

Wanted--A Man

Wanted—A Man—Sounds like an ad in the want column, does it not? And that is as it should be. From now until the nominating conventions, of all parties have concluded their deliberations, this "Wanted—A Man" ad should be kept at the head of the want column by every patriotic American publication in the United States, and in each case be placed next to the pure reading matter. The various parties, like individuals, will of course, differ in their conclusions as to the qualifications of the "Man."

Let the republicans, the socialists and the prohibitionists, select whom they will, we are here concerned only with the qualifications of the democratic nominee, one who will in truth represent the people instead of the "interests."

The coming struggle between the two great parties must be between the defenders of the popular rights and the defenders of the monopolistic privileges. In such a conflict the leader of the democratic forces must be absolutely free from the influence of privileged corporations, and above the suspicion of trust domination. In fact, he must be one who has justly earned the reputation of being the implacable foe of special privilege and a sincere tribune of the wealth-producing classes.

Four hundred and fifty-eight years before the Christian era, the internal affairs of the Roman republic had become so tangled that the people demanded a "Man" at the head of affairs, and they knew where to find him. They found Cincinnatus at work on his farm, ploughing with a yoke of steers. The committee told him of his country's great distress and needs. He left his oxen in the yoke, went with the citizens' committee, and straightened out the tangled troubles of his country. This is all this legendary story of Rome tells us, and we are left in the dark as to what became of the cattle.

Has the democratic party a Cincinnatus? The democratic party of this country can produce a great many such men. No man who has labored assiduously in the interest of the few as against the many, who has betrayed the trust the people have imposed upon him in order that he might become the pliant tool of great corporations, trusts, or combinations, to serve as their legal adviser, thus ignoring the rights of the people that the coffers of the privileged few might be filled, can ever become the standard bearer of the democratic party. No, the man of the hour, he who is to lead the democratic hosts to victory next November, must not be the servile tool of vested interests, but must be a man of the people, abreast of the times, free, untrammelled, progressive, and absolutely incorruptible.

I am not considering the splendid qualifications of that brilliant coterie of democratic statesmen, whose names are now so prominently before the public as available candidates.

I need not mention Bryan, the great commoner, Wilson, Clark, Kern, Marshall, and a host of others, whom I as an Indian and veteran of the civil war would be pleased to follow to victory. But there is another in the ranks of democracy, as great as any of these I have mentioned, to whom the convention should turn—the Cincinnatus—who still has his hand to the plow.

This man is in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and of an ancestry, the very best. His honored father served twenty-two years in congress, and was the leading constitutional lawyer of that body, serving as chairman of the judiciary committee.

After the son's graduation, he studied law, and began the practice of the profession in 1877. In ten years he was considered one of the foremost lawyers of his state. In 1890 he was elected attorney general of his state.

The young attorney general was confronted with an enormous volume of work. His state came into the union of the states under peculiar conditions. Unlike any other, the new state retained the ownership, and control of its entire body of public lands, constituting a vast domain. To encourage the building of railroads and construction of other public utilities, princely donations of this public domain, in the case of the railroads, ranging from ten thousand acres per mile, upward, were made, exemptions from taxation for long terms of years were accorded, and many other valuable privileges were extended to these corporations. Numerous rail-

road systems were established and their promoters greatly enriched. Not content, however, with the magnificent largess bestowed upon them, these corporations, encouraged by the liberality of the laws, and the laxity and favoritism displayed in their administration, maintained strong lobbies at the capitol, and actively and aggressively entered the field of politics. Contemptuously unmindful of the rights and welfare of the people, and actuated solely by a greed for unlawful gain, they formed great combinations and ruthlessly stifled competition. Shippers were oppressed with outrageous and unreasonable rates, an arbitrary and dictatorial attitude was assumed, suggestions of regulatory legislation were derided, and their domination of state affairs became almost intolerable.

The attorney general entered heartily into an active fight for the correction of these abuses, and did much in the preliminary battle for reform. Many suits were instituted by him against the offending companies for the recovery of the lands illegally acquired. All these were energetically, and in the main, successfully prosecuted against spirited and strenuous defense by able railroad attorneys, and more than two million acres of land, much of it of great value and extreme fertility, were restored to the state, to the resultant benefit of the public schools and the actual settler. The legislature, aided and largely directed by the chief law officer of the state, enacted a comprehensive railroad commission law, placing these corporations somewhat under regulatory power of a commission. This law was at once vigorously assailed by all the great railroad systems, and a legion of the most eminent corporation attorneys of the country were employed to break down and discredit the new enactment. A complacent circuit judge was found to sustain the jurisdiction of the federal court, sweeping injunctions were granted against the enforcement of the rates promulgated by the newly formed commission, and the court held the law to be utterly unconstitutional and void. The cases, practically pioneer in our judicial history, were promptly appealed to the supreme court of the United States, and there the attorney general proved his metal. The court, despite the able efforts of distinguished counsel, representing the roads, utterly overturned the judgment of the circuit court, and declared the law valid. As a direct result of his successful efforts in these cases, millions of dollars, in freights, have been saved to the people, combinations of competing lines have been effectually prevented, physical valuations of all the roads have been made, and the issuance of watered stocks and bonds, as a basis for unreasonable rates, has been rendered impossible now. Indeed, so beneficial have been the operations of the commission law, as broadened and strengthened under his subsequent administration as governor, that it has been used as a model for legislative enactments of a similar character in many of the older states.

Before the conclusion of his second term as attorney-general, there was an insistent demand from all sections, that he should become a candidate for the democratic nomination for governor.

Yielding to the earnest importunity of his friends, he consented to become a candidate. The contest for the nomination was memorable. After a hard campaign, the bulk of the democrats, conscious of the alarming condition of state affairs, and the necessity for a clear brain and a strong and vigorous hand at the helm, rallied to his support, and with the prestige of his signal services to the people fresh upon him, he was nominated in the convention upon the first ballot.

At the inception of his term, the new governor, in his initial message to the legislature, with felicitous vigor and clarity of expression, marked out the principle which would control his administration. Combinations and consolidations of competing railroads were not to be allowed, the powers of the railroad commission were to be enlarged and more clearly defined, a strong and effective anti-trust law was demanded, extravagance in expenditures of public funds was to cease, appropriations were to be measured by revenues, the deficit in the treasury was to be speedily discharged, public service, and other corporations, were to bear their share of taxes, primary elections were to be legalized and regulated, and the fees of county

officials were to be reduced to a proper basis.

To discharge the deficit and place the state upon a cash basis, it was found necessary to recommend an increase in taxation. The influence of these alien and disturbing elements was easily apparent. The session dragged wearily along, week after week, with much wrangling and discord, accomplishing nothing. Through the persuasion and seduction and blandishment of the railroad lobby, a number of consolidation bills were passed. Each in turn, was promptly vetoed by the governor. His veto messages were vigorous in their denunciation of the measures introduced at the instigation of corporations, and so clear were they in their demonstration of the evils involved, that efforts to pass them over the vetoes proved ludicrously futile. Indignant at the supine inaction of the legislature for more than sixty days, the governor sent them a message, bristling with rebuke, and boldly and sternly demanding the carrying out of the party's pledges. It was effective. Within a few weeks, a strong anti-trust law was enacted, the tax rate was raised, appropriations were reduced to meet the income, official fees and allowances were reduced, a primary election law was passed, an improved basis of corporate taxation was adopted, and arbitration for labor disputes provided for.

Naturally, a storm of opposition to the governor was aroused. The increase of taxation was not popular, the powerful influence of the railroads was solidly arrayed against him, disappointed seekers for appropriations from the public funds were not scant in their denunciation, members of the legislature, writhing and sore at the just rebuke administered to them, opposed him as openly as they dared, and many of the county officials, their excessive emoluments, partially abolished, heartily abused him. These disaffected and disgruntled elements combined in an effort to defeat him for a second term, always accorded an incumbent by an unwritten party law. The republicans and populists, then strong politically, combined. The cry of demagoguery was raised, the efforts at reform declared to be insincere, and a hostile daily press proclaimed that capital was being driven from the state, that the cause of progress would suffer, and its growth and development checked and retarded, if not destroyed. A bitter campaign ensued. Disregarding the wholesale flood of criticism and oftentimes personal abuse loosed upon him, he contented himself with a clear and explicit statement of the improvement in the condition of state affairs. He demonstrated that millions were being annually saved to the people in reduced freight rates and official fees. He showed a deficit extinguished, the credit of the state restored and a full treasury. The checks imposed upon corporate rapacity were self-evident. The improved condition of the educational, penal and eleemosynary institutions spoke for themselves. The answer was sufficient. He was re-elected by an overwhelming majority.

Beginning his second term with the unquestionable approval of his people, the governor earnestly renewed his demand for promised reforms. He urged upon the legislature a continuance of the economy that had marked his first administration, and the measuring of appropriations by revenues; liberal support of the public schools and higher educational institutions, protection of laborers in the prompt payment of their wages by extending the provisions of the mechanic's lien law to them, abolition of the cruel doctrine of the fellow servant's law in the interest of injured railway employes, a more radical reduction of official fees, and an improved basis of taxation for railway, and other corporations.

At the end of his second term, the affairs of the state were found to be in such an admirable condition, and the wisdom with which they had been administered was so strikingly manifest, that, practically without a contest, he was elected to the United States senate. The wisdom of his people's choice has been thoroughly attested in his unanimous selection by his colleagues as the leader of his party there. A learned lawyer, a deep student, a keen analyst, a natural leader, well poised, with a character untarnished by the faintest breath of suspicion, his selection for the post was obvious; and, as remarked by one of his colleagues upon his recent election a second time to the place, "none else could, or should, be considered in connection with it."

A democrat by birth, tradition, training and inclination, his services to his party have been many. He was a delegate at large, and chairman of the state delegation at the national con-