

DEMOCRACY MUST MOVE FORWARD.

Wm. J. Bryan's leading editorial in The Commoner of July 22.

My selection as standard-bearer of the Democratic party in 1896 and again in 1900 made me the nominal leader of that party, and as such I did not feel at liberty to engraft new doctrines upon the party creed. I contented myself with the defense of those principles and policies which were embodied in the platform. Now, that the leadership devolves upon another and I bear only the responsibility that each citizen must bear, namely, responsibility for opinions, my utterances and my conduct, I am free to undertake a work which until now I have avoided, namely, the work of organizing the radical and progressive element in the Democratic party.

The money question is for the present in abeyance. The increased production of gold has lessened the strain upon the dollar and while bimetalism is as sound in theory as it ever was, the necessity for it is not so apparent. I believe that the time will come when the people will again turn to bimetalism and reject the gold standard, but this period will not come while times are good and while the advocates of the gold standard can point to a reasonably sufficient supply of money. Of course, it is absurd for those who said that we had money enough in 1896 to point with pride to a large increase since 1896, but inconsistent as it is they do so and as the present enlarged volume of money brings, in part at least, the advantages hoped for from bimetalism, it is useless to press the subject of bimetalism for the present. While the advocates of the gold standard intend a crusade against the silver now in circulation, they do not openly proclaim it, and we must wait until they attempt to carry out their purpose before the people can be awakened to a realization of that purpose. The advocates of the gold standard intend to withdraw the greenbacks from circulation and to substitute bank notes, but as they do not proclaim their purpose we must await an object lesson before the people will understand it. The advocates of the gold standard intend to substitute an asset currency for the present national bank currency, but they do not proclaim their purpose and until they attempt it the people cannot be made to understand it. The advocates of the gold standard intend to establish a branch bank system such as Jackson overthrew, but as they do not an-

nounce their purpose the people do not see it and will not see it until some open and overt attempt is made.

Time will open the eyes of the people and events will reveal the purposes of the financial group that has its home in Wall street and makes forays against the country as often and as rapidly as care for their own safety will permit.

But while the people cannot be brought at this time to consider the various phases of the money question, they can be brought to consider certain other questions with which the Democratic party must deal. I have heretofore refused to take a position upon the question of the government ownership of railroads, first, because I had not until recently studied the subject, and, second, because the question had not been reached. Recent events have convinced me that the time is now ripe for the presentation of this question. Consolidation after consolidation has taken place until a few men now control the railroad traffic of the country and defy both the legislative and the executive power of the nation. I invite the Democrats, therefore, to consider a plan for the government ownership and operation of the railroads.

The plan usually suggested is for the purchase of these roads by the federal government. This plan, it seems to me, is more objectionable than a plan which involves the ownership and operation of these roads by the several States. To put the railroads in the hands of the federal government would mean an enormous centralization of power. It would give to the federal government a largely increased influence over the citizen and the citizen's affairs, and such centralization is not at all necessary. The several States can own and operate the railroads within their borders just as effectively as it can be done by the federal government and if it is done by the States the objection based upon the fear of centralization is entirely answered. A board composed of representatives from the various States could deal with interstate traffic just as freight and passenger boards now deal with the joint traffic of the various lines. If the federal government had the railroads to build there would be a constant warring between different sections to secure a fair share of the new building and development, but where this is left to the State the people in each State can decide what railroads they desire to build or to buy. The maintenance of the track,

the care of the stations, the handling of incoming and outgoing freight and passengers—all these things require the employment of men, and if the employment is left to State authorities instead of to national authorities, most of the objections that have been raised to government ownership will be answered.

The arguments in favor of the assumption of the ownership and operation of railroads by the government are numerous:

First—Extortionate rates would be prevented. So far it has been impossible to secure any real regulation of railroad rates. The railroads regulate the government instead of the government the railroads. When the government owns the railroads and operates them, there can be no question about the fixing of reasonable tolls.

Second—Discrimination would be prevented. At present the railroad authorities can kill one town and build up another, destroy one locality and enrich another. And these discriminations are not always made out of consideration for the interests of the railroad, but are sometimes made because of the investments of officials in the town or locality to be favored. Great injustice has been done by these discriminations, and no way has been found to prevent them.

But there is another kind of discrimination which is operating against the nation's welfare and progress, namely, the discrimination in favor of the large city as against the small one. To the railroads more than any other influence is due the fact that the population is being driven from the country to the city. With fair and impartial rates the small town might again hope to be the home of the small factory, and those people who are being crowded into the cities where they live without the economic, sanitary, intellectual and moral advantages which they deserve, would be scattered more evenly throughout the country to their own great benefit and to the nation's good.

Third—The politics of the nation is being debauched by money. This money is drawn from the great corporations that desire special privileges or immunity from punishment, and is used to corrupt not only voters, but legislatures. How can this corruption be stopped so long as enormous wealth can be made by watered stock and by the exploitation of the public? The railroad is to a certain extent a monopoly. As soon as a line is built between two points the field is occupied and it is impossible to have competi-

tion. If a second road is built for the purpose of securing competition, the traffic between the two terminals must support two roads instead of one, and it is impossible for two roads to carry the passengers and the freight at as low a cost as the one road could. This being true, the result usually is that the competing lines are soon consolidated and the attempt at competition given up. Legislation has been attempted against consolidation, but so far such legislation has been very ineffectual. The benefits to be derived by the railroads from the destruction of competition are so enormous that they have thus far been able to protect themselves by the giving up of a small part of the benefit to those who are in a position to interfere with them, but whose views can be modified by an argument addressed to the pocketbook.

Fourth—Another objection to the private ownership of railroads has been forced upon me with increasing emphasis during the last few years, namely the corrupting influence of these great railway corporations over the young professional men of the country. The railroads have lawyers in every county and general attorneys at every State capital. These men stand high in their profession and are usually men of character. Their connection with the railroad has in many instances made them not merely the attorneys for the road in legal matters, but lobbyists for the road in political matters. These men have controlled conventions, dictated nominations, written platforms and so shaped appointments that the masses have been ignored and their interests disregarded. The United States senate today contains so many men who are obliged to the railroads that it has been impossible to secure an amendment of the interstate commerce law, although for years the interstate commerce commission, composed of both Republicans and Democrats, has been pleading for an amendment.

It is not necessary to believe that United States senators actually draw salaries from these railroads at the same time that they draw salaries from the government, although it is known that salaries have been offered to senators by railroads having business before that body, and it is known today that there are men there who did receive salaries from railroads just before their election and it is not known that those salaries have been relinquished.

If the railroads were owned by the

several States instead of by private corporations, the railroad officials would be selected by the people and responsible to the people, whereas now these attorneys are selected by the railroads, paid by the railroads and subservient to the railroads.

Fifth—Another objection to the private ownership of railroads—and it is an objection that all recognize—is the use of the pass in politics. In some of the States the constitution forbids the use of a pass by public officials, but even in such States officials sometimes use passes and when an official in such a State accepts a pass, having violated the law, he puts himself where the railroad can blackmail him and force him to vote for measures desired by the railroads.

So powerful is the influence of the pass that it was impossible to secure at the last session of congress consideration of a resolution introduced by Congressman Baker of New York asking whether the giving of a pass was a violation of the interstate commerce law. The Pennsylvania railroad and the Baltimore & Ohio road secured large appropriations from the last congress for the enlargement of the depot facilities at Washington, and it is a notorious fact that representatives of the roads were present in the lobbies of the capitol building giving passes to the members of congress who voted with them and refusing passes to the members who voted against their demands. Any one who has had any experience in politics cannot be blind to the fact that the use of the pass often controls conventions, determines the selection of legislators, governors and often judges. When the recipient acts upon questions that involve the interests of the people, either his mind must be influenced by favors received or he must constantly brace himself against that influence. These are some, not all, of the reasons that may be given in favor of the government ownership and operation of the railroads. By leaving the matter to the State each State can act for itself and be governed by the sentiment of the people, moving as slowly or as rapidly as that sentiment demands. But I feel assured that the time has come when the Democratic party as a party should turn its face toward the solution of this great question, and by the advocacy of the government ownership of the railroads bring to the people relief from the economic evils that have followed private ownership, and relief from the political corruption which seems indissolubly connected with the private ownership of railroads.

Whether the various roads shall be secured by purchase or condemnation is a matter that each State can decide for itself. It may be wiser to begin by building new lines where they are now needed and thus determine the value of the old ones by the operation of the new ones. But the means to be employed for the securing of the lines and the rules to be adopted for the operation of them, will be found easy after the public has determined that the people, acting through their government, should take upon themselves the work of controlling this great branch of the business of the people.

While the Democratic party in the nation is advocating the government ownership of railroads, the Democratic party in the cities should upon the same theory espouse the cause of municipal ownership of municipal franchises. Private contracts for water, lighting and street car facilities have been the fruitful source of municipal corruption, and there is no solution of these municipal problems that does not involve municipal ownership. The progress made in this direction in European cities shows what can be done, and it is only a question of time when in each city in the United States the people acting through their municipal government will do for themselves, without the intervention of corporations, that which is now done at greater expense by private corporations. The municipal operation of the street car lines will result in such a reduction in fares that people can live farther from the center of the city and thus secure healthier locations. There are many questions of sociology that affect the municipal population and the Democratic party must meet all of these with an eye single to the public welfare.

We have also reached a time when the post office department should embrace a telegraph system as well as a mail system. While the telegraph lines do not reach as many people as the railroads do, and while the abuses to private ownership have not been so open and notorious, yet there is no reason why this nation should not do what other nations are doing in this respect. In the small towns the postmaster could act as telegraph operator and thus a great economy could be effected. In the larger cities the telegraph system could be under the control of the postmaster and such employes added to the postal service as might be necessary. It is safe to say that the cost of messages could be reduced one-half, and yet have the system self-supporting.

There is no good reason that can be urged against the government ownership and operation of the telegraph system in connection with the postal department. The matter has already been investigated by Congress and favorable action taken, but the influence of the telegraph companies exerted through their corporate interests and through the franking privilege has been sufficient thus far to prevent any action being taken. The democratic party ought to take up this reform and make it a part of its creed.

Private monopoly must be destroyed. The Democratic platform adopted at Kansas City declared private monopoly to be indefensible and intolerable. This declaration was reproduced in the St. Louis platform adopted a few days ago. To what extent this will be overcome by the influences that surround Judge Parker no one can yet declare, but it is evident that the conservative Democrats, as they call themselves, will never give the country any relief from the trusts. The government ownership of railroads will exert a tremendous influence toward the destruction of private monopolies, for most of the great trusts have been built up by railway discriminations and rebates, but the democratic party cannot content itself with any partial remedy for the trusts. It must declare war upon every private monopoly and it must prosecute that war relentlessly until the principle of private monopoly has been eradicated and industrial independence again secured.

The door of opportunity must not be closed against the young men of this country. The right of the citizen to build up an independent business and to enjoy the fruits of his toil must be guaranteed to him. It is the basis of our industrial development and it is the guaranty of our political liberty. The State should be encouraged to employ every power that it has to prevent the incorporation of a private monopoly, and the power of Congress over interstate commerce should be invoked to resist any and every effort to use a State charter for the exploitation of the whole country. A line must be drawn between the inalienable rights of the natural man and the law-conferred rights of a corporation. A corporation has no inalienable rights; it has no rights except those given it by law, and the people cannot be presumed to desire the creation of a man-made giant, having both the power and the disposition to trample upon the rights of the God-made man. The

private monopoly must be destroyed, root and branch.

The democratic party has in two campaigns stood for an income tax. The plank was omitted this year because the men in control of the party thought it would jeopardize success in the eastern States. This objection may have weight when the appeal is made to a particular section and to the wealthy men of that section, but it cannot have weight when the party goes forth, as it must ultimately, to appeal to the masses. It is unnecessary to say that a progressive Democratic party must favor a tariff for revenue only. It cannot favor the taxation of the many for the benefit of the few.

An income tax is just and without it it will be difficult to secure any effectual tariff reform. When the people understand the income tax the popular demand for it will be so great that no party will dare to ignore it merely to court favor with the comparatively few who are now avoiding their share of the expenses of the government and throwing too large a portion of the public burden upon the poor.

Even as now organized the Democratic party stands for the election of senators by the people and it ought to stand for direct legislation as far as the principle can be conveniently applied. Everything that brings the government nearer to the people is good. There is more virtue in the people than ever finds expression through their representatives.

Our party should also consider whether our federal judges should not be elected by the people to serve for a limited period. The life position in the civil service is not in harmony with our theory of government and the appointment of judges for life is not justified by experience. The president must rely upon his advisers when he appoints United States judges and the people at large can make the selection better than any president can. Elections for a stated period would bring the judiciary into closer touch with the people whose servants the judges are.

I suggest, not for the purpose of insisting upon it, but merely to bring the matter to public attention, that it may be found desirable to change the method of selecting postmasters. At present they are appointed by the president upon the recommendation of congressmen. The post office department is now a great political machine presided over by a man skilled in

political maneuvers, and the wishes of the people in the various communities are entirely ignored. Why should a federal administration ignore the wishes of the people whom the postmaster is expected to serve? If a system can be devised whereby the federal government will still retain the power of appointment and the power of removal and yet be restricted in appointment to persons named by the local community, a step in advance will have been taken. The right of local self-government can thus be vindicated and the use of the post office department for the benefit of the congressmen or for the benefit of the administration prevented. Such a change would also make it impossible for a federal administration to force colored postmasters upon white communities for political purposes. Is there any good reason why the president in making appointments should not consult the convenience and the will of the people who patronize the post office?

The differences between labor and capital are becoming more and more acute. And why? Because capital has not only been permitted to monopolize the resources of the government and feed fat upon the toil of the people, but it has been given a free hand in dealing with labor. It has been permitted to use labor for its own enrichment and then to dictate terms to the wage-earner. The Democratic party must be the champion of the man who toils—not his defender when he does wrong, not his apologist when he is led into error, but his exponent in the effort to secure the protection of his rights and the conservation of his interests. The Democratic party is not the enemy of wealth; on the contrary, it is the best friend of honestly acquired wealth, for by preventing the acquirement of wealth by illegal and unjust methods it would give to the possessor of wealth the honor and the distinction to which his thrift, energy, industry and economy ought to entitle him.

The Democratic party, if it is to be a power for good in this country, must be the defender of human rights. It must devote itself to the protection of human rights. It must declare, establish and defend the true relation between man and property, a relation recognized by both Jefferson and Lincoln—a relation which puts man first and his possessions afterward, a relation which makes man the master of that which he has created, a relation which puts the spiritual and moral life of the nation above its material wealth

and resources. This is the great struggle of to-day and it is a struggle in which the Democratic party must take an important part.

The contest above outlined must be made whether the party wins in November or not. A single election is but an incident in the life of a party. For more than a century the Democratic party has stood forth as the representative of certain great ideas. Jefferson founded it, Jackson defended it, and even Cleveland could not destroy it. If Mr. Parker is elected his administration will rid us of imperialism and of the threat of a race issue and give us greater freedom in the taking up of economic questions. Nothing that he can do or say as president will thwart the purpose of the democratic masses to rid the party of plutocratic influences or tendencies. The Republican party is growing more and more plutocratic and it can furnish a home for all who believe in the rule of wealth. The Democratic party cannot be a plutocratic party; it cannot belle its history; it cannot disappoint the hopes of its members. The fight must go on and must go on until victory is secured. Can we win? Who can doubt it? To those who think that a temporary victory of the conservative element ends progress in the Democratic party let this reply be made:

O ye of little faith! Go forth into the fields and see how the myriad grains, bursting forth from their prison in the earth, push upward toward the light. Watch them as under the influence of sunshine and shower they grow to maturity and furnish food for the race. Go into the orchard and see the seed or the grafted twig grow into a great tree whose leaves furnish shade and whose fruit gives nourishment to man. Measure if you can the mighty forces behind the grain and the tree, and know ye that the forces behind the truth are as irresistible and as constantly at work. God would have been unkind, indeed, had He made such ample provision for the needs of man's body and less adequate provision for the triumph of those moral forces which mean more to the race than food or clothing or shelter. He is a political atheist who doubts the triumph of the right. He lacks faith in the purposes and the plans of God who for a moment falters in the great struggle between truth and error—between man and mammon.

Evelyn—Yes, my great grandmother eloped with my great grandfather.

Cholly—Just fancy! Old people like that!—Smart Set.

"IT'S MAH HOME."

A dispatch from New York to the Chicago Record-Herald of July 24.

"Bill" Everson, a middle-aged colored man, snaps his fingers at John D. Rockefeller and his millions. "Bill" owns a three-acre farm on the slope of Buttermilk hill, in Westchester county. John D. Rockefeller owns 6,000 acres, including Buttermilk hill, his property extending from the village of Hawthorne on the Harlem railroad to Pocantico Hills, on the Putnam railroad.

Dozens of farms in Mount Pleasant township have been purchased by the Standard Oil magnate in the last few months, and Buttermilk hill, several miles long and a mile wide, now is included in the Rockefeller property—that is, all of Buttermilk hill except the three-acre farm owned by "Bill" Everson and a cabin and a half an acre occupied by Marie Everson, his maiden sister.

Farm after farm in Hawthorne, East View and other towns along the slope of the hill has passed into Rockefeller's possession, and to-day he is the largest land owner in Westchester county. Some of the farms purchased by Rockefeller were bought at their real value, some cost him a fancy price, but neither fair price nor fancy can move "Bill" and Marie.

"I don't want Mistah Rockefeller's money," said Everson to-day. "I ratheh have mah fahm. Why should I sell out mah little home? Here I have mah wife, mah three children, mah ole hoss, mah garden sass, mah hayfield and mah 'tate patch, and I owns all ob 'em. If I sell mah fahm to Mistah Rockefeller, where do you s'pose I'm goin' to live? Nobody much wants colored folks 'round as neighbors, and I'm not goin' to spend mah time lookin' for another fahm. He offered me \$1,200 for mah fahm, but I don't want his \$1,200; mah fahm's worth more to me than all the money Mistah Rockefeller's got in his iron chest. It's mah home, mah wife's home and mah children's home, and I'm goin' to stay right there."

Everson's farm is a neat little patch of ground on the state road between Hawthorne and Briarcliff Manor. Mr. Rockefeller owns the land on three sides of it. As "Bill" says, he has a garden and hay and potatoes, and, moreover, he has a water melon patch that would make most colored folk sit up all night and wink and blink at the prospects of melon days still to come.

Down the State road, half a mile from Bill's house, lives his sister, who has a cabin home on the side of Buttermilk hill. She is an invalid and says she doesn't want the \$890 Mr. Rockefeller

offered her for the little hillside home. She is old and feeble, and she wants to end her days in this little mountain bower, with her chickens, her honeysuckle vines and the cool spring that trickles out of the hillside.

She cares not whether Mr. Rockefeller owns the land east, west, north and south of her; she wants to live in peace. She is nearly blind, lives alone and has few callers. Her brother comes every few days and chops wood for her, and once each week the village dominie of Hawthorne calls on Marie, says a prayer with her and carries away her blessing.

So these poor colored people. Bill in his \$1,200 home and old Marie in her \$800 cabin, dwell in content, while upon the mountain side they hear the powder blasts of Rockefeller's workmen, who are constructing a marvelous driveway circling round and round Buttermilk hill.

A PUZZLER.

For The Public.

Four years ago, and, truly, eight years, too, My neighbor Jones declared with virtuous scorn

That though a Democrat all through and through,

As was his father before he was born, McKinley should receive his best support;

'Twas hard to vote Republican, but yet

'Twas harder still Bryan should be allowed

Our solid business interests to upset.

My neighbor Smith, also a Democrat.

(Although he spells it with a little c.) Says this year Roosevelt is the proper man

For him to vote for, far as he can see.

'Tis well agreed the choice is merely one Of persons; and Smith says that while he feels

No hankering for fish diet, when it comes To choosing eels or oysters, he takes eels.

This tickles Hawkins just about to death; The G. O. P. is Johnny on the spot.

But I'm surprised to see how Jones goes on.

Call's Smith a turn-coat, traitor, and what not.

Now why 'tis worse this year than 'twas before

To vote Republican, I can't quite see; There must be the same famous difference

There was 'twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee.

JAY HAWKINS.

After denouncing the men who nominated it as train robbers, Mr. Bryan cannot support the Illinois state ticket. The Nebraska statesman always did allow the small virtue of consistency to hamper his movements.—Chicago Daily News.