

Platform Suggestions

(Interview given by Mr. Bryan to the Cleveland Plain Dealer.)

"I have no disposition to suggest in advance planks on which the Democratic convention might be divided, but there are certain planks which will be in the platform as a matter of course. These I am willing to mention together with the reasons that take them out of the realm of controversy.

"First—there will be a plank endorsing the President's administration—not that every member of the party endorses everything the administration has done, not that a majority of the convention will endorse everything that has been done—but it has been a great administration and the Democrats of the nation ought to endorse it—they would not think of entering the campaign on a repudiation of the administration or upon a platform silent on that subject.

"Second—the platform will contain a plank in favor of prohibition as the permanent policy of the country and our candidate will be pledged to the strict enforcement of the law in letter and spirit. This statement is based on the fact that three-fourths of the Democratic senators voted for its submission and two-thirds of the members of the House voted likewise. EVERY STATE CONTROLLED BY THE DEMOCRATS HAS RATIFIED THE NATIONAL PROHIBITION AMENDMENT, and all but three of the states controlled by the Republicans. Thirty-four states now have prohibition by their own act, nearly all of the thirty-four having adopted it by popular vote. It is inconceivable that the Democratic party should defy the conscience of the nation on this subject, especially after having contributed so largely to the prohibition victory."

"What about the opposition of such states as New Jersey?"

"New Jersey is one of three states that did not ratify the prohibition amendment. If you will examine the ratio, you will find it is nearly the old '16 to 1' ratio; 45 to 3 is 15 to 1. There being only three states recorded in opposition to national prohibition, New Jersey would naturally expect to furnish our candidate for President and either Connecticut or Rhode Island our candidate for vice president IN CASE OUR CONVENTION GOES WET, but we would not be sure of carrying the three wet states because conscience may break out even in them before election. Those who talk about a wet plank in our platform do not, of course, have any interest in a Democratic victory. Recognizing that their case is hopeless, they simply seek to take revenge on the party for its honorable part in banishing the saloon."

"Before leaving this subject, what do you think the Republicans will do in regard to prohibition?"

"Their plank will be as strong as ours. They have been spared the humiliation of having any avowed candidate espouse the cause of the liquor traffic. Before the Convention meets, all the Republican candidates who have any chance of winning the nomination will be strongly committed to prohibition."

"What will be the third plank?"

"Our platform will strongly declare for woman's suffrage if at that time the amendment has not already been adopted. If, as is probable, the amendment is in effect, we will congratulate the country upon woman's entrance into the arena of politics and point with pride to the fact that a majority of the Democratic senators and congressmen voted for the submission of the amendment."

"But are not some Democratic states opposed to woman's suffrage?"

"Yes, some of them—a few—but this is a government by the majority. When a party stands for a proposition and a majority of its representatives support the proposition, the opposition of a minority does not count, especially when the minority does not succeed in defeating the propositions."

"The fourth plank?"

"This will be in opposition to enforced military training. The action of the Democratic caucus in the house last Monday made it certain the party will be opposed to the military measure. A vote of 106 to 17 is quite decisive—more than six to one. A Democratic Convention would not be likely to rebuke its representatives in congress. The action of our caucus was of great importance, first—because, besides announcing the position of our party it also made certain the defeat of universal military training in this

congress. Second—because the Republicans will hardly dare to endorse universal military training in their platform after a Republican congress has voted it down. I am speaking of PROBABILITIES. I think the opposition to military training is even stronger among the Republican voters than the among the Republicans in the senate and house. Third—the failure of the Republican congress to declare in favor of universal military training is likely to eliminate professional soldiers from the list of candidates. Last Monday therefore was a great day for the country."

"Next?"

"The profiteer will not be overlooked. The beneficiaries of profiteering are so few in number in comparison with its victims that it will have no open defenders in the Convention although it may be represented by some bushwhackers. The Convention may be expected to propose effective remedies, national, state and local, for Profiteering and his older brother, the Trust. I am not naming these planks in the order of their importance. Profiteering may be the paramount issue."

"What next?"

"I think it is safe to say the party will declare against a return to protective tariff, and will endorse the income tax. This plank probably will be accompanied by a declaration against a reduction of the tax on big incomes without a corresponding reduction in small incomes. That is, the Democratic party will oppose the demands of big business on this subject. Big business and the men of great wealth—the influence that dominates the Republican leaders—will try to shift the burden of taxation to the backs of the poor. They are demanding a repeal of the EXCESS PROFITS TAX, the least burdensome of all the taxes.

Labor questions will occupy a large place in our platform. I have no doubt that the party will defend the right to organize and to peaceably persuade; declare in favor of an eight-hour day and favor the right of collective bargaining. I also hope the Democratic party will declare in favor of the creation of machinery—similar to our peace machinery—for the investigation of all disputes between employer and employee so that differences may be settled before they reach the strike or lock-out stage. Compulsory arbitration would be objectionable but there can be no valid objection to compulsory investigation.

"I take it for granted the party will renew its declaration that a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable although it is impossible at this time to say how far the Convention will go in applying the principle to the telegraph, telephone and railroad problem."

"What else?"

"It is certain the Convention will deal with many other subjects, like good roads, the middleman and propositions regarding the farmer, but I do not care to enter upon any effort to outline a platform. I have only touched upon subjects in regard to which I think it is certain the party will act, questions upon which the State Conventions should and will speak emphatically before the National Convention meets."

WORLD ENDORSES NULLIFICATION

The New York World says editorially

"If the emphatic pronouncement against Prohibition by national amendment causes surprise or misgivings in any quarter it is to be remembered that this is an original article of Democratic faith. No novelty attaches to the declaration at this time except as straightforwardness in such matters has been too much discouraged by cowardice and treachery."

When the World endorses nullification of the Federal Prohibition amendment by state statute it ought to do so in the name of the liquor traffic and not in the name of the Democratic party.

COMING TO THE FRONT AGAIN

Mr. Bryan, the hardy perennial, is coming to the front once again, and the humorists are preparing for another inning. But isn't it just possible that his long deferred day is about to dawn? No man has been more closely interested in the political history of the last twenty-five years than he, his ability is real, his integrity unquestioned, and as for perseverance—why, he is its very incarnation. That so long a period of preparation should be wholly futile is unbelievable, and the distinguished commoner shall not lack sympathetic watchers during the coming months. We need a man who ardently believes in America and the United States constitution, and he is it.—Western Watchman, St. Louis.

Inexcusable Ignorance

The Times-Union of Jacksonville, Florida, says:

"The vast majority of people are in sympathy with prohibition," declares the St. Petersburg Independent; and as the majority of the people of the country have never expressed an opinion on the subject we wonder how it came to be so well informed."

If the Times-Union were the only wet paper guilty of such inexcusable ignorance its utterance might be allowed to pass unnoticed, for the people of Florida are too well informed to be influenced by such a gross misrepresentation. But as such editorials go the rounds of the anti-prohibition press it deserves a moment's attention. The prohibition question has been before the country for many years; 34 states have gone dry by state action, nearly all of them by popular vote. In the very few states where prohibition was introduced by statute, subsequent legislatures have been elected PLEDGED TO CONTINUE PROHIBITION. Forty-five states voted to ratify, and nearly all the legislatures that ratified WERE ELECTED ON THAT ISSUE or were the LEGISLATURES OF PROHIBITION STATES.

Ratification was an issue in Illinois in 1918, and prohibition won. Ratification was an issue in New York in 1918, and prohibition won. Ratification was an issue in Ohio in 1918, and prohibition won. The state prohibition amendment has been voted on FIVE TIMES in Ohio. It was defeated by 84,000 in 1914, by 54,000 in 1915 and by less than 2,000 in 1917. It was carried by 25,000, in 1918, and by about 40,000 in 1919. The congress that submitted prohibition (elected in 1916) was elected by the people. Three-fourths of the senators and two-thirds of the congressmen voted to submit the national amendment, and the voters knew how these senators and members voted on this question when they voted for them.

Yet in spite of repeated endorsements of prohibition by the voters at the polls, papers like the Times-Union continue to echo the falsehoods sent out by the ex-brewers. Chief among these falsehoods is the statement that "the majority of the people of the country have never expressed an opinion on the subject."

W. J. BRYAN.

THE GOLD STANDARD

S. R. Wagel, publisher of the Bullion and Foreign Exchange—regarded as one of the leading authorities on this subject—has this to say on the gold standard:

"Events in the past year have confirmed the conviction that the gold standard can no longer be maintained, and a large number of intelligent economists are attempting to find a way out of the present difficulties. Professor Cassell has been the first to propose an international commission to discuss the relation between the world's currencies and finance. As long as free circulation of gold is impossible under present conditions, while note issues remain at the abnormally high levels, and the gold supply of the world is reducing, the standard must have some other basis than gold. With the present situation in silver, bimetalism is also coming to the fore. There is little doubt that some solution must be attempted at an early date, and it is not improbable that there may be fundamental changes in the relations between gold, silver and currency."

What has become of the cocksure financial authorities who, in 1896, prated about the unchangeable value of gold and the sufficiency of the gold standard, the melting pot test, the dumping ground fear, etc.—alas! they are all silent now, or have turned about and are trying to save the world from the very standard which they used to idolize.

William Jennings Bryan is the liveliest "dead one" ever known, because he never will "stay dead." It is hard to kill a "man with a mission," and still harder to bury him. We do not forget that Bryan was dead, as well as damned, at the opening of the Baltimore convention in 1912; but before that convention concluded its labors, the same Bryan had made Woodrow Wilson the nominee for President! It is just as well to remember this fact.—San Francisco Star.