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OBSERVATIONS.

Yesterday—Tomorrow.

Not many thought it would happen in Nebraska, but it did. In November, 1896, half the voters of this state, plus thirteen thousand, registered at the ballot box their approval of the Chicago platform and the presidential candidacy of William J. Bryan. At Kansas City last July, the principles of the Chicago platform were reaffirmed and endorsed and another platform also adopted. On the sixth day of this month half the voters of Nebraska, plus seven thousand, rejected both of these platforms and the candidates who stood upon them. What wrought this change of twenty thousand votes? It may be ascribed to a combination of causes the most effective of which was the universal prosperity enjoyed by the people since the inauguration of President McKinley. The Chicago convention ascribed the then prevailing prostration of industry and general business stagnation to the coinage act of 1873, and proposed as a remedy the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the existing legal ratio. Republicans attributed the disastrous conditions which had obtained during three and a half years to the unrestricted control of the government by a democratic administration. As an efficient remedy the republican party proposed its own restoration to power. In the last paragraph of its platform adopted at St. Louis in 1896, it said:

"Confident alike in the history of our great party and in the justice of our cause, we present our platform and our candidates in the full assurance that the election will bring victory to the republican party and prosperity to the people of the United States." When was there a more complete fulfillment of prophecy? Not

in modern times. By its Kansas City platform the democratic party declared that this year our constitutional republic was at stake, and that the decision to be rendered at the polls would determine whether our children are to enjoy the blessings of free government. But the people had come to disbelieve Mr. Bryan; they knew him to be a false prophet; unterrified by the evils which he predicted they condemned him to defeat and executed judgment. In that condemnation and execution the young man Absalom, for whom upon the stump he had evinced great vocal solicitude, actively assisted. Other causes contributed, perhaps in a lesser degree, to the result. The democratic candidate traveled extensively and spoke repeatedly; he appealed to passion and prejudice rather than to patriotism; he sought to awaken that spirit of envy which too frequently possesses the proletariat. Great multitudes greeted him, cheered him, and voted against him. His speeches like his platform were literary parricides, they killed their father. He sat down at the right hand of Richard Croker, Tammany's chieftain, and making an alliance with that enemy of good government, not only raised a question as to his own good faith, but opened the eyes of his adherents to his insincerity.

Notwithstanding the fact that today Mr. Bryan is the most grievously disappointed, the most completely crest-fallen public man in the United States, he is the most powerful personality, the most influential individual within the democratic party. At the blast of his bugle the party will reform its lines upon his plan. Gold democrats, Cleveland democrats, old-line democrats are suggesting if not demanding a reorganization of the party. There will be no such reorganization. To their credit be it written that those who make this demand are not of the party as it now is. They went out as a protest against dishonesty, against repudiation of obligations, against a debased currency, against lawlessness and disorder, and against a virulent attack upon the judiciary. They are not prodigal sons who went out to feed swine, although the future may convince a few who ostentatiously returned this year, that they would have retained a greater degree of self-respect had they remained out, even at the expense of engaging in that occupation. For those who refused to accept and endorse the platforms of 1896 and 1900, there is no place within the democratic party and Mr. Bryan will see to it that none is in the future provided for them. He will continue to be what he is now, the dominating power within the democratic party and all talk of his elimination by those who have aided in his defeat when he has been a presidential candidate, is idle. The earlier the democrats, that were not swept from their moorings by the tempest

of declamation at Chicago and that refused to follow their party when it consorted with populism and allied itself with the lawless, establish themselves without party lines, or find a home within the republican party, where for two presidential campaigns they have rendered effective service, the better for them and the better for the nation. To them Mr. Bryan will never permit his party to do obeisance or extend the hand of welcome. He will if he wishes, be the party nominee in 1904. If he does not desire the nomination, an improbable possibility, he will designate the nominee and he will not name Mr. Olney, Mr. Morton, Mr. Cochran, Mr. Hill, or any man who has denounced Bryanism or suggested its elimination.

In confirmation of the foregoing Mr. William E. Curtis of the Chicago Record says: "The democratic members of congress, as they come to town, do not speak favorably of the plan to reorganize their party. They are determined in their opposition to any reorganization by John G. Carlisle, Don M. Dickinson and other members of the Cleveland wing of the democracy who voted for McKinley. They say sarcastically that the democratic party as it stands is good enough, and Mr. Morton, Mr. Carlisle, Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Herbert and others can remain where they are, in the republican ranks. It may be set down as certain that there will be no reorganization. Senator Jones and the other leaders of the recent campaign show no disposition to retire and no one is big enough to throw them out."

The Washington correspondent of the Chicago Times Herald, Mr. Walter Wellman, says: "The president expresses warm gratitude to those democrats who supported the republican ticket. He believes the number of such democrats this year was greater than in 1896. There may not have been so many of the leaders as four years ago, but the best leaders the democracy has were with the republicans this time, as before. More of the rank and file of that party supported the republican ticket than in 1896."

"Analyzing the returns the president can see that he had the votes of democrats from the stores, the farms, the shops—men in all walks of life—democrats who said little or nothing as to how they were going to vote, but marked their ballots right."

Form.

Mr. W. D. Howell's interesting series of articles on nineteenth century heroines has reached Becky Sharp, Beatrix, Esmond, Hester Prynne and Zenobia. In discussing other men's heroines Mr. Howells is convincing and illuminating. Thackeray's habit of interrupting his narrative to discuss his heroine with his readers is not in the modern style, and if Thackeray were writing now he would be obliged to conform to the

mode. It is not now good form for the author of a novel or a short story to show either sympathy for or animosity to his heroines or heroes. That the race has attained to a tolerable degree of altruism is shown by this literary standard. The intrusion of the author's opinion and taste is egotism and altruistic virtues are the last to develop in individual and in race. Grace Darling, the Boy on the burning deck, Abraham Lincoln and Sir Walter Raleigh were once infants with whatever ego they possessed centered on themselves. Their supreme self sacrifice was an evolution. A story must be good enough in itself to be worth telling, or else the style of telling must be matchless. In either case the twentieth century demands that the author keep out of sight. He cannot stand with a stick as Thackeray did, and as the barkers in front of the Midway shows do now to point out the attractions of their company. Humour, pathos, contrast, must be discovered by each reader for himself without a guide. No Moses would be possible to this generation of Americans. They will not be lead and any one who shall aspire to or claim inspiration, and for that reason the right to lead, will be overwhelmed by the votes of the American people. Because the book says so or because the preacher says so, or because the President says so, does not settle anything for the thoroughly modern adult American. He must know it from his own experience, he must have made his own syllogism and acknowledged its soundness before he makes it a part of the separate set of principles which each good American citizen finally adopts. As a rule of conduct the intrusion therefore of an unknown author's personality into a story which is otherwise readable and in the way of proving itself, is the signal for disgust and the tossing aside of the book by the free and independent American reader. There are certain very popular authors whose presence in their narratives is tolerated and even welcomed by their old acquaintance, the public. But it is a liberty for a new author to cross his own stage, while the curtain is up. We are easy-going and not very insistent upon convention, outside of Boston and Philadelphia, but we have an appalling (?) dignity when convinced that another has encroached upon it. Mark Twain, at the present time is the most popular writer and literary personality in this country and in his role of humorous commentator upon men, manners and early Missouri institutions he might easily introduce himself more than he does without offending. But it is hard to find Mr. Clemens in his books, and it is harder to find Mark Twain in Mr. Clemens. Whether or not he learnt in Missouri to "keep things separate," he learnt it early and has practiced it late.

There are so many talented writers in Lincoln, some of whose productions the editor of this paper has the con-