

# OUR NEW YORK LETTER

Weekly Letter on the  
New York Situation by  
Hon. Henry M. McDonald.

New York, Oct. 1.—Editor Independent: The past week has been one of lull in politics. The only event of importance has been Judge Parker's letter of acceptance, issued at the beginning of the week. His letter, while somewhat more positive in expression of opinion than his speech of acceptance, lacks vigor and stamina. It is becoming more and more evident that these elements are not a part of the candidate's mentality and therefore he can not express himself with precision and force. The New York Tribune quite fairly expresses public sentiment when it states that "Mr. Parker's letter goes far towards demolishing his reputation as a great jurist capable of sustained logical force. It is an assemblage of disjointed paragraphs, seemingly produced without any plan of arrangement, without any clear-cut conceptions of the problems discussed, and without any definite policy to expound."

In the same line the very carefully edited Journal of Commerce says: "The letter can hardly be called a strong document by Mr. Parker's most zealous supporters. It lacks the aggressive vigor displayed by President Roosevelt in his letter of acceptance. Judge Parker touches briefly on a number of public questions in a manner that may almost be characterized as tame, not to say commonplace."

The New York Sun, which was inclined immediately after the St. Louis convention to support Mr. Parker, but afterward adopted a different policy, principally on account of the men whom Mr. Parker called about him to manage his canvass, states: "The letter is easier to read than its predecessors, because Mr. Parker himself or some useful friend has edited away the over-abundance of qualifying

phrases and modifying words with which the excellent gentleman has been accustomed in his political manifestos to balance both sides so impartially that when you get to the end of one of his complicated sentences you do not know whether tweedledee or tweedledee has the plurality."

As a matter of fact, the public utterances of Mr. Parker since his nomination have more and more convinced thoughtful people that the motive which animates him solely in all of his public declarations, is an overwhelming desire to obtain the presidency, and that party principles and party policies are in his mind of secondary consequence.

This consuming ambition to become president, is shown by the fact that Mr. Parker has practically changed his residence from Esopus to New York, and has taken quite complete charge of the conduct of his campaign. No matter is too minute for his attention, as was indicated a day or two ago when, through Mr. Belmont, he requested Dr. John H. Girdner of this city, one of Mr. Bryan's closest friends, to call upon him. Dr. Girdner told Mr. Belmont that he would not call on Mr. Parker, except at the solicitation of the democratic candidate for the presidency, and will full knowledge on the part of the candidate that he (Dr. Girdner) was opposed to his election.

Mr. Belmont assured Dr. Girdner that Mr. Parker desired to see him; and that he well knew of his opposition to his candidacy. Under these conditions the call was made. A gentleman present at the interview, told me that almost at the outset Dr. Girdner told Mr. Parker that he could not support his candidacy, owing to the fact that his nomination had been brought about

by the money power; that it had only been accomplished by disreputable methods, that the character of the men who were carrying on his canvass was such as to repel all patriotic Americans.

Mr. Parker then asked Dr. Girdner if he did not think him a better man than Mr. Roosevelt; the doctor replied that he did not see that that matter was material, but granting that he (Parker) was a better man than Roosevelt, the situation seemed to be the same as when a couple of burglars had broken into one's house and had held the owner up at the mouth of their pistols. That then one of the burglars should say to the householder, let me rob you because I am better looking and more civil than this other fellow. The doctor then added, "I don't know as it would make very much difference to the held-up, which of the pair took his cash. Without any personal reflection, it seems to me, the country as between the democratic and republican parties is in the same condition as the householder; it doesn't make any particular difference whether Mr. Roosevelt or you succeed, the result in either event will be extremely injurious to the best interests of the people."

In this connection I may say that a little time before I saw Dr. Girdner, I had called on quite a wealthy leading business man of this city, also a close friend of Mr. Bryan. He stated in the course of the conversation that he would not vote for Mr. Parker. The position of these two gentlemen is, I believe, that of the great majority of leading radicals in this city. I therefore look for a large vote for Watson and Tibbles.

The petitions, which it is necessary to secure in order to nominate state

officers, and which, as per the sample which I sent you a few days ago, are as long as a snubbing rope, have been obtained in all the counties of the state, except one, and are now on file in Albany. The missing petition is that of the county of Wyoming, in the western portion of the state. The state, county and town democratic organizations, are using every effort to prevent the securing of the necessary signatures in that county. One of our most careful canvassers spent three days in the county last week, and only succeeded in securing four signatures. He has, however, been reinforced by three other canvassers. Progress is now being made, so that we are positive that the petition will be completed in that county by Tuesday next, the 4th instant, so that it will be filed in Albany in ample time, as the last day for filing petitions is the 14th instant.

These, and similar obstructive tactics, which the democrats are pursuing, show very plainly the importance which the democratic campaign managers attach to the people's party movement in this state. In fact I am more and more convinced that if Mr. Parker is defeated in this state, it will be the result of the campaign which is now just being opened for Watson and Tibbles. The formal opening of this campaign will occur at the dinner, which, as I mentioned in my last, is to be given at the Palm Garden, this city, on Wednesday next, October 5. Mr. Watson's speech on that occasion will undoubtedly be a masterly effort and will encourage every radical to labor with all his heart, soul and strength, to poll as large a vote for that great leader as is possible in the Empire state.

HENRY M. McDONALD.

## Disregard of Law

Editor Independent:

When railroad companies take advantage of Sunday to do those things which are so much an invasion of the rights of citizens as to make doubtful their right to do the work on ordinary workdays when courts are in session, they are simply laying up trouble for themselves and it would come with poor grace for them to insist upon a strict enforcement of the law should they have trouble in the future with their employes. By the very act of causing these employes to disregard the rights of others and to work on Sunday—in itself an infraction of the laws of the state—in an effort to secure possession of land to which their rights might be questioned, the officers of the company instill into the minds of the men that nothing is to be considered but success. If the men take this lesson to heart and, in a strike, should so far forget the respect due the rights of others as to make assaults upon the strike breakers or attempt to levy a boycott the company would be entitled to little sympathy for it would but receive the treatment it has accorded others.

In this country, particularly, it will be found that the source of disregard for law is not in the working classes. It is true that under stress of circumstances the working man has not always respected rights of persons and property but even a casual study of the question will show that in most instances the men thus disregarding law have been but following the example set for them by managers of corporations, and are only putting into effect those methods which they have previously followed at the command of corporation managers for the benefit of the corporation.

It is not unprecedented for the bookkeeper of a large wholesale house to be instructed to make a false entry in his books to cover an illegal rebate granted his house for freight charges. This is considered all "in the business" by the managers of the house, but when the same bookkeeper makes another false entry to cover cash taken by him from the safe, there is indignation on the part of the house and, if prosecution is not followed by punishment, it is considered an act of grace upon the part of the company to whose interests the employe has proved false.

A railroad company will instruct a roadmaster to cause track to be laid along a street to which the company has a questionable right, the work to be done at night or on Sunday so that persons who may have superior rights may not be permitted to enforce them. The work is done to the satisfaction of the company and it is all right, but when the same men attempt to tear up track or assault other work-

men all of the powers of the state are invoked to enforce the law.

In almost every line of business there is more or less of the same thing, and the wonder is that the ordinary working men, whose idea of the law and of things in general is drawn not so much from books as from the course followed by successful men and corporations, have as high a regard for law as they show under all circumstances.

There can be no two rules of action in this country. Either all persons, natural and artificial, must be compelled to observe the law or anarchy must be recognized and permitted to the individual as well as to the association of individuals who combine together for business. The corporation cannot be punished by imprisonment,

and fines may be treated lightly as a change in the schedule of prices for a short time will generally place the burden upon the shoulders of the consumer. If any imprisonment follows the violation of law on the part of corporations it is usually a paid employe, who is compelled by the stress of circumstances to follow the illegal course, who receives punishment and the master mind who conceived the iniquity escapes punishment.

There should be a change in the laws regulating the punishment of corporations violating laws and since fines can be shifted and punishments avoided probably the most effective means of punishment would be for the state whose laws have been violated or evaded to levy upon the property of the corporation and hold it in trust

for the stockholders pending the collection of penalty which should be taken from the ordinary revenue of the concern. By this means the punishment would fall upon those who expect to derive benefit from the infraction of law and not upon the public and would, at the same time, brand the company as one which should be watched. ALLY DELUCA. Omaha, Neb.

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