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The People Understand

We need not believe that what is done in convention is done secretly. We always act under the eyes of representatives of the press, who know why we act and who told us to do it; we must not presume that those at home can be deceived. The people at home will know that the influences that dominated the Chicago convention are here, and are more largely at work than they were at Chicago. I appeal to you to so act that the Democrats of this country can say that the Democrats are true to the people and that they can't be frightened by your Ryans or bought by your Belmonts.—From Mr. Bryan's Speech in the Democratic National Convention.

An Important Change

The following news item, published in the Chicago Examiner on last Thursday will interest the readers of The Commoner:

"Baltimore, Md., July 3.—Whose was the 'fine Italian hand' that slipped into the democratic national platform an innocent-appearing little clause about which groups of organization politicians are talking today with much concern.

"Under the caption, 'Presidential Primaries' in the platform adopted last night, the following clause occurs:

"Committeemen who are hereafter to constitute the membership of the democratic national committee and whose election is not provided for by law, shall be chosen in each state at such primary elections and the service and authority of committeemen, however chosen, shall begin immediately upon the receipt of their credentials respectively."

"Innocent as it may appear, it was said in the hotel lobbies this morning that this clause strikes directly at the grip which many of the members of the committee now have on their jobs by virtue of their control of their local state politics.

"William Jennings Bryan is said to be responsible for this as well as nearly all of the sentences in the platform."

Without discussing the authorship of the suggestion (the writer is not sure who first suggested the change) Mr. Bryan admits that he was an active advocate of the change, and that he rejoices in the adoption of the suggestion. The predatory interests, understanding the advantage to be secured through the control of the party machinery have been watching the selection of national committeemen while the rank and file of the party were busy with the discussion of the principles, policies and platforms. The abuse of power by the republican committee at Chicago and to a less extent by the democratic national committee at Baltimore makes the present an opportune time to bring the committee more into harmony with the voters. Popular election makes the committeeman feel his obligation to the people and the reorganization of the new committee before the convention meets makes it hereafter impossible for an old committee to thwart the will of the people by making up the temporary roll of the convention. This change is so vital that there is no doubt that the next republican convention will doubtless follow the example set by the democratic party and it is to be hoped that both parties will apply the doctrine to the state committees.

The democratic platform is progressive and this is one of the longest steps taken in advance. Democracy moves forward.

If Mr. Hearst is going to advocate the ticket by attacking the candidate, Governor Wilson will soon be praying for an independent ticket like that put up by Mr. Hearst in 1908. Mr. Hearst's power to harm the party is less on the outside. He is more fatal as an advisor than as an opponent. Mr. Clark owes his defeat more to Mr. Hearst's counsel than to any other cause.

ELIMINATING BRYAN

Editorial in New York World, Thursday, July 4th: Tired and worn out after the exhausting work of being voted forty-six times as a unit by Charles F. Murphy, Governor Dix announces that "Bryan should be eliminated from the party." That is exactly what Mr. Ryan, Mr. Belmont, Mr. Murphy and various other predatory patriots undertook to do when the Baltimore convention was organized and as a result of their peerless leadership Mr. Bryan became the dominating power in the convention.

Eliminating Mr. Bryan from the party is a formidable task, and perhaps his excellency had better not undertake it at this time. Besides, the Hon. John A. Dix is going to have his hands full for a few months to keep himself from being eliminated from the governorship of New York.

BURKE AND CHAMBERLAIN COMPLIMENTED

The convention paid a high compliment to Governor Burke of South Dakota and Senator Chamberlain of Oregon. These states are small and far west, but Burke and Chamberlain have lifted their respective commonwealths into such prominence that more than half of the convention expressed a preference for one or the other of them. Mr. Bryan, believing that a vice president from the west would draw a large number of progressive republicans to the ticket and believing also that the vote of North Dakota and Oregon on the temporary chairmanship commended these gentlemen to the party, seconded the nomination of both Burke and Chamberlain. But the hour being late the delegates were anxious to go home and Governor Marshall, having a plurality on the first ballot, made such gains on the second that, at its conclusion, the names of Burke and Chamberlain were withdrawn.

WILSON AND MARSHALL

The ticket nominated at Baltimore is a strong one. Governor Wilson has appealed to the imagination of the reformers of the country; his record in office is a brilliant one and his fighting qualities excite enthusiasm among his followers. It will be a lively campaign. He is the very antithesis of President Taft and is already drawing progressive republicans to his standard. Governor Marshall's achievements as chief executive of Indiana won him such a strong support on the first ballot that it only required a second ballot to settle the contest in his favor. He is a great campaigner and will be a powerful aid on the stump.

Hurrah for Wilson and Marshall.

What's the matter with the nineteen progressives from Ohio? They're all right. And they were "on the job" from the opening of the convention to the close. It was a great fight they put up in Ohio at the primaries; but it was a still greater one at Baltimore. They will have to use the laboring oar in the coming campaign in that state.

The Baltimore Platform

On another page will be found the Baltimore platform. It will repay perusal; it is the most progressive platform ever adopted by a great party. While its main features bear the impress of Senator O'Gorman and Mr. Bryan, valuable assistance was rendered by Mr. Walsh of Montana and Senator Pomerene of Ohio. These were members of the sub-committee which put into shape the various planks agreed upon by the larger sub-committee of eleven. All of the members of the full committee took part in the discussions and many of them offered planks which were incorporated in the platform.

It was a very harmonious committee—a delightful body to work with. Mr. Kern made an admirable chairman and each member, without surrendering his opinion on any subject, showed a desire to have the party's principles stated in language which would cut smoothly and leave no ragged edges.

Special attention is called to a few sentences. First, as to progress toward the more complete applications of the principles of popular government. The platform says: "We again remind the country that only by a larger exercise of the reserved power of the people can they protect themselves from the misuse of delegated powers and the usurpation of governmental instrumentalities by special interests." This is a very happy statement of a great proposition.

Second, on banking legislation: "Banks exist for the accommodation of the public and not for the control of business. All legislation on banking and currency should have for its purpose the securing of these accommodations on terms of absolute security to the public and of complete protection from the misuse of the power that wealth gives to those who possess it." What better rule could be laid down?

Third, on the trust question: "A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable." This is the fourth democratic national platform in which that phrase has occurred. It states the issue on the trust question fully and completely. Equally strong and felicitous is the plank on the supreme court decision which inserted the word "unreasonable" in the anti-trust laws. The law must be restored to its former strength.

The party's position on the tariff question, on the high cost of living, on the Philippine question, on the labor question, on the respective spheres of states and nation, on interstate commerce, on a single presidential term, on publicity, income tax, popular election of United States senators, presidential primaries, and changes affecting national committeemen—in fact, on all of the many questions covered—is clearly and forcibly stated, but the above sentences are reproduced as illustrations of strength and symmetry. It is a great platform.

What a difference between a Guffey delegation carried to a convention at his expense and acting under his orders—what a difference between such a delegation and the Pennsylvania delegation in the Baltimore convention! The Keystone state made a splendid showing. Congressman Palmer made a fine impression and he was the leader of a noble band.