

BRYAN AS A CANDIDATE.

The feeling of the anti-imperialists toward Bryan is faithfully portrayed by the following editorial which appeared in that reliable and ably edited newspaper, the New York Evening Post. He is held equally responsible with the President for the treaty of peace with Spain and the blunders which are a logical sequence of it. As a 16 to 1 star Bryan was not a paying attraction. The only hope of the democratic party is to profit by the wide-spread feeling of dissatisfaction to the imperial policy of the administration. Since Bryan is no more acceptable than McKinley to this element of voters it would mean a repetition of the defeat of 1896 to nominate him. The Post says:

"The demerits of William J. Bryan as a candidate for the Presidency were con-

sidered at a meeting of Democrats in Brooklyn last evening. He was weighed in the balance by the party leaders of influence and renown, and was found wanting. It was made very clear that he would not get the votes of these men in the nominating convention, if they should happen to be members of it. It is not so clear that they will have any votes to give in that body. Of course, ex-President Cleveland will not be a delegate. It is doubtful if ex-Governor Campbell of Ohio will be, and it is almost certain that Judge Willett of Alabama will not be. Nevertheless, these men represent a considerable number of votes that will count in the election, if not in the nomination.

"While the chances are ten to one that Mr. Bryan will again be the nominee of his party, there is

little reason to suppose that he will make a better run than he did before. While the public have learned a good deal about Mr. McKinley since the last campaign that will detract from his support, they have also formed some opinions about Mr. Bryan that will tell against him heavily. They have discovered that he is not a man of convictions, but is flighty of purpose and not to be depended on in a crisis. He has lost rather than gained ground by his incessant speech-making during the past four years. He has had his finger in every pie, quite unnecessarily and often to his own hurt. He volunteered in the Spanish war, and as soon as he resigned his commission, became an advocate of the treaty with Spain by which we bought the Philippines. It was his influence that put that fatal possession into our hands. There were votes enough to reject the treaty until he put his shoulder to the wheel.

"Mr. Bryan's apology is that he desired to stop the war, and to reject the treaty would have

been to start up the war afresh. This is hardly a plausible excuse. The country will not be-

lieve that Senator Hoar was wrong and Mr. Bryan right in their estimates of the consequences of rejecting the treaty. Spain was in no condition to renew the war if the treaty had been rejected. We alone had the decision of that matter in our hands. If the treaty had failed by the action of the Senate, it would have been necessary either to amend it, or to renew the protocol, and make a new treaty. The causes of war having ceased, and Cuba being in our hands, there was nothing left to fight over. Evidently Mr. Bryan thought that the Republicans would gain a political advantage if the Democrats should defeat a treaty which carried with it an extension of our territory, and therefore gave his influence for ratification. Whatever consequences have flown from ratification, he is, therefore, in part responsible for.

"It will be said that this is past and gone. True; but it is an index of Mr.

Bryan's character and political methods. It stamps him as a man without firm convictions, and as liable to take any unexpected course in dealing with the great question of our new possessions. Certainly Mr. McKinley has no advantage over him in this particular. He cannot be relied upon to follow his "own plain duty" two weeks after he has formulated and proclaimed it to the world. But a candidate is needed of whom it can be said beforehand that he has convictions and will follow them when the pinch comes. Does anybody claim so much for Mr. Bryan? Can any Democrat affirm with confidence that William J. Bryan, if elected, would say, "The Philippines, so far as the President of the United States can make them so, shall be free and independent?" There is nothing in his career that leads us to think so."

AN AGREED LIE. Napoleon declared: "History is a lie agreed upon" or, briefly, history is an agreed lie. In Nebraska the valuations placed upon personal and real property, by sworn assessors, are lies agreed upon by these precinct officials. Solemnly, under oath, they gather at the court house and agree to report cows and other bovine animals at from three to five dollars each for taxable purposes. The law says all property shall be listed at its cash or selling value. But the doctrine of "protection for infant industries" has so long dominated in Nebraska that encouragement for liars and rewards for lies came, very logically, into the revenue system of the state. The biggest liar is blessed with the least taxation upon his property. That stimulates the prevarication industry among individuals to a glowing heat. But the contest for the liar's belt among individual tax-payers is not more exciting than the match, to determine the prowess of composite liars, between counties.

The prize lied for by the several counties of the commonwealth is the evasion of taxes for the maintenance of the state government, with its oil inspectors, railroad commissioners and labor bureau parasites. This contest for the blue ribbon, by concrete mendacity, is a marvelous exhibition of legalized and protected perjury.

The whole system of revenue in Nebraska is merely an encouragement to the infant industry of manufacturing lies, making false oaths and fostering a general disrespect for truth and honesty. A total repeal of present revenue laws and the institution of those which will separate the valuation of real estate, for the purposes of revenue to the state, from the valuation made for county purposes is demanded.

REGRETS. THE CONSERVATIVE has lost some

friends, to whose memory a few words must be said before they pass into oblivion.

On the south side of the railroad track, a short distance across the river, there has stood for many years an avenue of trees that had not its equal anywhere hereabout. It was something like an eighth of a mile in length and consisted of sixty or eighty trees, some of which could not have been less than four feet in diameter. To pass through it was like going down the gigantic colonnade of the Peristyle at the World's Fair of 1893. The trees were only cottonwoods, but this did not detract from their majesty to a discerning eye, for while trees of that family are liable to be somewhat untidy about their bases, they have a way of holding the sunlight among the light-colored foliage of their lofty crowns, quite beyond any of our other trees. Their great trunks are dark and dingy, but far overhead one can see a light that takes one on into the hope of coming springs. To walk or drive among these trees has always been a pleasant and solemn thing.

Now the passer sees, if he chooses to look, a very thrifty row of cordwood running far across the next field, but no trees; and the enterprising April sun, with its fierce coadjutor, the spring wind, are rummaging with delight in the vegetable rubbish about an aisle of bare stumps, which has been forbidden to them for half a century.

Near the 13th-street bridge over South Table Creek there stood another great tree, growing by the side of the stream below, and holding its crown up past the bridge, so that the passer found himself in the upper world of birds. It too was only a cottonwood, but it was a stately tree, thirty-eight inches through its trunk and sound as a granite rock. But the county commissioners, building a new bridge at that point, saw a chance to put themselves on record in the matter of trees; and now THE CONSERVATIVE, in crossing the new bridge, looks the other way.