delegate to represent a progressive constituency. It is only fair

that a reactionary constituency be represented by reactionary delegates. This may be conceded without injury to the prospects of any progressive in any reactionary section, for while the reactionaries will plead for representation in progressive sections, they will never permit a progressive to go to the convention from a reactionary section.

"The delegates prepare the platform before they nominate a presidential candidate and a convention of reactionaries will be sure to write a platform likely to defeat a progressive candidate. I am emphasizing this point because the reactionaries are at work everywhere trying to get men in progressive delegations and the voters ought to understand that the platform might be jeopardized if the reactionaries can get sufficient representation in the convention.

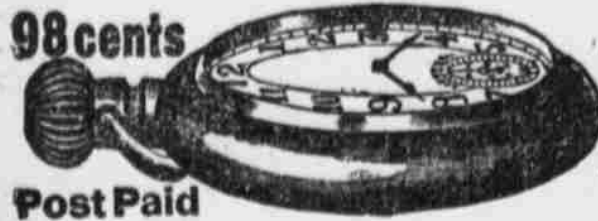
"The second choice of the delegates must also be considered, for it is not certain that any candidate will have a majority on first ballot. Delegates should therefore state their first and second choice of candidates so that the progressives' position will be that much stronger."

#### Would Make No Rewards at Expense of the Party

"Have you expressed any choice among the candidates or will you do so," Mr. Bryan was asked.

"No and I do not care to, unless it becomes necessary. I have no friends whom I would be willing to reward, at the expense of the party, nor do I have any enemies to punish. I am for any progressive against every reactionary and should be glad to help in each state, the progressive who is the choice of the democrats of that state. In case there is a close vote, as in Oklahoma, I would advise a division of the delegation in order that there may be harmony as between progressives. If in any state, I am convinced that the reactionary element is attempting to divide the progressives with a view to securing a victory over both, I shall favor the support of the strongest progressive and the withdrawal of the others.

"While Governor Woodrow Wilson



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