

OLD LINE DEMOCRATS OF THE REASONS FOR OPPOSING BRYAN

His Election Now Would Be as Disastrous as It Would Have Been in 1896.

NOT AFRAID TO EXPRESS FORCIBLE OPINIONS

Injecting Imperialism as a Bugaboo Cannot Affect the Real Issue to Be Fought.

Four years ago thousands of democrats repudiated the party creed as set forth in the Chicago platform. As the chief objection to the platform was its declaration in favor of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, the sound money men held an independent convention and placed in the field a second democratic ticket and a platform promising a more conservative and safer course in financial legislation than that proposed by the regular party organization. To the Palmer and Buckner ticket and the Indiana platform many of the conservative democrats of the country gave their support, not because they expected to elect the ticket, but because such a course afforded them the opportunity to vote for the cause of sound money without shock to their partisanship.

This year it has been determined not to place a sound money democratic ticket in the field and hence old school democrats must choose between McKinley and Bryan or decline to vote at all.

What do the leaders intend to do? Owing to the changed conditions it has been considered important to interview a large number of old line democrats, men who speak with a sense of conviction, with a view to reaching a consensus of their opinion on the questions of this campaign. It has been ascertained through these interviews that the democrats have by no means lost sight of the free silver issue and that they regard the democratic party's attitude on the coinage questions this year as a positive menace to the prosperity of the country.

The attempt to make the silver question of minor importance by declaring another issue to be the paramount one has had the expected effect upon the old line democrats. Even if it were not a fact that nearly all of the sound money democrats endorse the policy of President McKinley in the Philippine matter, the shifting of the silver issue to a minor place would not have induced them to return to their old party and knock anxiously at the door for re-admittance. They seem to have a lingering fear of the 50-cent dollar. Having seen their position of 1896 fortified by the course of subsequent events they are stronger than ever opposed to having the democratic party return to the 16 to 1 theory and say they will remain outside the portals of democracy so long as William J. Bryan remains the host within and so long as the platform upon which they must enter is tinged with silver baitism. The democrats agree with all business men that the triumph of the Kansas City platform at the polls would encourage a re-opening of the free silver agitation and in that way put further into the future the divorce of the obnoxious issue from the politics of the country. They say that so long as free silver is an issue with the remotest chance of success, the present sound financial system of the country is endangered and general business prosperity is threatened.

It is the consensus of opinion among the democratic leaders interviewed that the Philippine question is as well as the money question is safer in the hands of the present administration than it would be under a presidency of William J. Bryan and it is the general verdict that President McKinley has pursued the only possible course in dealing with the Philippines. There is very little sentiment in favor of Mr. Bryan's proposition to promise the insurgents free and independent government before they have laid down their arms, recognized the authority of this government and demonstrated their ability to maintain a government of their own. Nearly all of the old line democrats prefer to rely upon the more prudent policy of the republican party as declared at Philadelphia. Most of them will vote for McKinley, while some may not vote at all.

William A. Paxton.
William A. Paxton, widely known as a ranchman, cattle grower and wholesale grocer and a democrat who has served his party to its great advantage for many years, will not vote for his fellow Nebraskan, William J. Bryan, for the presidency. It is to Mr. Paxton's influence, more than that of any other one man, that Colonel Bryan owes his two elections to congress. But when it comes to forcing free silver and populism onto the democracy of the country Mr. Paxton demurs and withdraws his support.

"I will not vote for either Bryan or McKinley," says Mr. Paxton. "I am hoping that four years more of McKinley will bring the democratic party back to sound principles, upon which I can vote for a successful campaign. I don't know anything about this free silver proposition and neither does Bryan. He is honest enough in what he says, but the trouble is that he doesn't know, any more than you or I, how the thing will work out. It would be nothing but an experiment, and this is no time for experiments."

"I can't see any sense in trying on the free silver coinage theory and letting the business of the country go to the dogs while the experiment progresses. I tell you, the people are scared of Bryan. I know of a couple of big loans that were negotiated only last week, one for \$75,000 in Chicago and the other for \$300,000 in Omaha. In both cases the borrower asked that the loans run to January next, but neither the Chicago nor the Omaha banker would make a loan beyond November 1. This shows how the financial institutions stand now, when the campaign is just beginning, and is a good indication of how they will stand in the event of Bryan's election."

"Our financial system is good enough as it is and when any tampering with it begins we may look for another panic and another period of hard times."

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attempt to disturb the present conditions by the election of Mr. Bryan."

Henry W. Yates.
Henry W. Yates, president Nebraska National bank, is outspoken as to his position:

"I notice that some democrats who voted for McKinley in 1896," says Mr. Yates, "are inclined to get back to the party this year on the delusion that the silver issue is dead and could not be revived within the next presidential term even if Bryan should be elected. These people do not seem to realize the significance of a democratic victory this year. The election upon it now and every body knows that the cure was effected by the voters of the doctrines enunciated in the Kansas City platform. With Bryan in the executive office, after an endorsement of the 16 to 1 idea at the polls, there certainly would exist a threat against capital, which would force upon it new and unknown conditions, creating distrust, disturbing confidence and causing the suspension of commercial undertakings."

"The Kansas City platform, which upholds fiat money and attacks the gold standard, brings us again to the agitation which caused the depression of 1892-96, so long as this issue is presented, no matter how long it may be clouded with other questions and its discussion shunned and avoided by its upholders, with the hope of masking behind pure and noble declarations their real aims and purposes, there can be no other question of equal importance before the American people. Bryan's only power would be to destroy, and there is more to destroy now than there was in 1896."

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"You ask for my views on the attitude of the gold democrats who voted for McKinley in 1896 and who now propose to vote for Bryan. I have understood that there were such in my own city of Omaha who, together with myself as a gold democrat in 1896, voted against Bryan. I have never heard any satisfactory reason for their present attitude. The attempt to explain their position, as I understand it, by saying that as long as they are opposed to imperialism, and that McKinley favors it, and Bryan opposes it, and view of the further fact that the money question is settled beyond the reach of the next presidential term, they will favor Bryan as against McKinley on the imperialistic issue."

"In the first place, I think our gold democrats who have assumed this attitude are in error in supposing that the present settled and substantial basis upon which the financial condition of our country rests will remain secure in the event of Mr. Bryan's election."

"While it may possibly be true that the national legislature will be so constituted for four years to come that the present financial policy cannot be disturbed by legislative enactment, at the same time capital and the business interests of the nation, which are known to be sensitive and easily influenced, will be, if Mr. Bryan is elected, once thrown into disorder, either through fear of what might be the result of his management of the affairs of the nation or his views, or fancied views, of the financial result of planting into the presidential chair one who is in league with and supported by a combination of silver democrats, silver republicans, populists and what not, all of whom claim to be reformers, but whose proposed remedies and alleged reforms are largely at variance with each other and none of which is well defined. In other words, if it is true that congress will be so constituted for four years that even with Mr. Bryan as president the present financial policy cannot be changed at the same time, with his attitude being so antagonistic to the present financial policy of the country his election would result in immediate lack of confidence, distrust, disquietude and business collapse. There is therefore little reason for democrats who favor honest money and a sound financial policy to aid in the

Ed. Riley.
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"Why have I changed? Simply because experience has taught me something. There was something the matter with all of us in 1896. Business was bad, when you did sell goods you were never sure of getting your money. The republicans attributed this to the depression of 1892-96, but I know it was on account of the gold standard. The two main features of the Kansas City platform are comprised in its arrangement of so-called imperialism and its reiteration of the Chicago plank on the silver question. The first arrangement or declaration of the so-called doctrine of imperialism is a house built upon a foundation of sand, or, in other words, an arrangement of a doctrine in no sense advocated by the republican party. The Kansas City convention on the subject of imperialism erected a straw man, to furnish, as it were, a punching bag to enable Mr. Bryan to satisfy his crooked talents for the balance of the campaign. The imperialistic plank of the platform is built upon the assumption that somewhere, at some time and in some manner the republican party has pledged itself to the doctrine of imperialism."

"In the declaration of the president, in the act of congress or in the platform of the party, as found in its platform, there is no justification for this assumption. From the whole history of the subject, as it now presents itself, beginning with the Cuban question, there is no place where the doctrine of imperialism can be found attached to either party. Practically the only difference between the democratic party and the republican party is one of method rather than of political policy."

"While Mr. Bryan, in his speech of acceptance of the democratic nomination and elected, immediately convened congress and recommend a declaration of the nation's purpose to establish a stable form of government in the Philippine islands and to give independence to the Filipinos, neither platform nor the speech discloses any method by which this purpose can be accomplished. Practically the only difference between the democratic party and the republican party is one of method rather than of political policy."

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Dr. George L. Miller.
Dr. George L. Miller, for thirty years a leader of the Nebraska democracy, the founder of the Omaha Herald and for twenty-four years its editor and a representative of his state in many national democratic conventions of the past, is today the most sincere and probably the ablest foe to Bryanism west of the Missouri river. It is Dr. Miller who has held the scales carefully digested the practical adjustment, organization and administration of political affairs in this and other countries that his mind revolts against Bryanism. It is because he has spent the best efforts and the best years of his life in advancing the principles of true democracy in a new and growing western commonwealth only to see the resultant political organization, constructed on a sound basis, magically swept away almost immediately after its triumph by the vagaries of a new and enigmatical leader that his heart beats against Bryanism.

Dr. Miller comes into the world more than forty years ago from New York state, where in his younger days he enjoyed the personal friendship and the political tutelage of no less a democrat than Horatio Seymour. The affectionate esteem in which Seymour is held by the veteran Nebraska editor was nicely shown when some years ago he erected on his Nebraska farm a bronze statue to the New York statesman.

It will be remembered that last year Dr. Miller, feeling that this monument might by some future tenant of the Nebraska farm be allowed to crumble and fall, presented it to the city of Uden, N. Y., the home of Seymour, where the memory of the statesman will always endure and assure good care for the token in marble and bronze.

Dr. Miller is somewhat advanced in years, but his mind is as alert and as full as ever. He has retired from public life, but he has not retired from the business and the politics of the world and can have no ulterior consideration in the formulation of his opinions on the questions of important current interest. His views on the great issues commanding public attention in this campaign, being unbiassed by partisanship and untrammelled by personal considerations, are therefore worthy of more than passing notice. He is pleased to call himself a McKinley democrat, and if it were not for the fact that he feels perfectly confident of the re-election of the president he might not object to being designated as an alarmist.

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