

TOM WATSON IN NEW YORK

The Campaign Put Fire on the Terrapin's Back and That is What Is Making Him Crawl

WHO GAINED GROUND IN CONTEST

Legislation Has Been Helping the Strong to Plunder the Helpless And Weak

That the movement in the east which followed Hon. Thomas E. Watson during the late campaign, is a permanent one was shown by the pleasant little banquet given Mr. Watson at Union Square Hotel this evening, at which between one and two hundred persons were present. It was under the auspices of the city committee of the people's party and was attended by many of the best known leaders of thought in New York, among whom may be mentioned J. G. Phelps-Stokes, Justice Samuel Seabury, Dr. John H. Girdner, Melvin G. Palliser, Gustav W. Thomson, George A. Honnecker, late populist candidate for governor of New Jersey, Mr. J. M. Hazzard, managing editor of the American Press Association, Mr. Charles H. Towne, editor of the Smart Set, Mr. John Milton Scott, editor of "Mind," and the Hon. Charles Q. De France, secretary of the national people's party. Among others in attendance were the editorial and business staff of Tom Watson's Magazine.

Short speeches were made by Mr. Phelps-Stokes, Mr. George L. Rusby of New Jersey, Hon. A. J. Boulton, people's party candidate for governor of New York, and several others. Every mention of Mr. Watson's name was cheered to the echo, as were also the many predictions of renewed populist activity in the future. Mr. Watson was given an ovation when he was introduced which was repeated again at the close of his address. He spoke in his happiest vein.

"In civil life as in war," he said, "a crisis may demand that some one should lead a forlorn hope. Victory is not expected, glory may not be won; but duty calls the soldier and he answers 'Here'—to do or die in her exacting service.

"During the presidential campaign of 1904, it fell to my lot to lead the forlorn hope.

"With full knowledge of the weight of the burden, I took it up and bore it as best I could; and I am proud to meet tonight so many of those who stood by me throughout that ordeal.

"I am sure that I express your sentiments when I say, we glory in the fact that, in spite of all the abuse and

ridicule which beat upon us, we upheld the banner of Jeffersonian democracy at a time when its trusted leaders had weakly surrendered or basely deserted.

"The democratic party had grown weary of the virtue which meets with no substantial earthly reward.

"To lay up treasure in heaven is apparently no part of its program.

"For eight years prior to 1904 it had done business on principles forcibly borrowed from the people's party; but, while these principles were right they had not yet become sufficiently popular to command a majority vote.

"We are tired of being in the minority!" cried the democratic leaders; and they astonished mankind by trying to win the game with the cards which the republicans had already dealt to themselves.

"The result was precisely what might have been expected by anybody except the party which, after having sent its prayers skyward through a megaphone, chose August Belmont for its cashier, Grover Cleveland for its wet nurse, Tom Taggart for its prophet, and Dave Hill's favorite pupil for its candidate.

"The smoke of battle has now lifted; the campaign liar is taking a well-earned vacation; James Creelman has turned his attention to Thomas Lawson; and we may, at length, form some accurate estimate of what was accomplished by the campaign of 1904.

"Who gained ground by that contest?"

"The Radicals.

"The republicans stood for conservatism; the democrats stood for conservatism. No issues were raised.

"The two old parties were so determined not to alarm anything, or anybody, that they did not even alarm each other.

"On every subject—Finance, Tariff, Imperialism—the attitude of the two presidential candidates was so nearly identical that neither of them ever could or would define the difference.

"The radicals stood for vital reforms.

"And now what is the result?"

"The conservatism of republicans and democrats has been cast aside, and the dear old twins are doing their best, in congress, to convince the people that they themselves are radicals.

"They realize that the great deeps of American thought have been broken up and that irresistible waves are beating against the walls of special privilege and monopoly.

"Suppose that Eugene Debs had not made his splendid fight; suppose I had failed to answer the call of the Springfield convention, does any one believe that congress would now pretend to be so eagerly interested in reform?"

"Year in and year out the wrongs under which our people suffer had cried aloud for redress and no president had rushed to our relief.

"It was the campaign of 1904 that put fire on the terrapin's back and made him begin to crawl.

"Can the republican party give the people the reforms they need? Impossible!

"There are too many republicans personally interested in keeping things substantially as they are.

"Can the democratic party do the work? Impossible!

There are too many democrats personally interested in keeping things substantially as they are.

What then is the hope of the country? The union of all reformers. We must draw from the republican party those who oppose class law and money-bag aristocracy; we must draw from the democratic party every true-hearted Jeffersonian. We must gather into one compact aggressive movement all patriots, no matter what they call themselves, who are broad-minded enough to agree upon essential reforms which are within the reach of this generation. We must choose for leaders men who have in their make-up the fire of the crusader and the consecrated zeal of the martyr—men who are not to be tempted, or bullied; men who fear nothing in God Almighty's world except to violate their own sense of right.

"This people will not be redeemed from misrule by leaders who never dare to take a stand upon any question until they have first considered, anxiously, how it will affect the vote. Such reform as we need will never come if we wait for those who measure right and wrong with the yard-stick of a political convention. That party, or that set of leaders, which never knows what it believes in, or what it stands for, until its national convention has adjourned, deserves no toleration from gods or men. The only party and the only set of leaders which deserves respect, or can hope to make the world better by its labor, is that which adopts it screech with conscientious intelligence, fights for it with fearless devotion, and clings to it, throughout the night and the storm, with a fidelity

which no discouragement can shake.

"Great is the original thinker; great the emotional orator; but thought, however wise, speech, however sublime, avail nothing until the worker comes into the field. Rousseau's thought was profound, but it was the worker of the French revolution who shaped radical ideas into laws and institutions. For many a generation, England had her democratic thinkers and her democratic orators, but the people had no civil liberties until the workers and the fighters had made the creed of the student the chart by which they moved, the plan by which they worked and fought. So in this land, we have had the thinkers—from Jefferson's time down to that of Henry George; we have had the orators, from Patrick Henry down to—well, down to John Sharp Williams. But to win, we need workers. We need men who put principle above party, patriotism above self, duty above hunger for office. We want men who are not afraid to be in the minority, if they are right; men who would rather hear the still, small voice of an approving conscience than to listen to the roar of a nation which blindly applauds the wrong.

"To the men who want thus to work, the American world offers tasks worthy to enlist all the strength of the mind, all the zeal of the heart. Commercial slavery holds in chains tens of thousand of the little boys and girls of our land. We are cowards and become parties to the crime, if we do not heed the cry of the children, and do our utmost to strike the fetters from their helpless limbs. Ten millions of our fellow citizens are in poverty, and their condition threatens the whole body politic—for with poverty comes an infinity of woes not confined to the poor. Almost exclusively the poverty from which we suffer results from bad laws and dishonest administration. Legislation has been helping the strong to plunder the weak; dishonest administration has been aiding piratical capital to exploit a submissive public; dishonest officeholders have been giving away to greedy corporations the most valuable property which belonged to the people; and franchises which should have been exercised for the benefit of all, are being used by the few to rob the many.

"Again, we see everywhere that we no longer have representative government. The people do not control. The senate of the United States is selected by organized capital, and obeys its master. The federal judiciary, appointed for life, owing nothing to the people, and not responsible to them, is the bulwark of money-bag aristocracy. When corporation tyranny shall have been checked at every other point, it will entrench itself behind this undemocratic and irresponsible power, and it may happen that the president and congress will assault in vain the common enemy when it is shielded by those judges who claim and exercise the right to nullify legislation upon which congress and the president have agreed. We must give back to the people the power to initiate and vote legislation; the right to control their representatives; the right to remove the officeholder who betrays his trust. If we had had no other doctrine beside that, in the last campaign—if we had no other now—that doctrine alone would justify us in the determination to keep in the line of battle.

"Comrades, in this, the dawn of the new year, let us revive our energies, strengthen our purpose, and press forward. For my part, my motto shall be that of Seneca's pilot when, in the midst of the tempest, he cried out:

"O, Neptune! You can save me if you will; you can sink me if you will, but whatever be my fate, I shall hold my rudder true."

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