

Mr. Bryan's New York Interview

Special from a New York World staff correspondent: Chicago, April 7.—It requires only a few minutes' conversation to convince one that William Jennings Bryan, thrice democratic candidate for the presidency, still retains many of the ideas that overnight won him a conspicuous place in political history sixteen years ago. Before three of the ninety-seven minutes during which a World correspondent talked with him on Thursday night had passed Mr. Bryan revealed his determination to insist upon the adoption of a "progressive" platform and the nomination of a candidate in sympathy with its provisions at the Baltimore convention.

Of personal ambition, aside from leading this battle against the "reactionary" forces within his party, Mr. Bryan seems to entertain none at present as far as the presidency is concerned.

"What in your opinion, Mr. Bryan, will most conduce to the success of the democratic party during the coming presidential campaign?"

DEMOCRATIC AND PROGRESSIVE

"The one prime essential is that the democratic party shall be democratic. By that I mean that it shall live up to the standard that it has raised before the people and fulfill the hopes that it has excited. The democratic party has led in the sixteen-year fight against the corporate domination of politics. For more than one-half of that time it had scarcely any assistance from the republican leaders. Seven or eight years ago Senator La Follette, the pioneer reformer in the republican party, began to organize a progressive force in that party. Mr. Roosevelt during his second term gave some encouragement to the movement, but the chief growth of insurgency in the republican party has occurred during the last four years.

"At the present time it is difficult to measure accurately the progressive strength in the republican party, but it is probable that if it could find free expression at the primaries it would be found to be a dominant sentiment. Its expression is not free, however, for two reasons. First, because the presidential-preference primaries are not held in many of the states, and, second, because the reform sentiment is now divided between Senator La Follette and Mr. Roosevelt. If it were concentrated on one man it might be able to control the republican convention but for the southern contingent in the convention, which does not represent any sentiment, progressive or otherwise—it simply represents what money or patronage can purchase.

"The third term objection to Mr. Roosevelt very materially lessens his ability to represent progressive sentiment. If he had taken up the cause of Senator La Follette or some other representative leader of the progressive republicans and worked as hard for him as he is now working for himself Mr. Roosevelt could have compelled the nomination of that leader—at least that is my opinion."

"What element of the republican party do you think will control in the Chicago convention?"

GAYETY AT CHICAGO

"I do not care to express an opinion on that point. I am not fond of making predictions. It seems quite certain that Mr. Taft will have more votes than any other man whose name is presented; but it is still possible that Senator La Follette and Mr. Roosevelt together may control the convention.

"However, there are indications that there may be two conventions. This attempt on the part of Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt to have contesting delegations looks like two conventions were possible; in that case it is hard for an outsider to fix a limit for the gayety of the week that the convention meets."

"What about the democratic situation?"

"I have purposely considered the republican situation first, because democratic opportunity may be very materially affected by the results of the republican convention. With nine-tenths of the democratic party progressive, and nearly if not quite one-half of the republican party progressive, the necessity for nominating a democrat who is progressive ought to be apparent to any one. In fact, it is so apparent that no democrat is an aspirant for the demo-

cratic nomination as an avowed reactionary. Even Governor Harmon is being urged entirely on the ground that he is a progressive—all his literature is addressed to the progressives. The democratic progressives would be willing to pay a liberal reward for any literature sent out by his campaign managers appealing to the reactionaries. This is the tribute that Wall street pays to progressives."

"Do you care to discuss the relative merits of the gentlemen who are candidates for the democratic nomination?"

GOVERNOR WILSON OR SPEAKER CLARK

"No, I have studiously avoided expressing any opinion regarding the relative availability of the two gentlemen who seem to be dividing public attention—Governor Wilson and Speaker Clark. I have avoided expressing any preference as between those two gentlemen for several reasons. The first is that I am not clear in my own mind as to which of them would be able to poll the larger vote, and a good deal may depend upon the action of the republican convention—that is, the course of the convention may affect the relative availability of these two candidates and I would like to have all the light I can get before expressing any opinion regarding either Governor Wilson or Speaker Clark.

"In the second place, I am anxious to render any assistance I can in keeping the progressive forces together so that they can act unitedly against the reactionaries. I think I can have more influence in this respect if I observe a strict neutrality between them.

"And then, again, I desire to help whichever one seems to be the strongest in any particular state in the fight against the reactionaries. I would not hesitate to help Governor Wilson in one state and Speaker Clark in another if I were satisfied that the weaker one was injuring the progressive cause. In my own state we have an unfortunate situation. Wilson, Clark and Harmon are all candidates at the primaries, and the division between the progressives may enable the Harmon force to secure the instructions even though Harmon might have less than one-half the vote in that state—the remainder being divided between Wilson and Clark.

"If I could be satisfied that either Wilson or Clark was so far behind the other as to be clearly a menace to the success of the progressives, I would not hesitate to support the stronger man in that state, reserving the right to give the opposite advice in any other state where conditions were reversed.

WON'T BE DELEGATE IF NEBRASKA INSTRUCTS FOR HARMON

"I am a candidate for delegate-at-large from Nebraska. If elected, and the state instructs for either Wilson or Clark, I shall be glad to carry out instructions. That, however, would not indicate any personal preference between the two gentlemen.

"If, however, the party in my state instructs for Mr. Harmon, I shall resign, for I am not willing to participate in his nomination or that of any other reactionary. I am not willing that Mr. Harmon's friends in Nebraska should control my action and prevent my discharging what I regard as an imperative duty to the progressives of the nation. My resignation will allow instructions to be carried out by some one else who can execute them in both the spirit and the letter.

"I believe in the primary law, and I believe in it so firmly that I think no man should be a delegate who can not give voice to the wishes of the people, as expressed at the primary.

"It must be remembered, however, that under our Nebraska law a plurality controls, and instructions might be given by less than one-half of the voters—the progressives being divided. In which case the delegates in carrying out the instructions would be enabling a reactionary minority to override a progressive majority."

"The newspapers announce that Mr. Harmon is going to speak in your state?"

"Yes, and they also ought to announce that Nebraska is the only western state in which Mr. Harmon is making a fight, and there would be no more Harmon sentiment in Nebraska than in any other western state—in fact, there would be less—but for the fact that the liquor interests are attempting to use him to punish me

for refusing to go into partnership with them two years ago."

"You speak of not being a delegate if Mr. Harmon gets the instructions from your state; does that mean that you will not attend the convention?"

BUT WILL GO TO CONVENTION TO FIGHT

"No, it doesn't mean any such thing. I expect to attend the convention, whether I go as a delegate or not. My chief business in politics during my remaining years will be to serve the people with whom I have co-labored since I entered national politics. If I can be of any service to them at this time in preventing the nomination of a reactionary and in securing the nomination of a real progressive, my services are at the disposal of the party. I shall do what I can to secure the nomination of any progressive who is shown to be the choice of the progressives of the party."

"There have been a number of other men mentioned for the presidency besides Governor Wilson and Speaker Clark. Would you regard Mayor Gaynor of New York as available?"

"Yes, I included him in a list I published some months ago, and see no reason for changing my views on the subject. Judge Gaynor has been an active supporter of the ticket in all the campaigns in which I have been a candidate—not only a supporter of the ticket but of the party platform. He has been one of the comparatively few prominent democrats in New York who have boldly stood for our party at all times, beginning in 1896."

"Is there not a danger that the reactionary forces may secure an advantage by putting forward 'favorite sons' as a means of getting control of the delegates?"

"Yes, there is always that danger, and we must rely upon the progressives of each state to see to it that the delegates themselves are trust-worthy. Instructions are not sufficient for the protection of the public, although I have also believed in instructions. Instructions do not generally cover platforms, nor do they bind the delegates beyond the candidate instructed for. I believe that delegates ought to reflect the sentiments of the people for whom they act. If New York is progressive, her delegates should be progressive and at all times stand for a progressive platform and for progressive candidates. If New York is reactionary, there is no reason why her delegates should not be reactionary. I can say this without fear of hurting the progressive cause, for the reactionaries are not likely to elect progressive delegates, although progressives are sometimes misled into electing reactionary delegates."

"Do you regard the action of the national committee in seating James M. Guffey of Pennsylvania as the committeeman of that state as indicating a reactionary tendency of its members?"

REFORM CAMPAIGN BY PRESENT NATIONAL COMMITTEE A FARCE

"Yes. While several members of the committee might explain the votes in such a way as to relieve themselves of the charge of being reactionary, I think the bulk of the men who voted for Mr. Guffey did so because they are tarred with the same stick. Our campaign will be greatly embarrassed unless there is a complete regeneration of the committee. A reform campaign led by the committee—as it now stands—would be a good deal of a farce. But it is only fair to assume that the personnel will be considerably changed if the progressives control the convention, as I think they will."

"Have you anything to say about the undertakings and achievements of the democratic house of representatives?"

"Measured by what a republican congress would have done, our democratic house has made a splendid record. It has a number of very important measures to its credit. The submission of the amendment for the popular election of United States senators is its most important act, although it has erred in not devising some plan for bringing the senate and house together on the proposition. The resolution is now in conference; it would be a great mistake to adjourn without acting upon it.

"The admission of Arizona was a most creditable act, and the house acted wisely in adding a provision for a change in the constitution of New Mexico, which conferred a great benefit on the people of that state.

"The bill providing for the publicity as to campaign contributions before election was another splendid measure, and I hope that before adjournment the doctrine of publicity will be