

# The Public

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## EDITORIAL

### The Democratic Candidate.

That Woodrow Wilson will make a stronger candidate, and if elected, a better President, than any of the other men in nomination before the Baltimore convention, cannot be thoughtfully disputed; and it is not seriously denied anywhere outside the circles of those whose enthusiasms were otherwise enlisted. His independence has been proved under the most trying circumstances. His progressivism has endured the best of tests. His popular strength was demonstrated at the primaries to be greater than that of any one of his adversaries. For purely party purposes, others might have been preferred, men whose boast it is that they have always been loyal to the Democratic machine; but for this transition period in the affairs of mankind, when old things are passing away and all things political are becoming new, not only in the United States but throughout the civilized world, Woodrow Wilson is as nearly as possible an ideal candidate. To few other men could William J. Bryan have transferred his well worn and untainted commission from the democratic Democracy as their leader in the irrepressible conflict of masses against classes, with equal confidence in the new leader's fidelity; to none other could he have done so with as much confidence in the new leader's triumph at the polls next November.



It remains now for Wilson to execute that com-

mission with Bryan's faithfulness and courage. Should he measure up to this standard, he will secure for himself that devotion of the masses which only three democratic leaders besides Bryan have won in the whole history of the United States. Should he temporize for party's sake or his own sake with the plutocratic interests or their political wolves or journalistic jackals—should he make Mr. Clark's mistake of falling into the lap of the Hearsts, of the Murphys, of the Sullivans, of the Taggarts, of the Ryans, of the Belmonts—he will be written off as a political asset of democratic Democracy along with others who have thus fallen by the way. But Wilson's record so far in his brief but brilliant and confidence-making career, is the best of guarantees that neither Bryan nor Bryan's host of confiding friends will regret the hour when Bryan's devotion to democracy, rising above all inferior considerations and coupled with unexampled political ability and courage, made Wilson his successor in the democratic leadership of the Democratic party.



### Bryan at Baltimore.

It is no empty compliment, that which pretty much all the papers but Hearst's—the latter for obvious and disgusting reasons—are paying to William J. Bryan as the Warwick at Baltimore. Few public men of any country or time, having his opportunities for self-service, would have undertaken what he accomplished: no other man in our time and country could have accomplished it had he made the effort. The convention had been well put together for a definite and treacherous purpose. This purpose contemplated the nomination of Speaker Clark with a view to his defeat at the polls by President Taft, or of Governor Harmon as second choice with a view to the election of either Harmon or Taft. Two things were necessary: First, that the affair should be labeled "progressive;" second, that the contents of the package should belie the label. Bryan detected the fraud and promptly denounced it. His fight had every appearance of a hopeless one. The scheme had been put together so well that the schemers held a majority of the convention under their control at first. But back of Bryan were the "folks at home." As he pummeled away, lonesome in leadership but not in support, the treacherous plans of the plutocrats slowly disintegrated; and Bryan's fidelity and courage were at last rewarded by the convention's nomination of the one principal candidate to whom the Interests, from their sad experience with him in

New Jersey, were unalterably opposed. Their solitary hope now is that before the November vote is counted they may "bring Wilson to his senses;" divorce him from Bryan, entangle him with bosses, taint him with Interest perfumes. A nicely groomed college professor in the White House, a publicist who appears classical and doesn't get in their way, would delight them; they would be equally well pleased, perhaps better pleased, if the game that was played upon Speaker Clark could be played upon Wilson, and Taft be consequently re-elected; but "a Bryanite from New Jersey," that is what they fear.



### Speaker Clark.

One of the Hearst papers attributes this language to Speaker Clark:

I lost the nomination solely through the vile and malicious slanders of Col. William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska. True, these slanders were by innuendo and insinuation, but they were no less deadly for that reason.

It may not be true that Mr. Clark has used this language. We hope he has not, and trust that no one will accuse him of it without better authority. But the idea thus offensively expressed, that Bryan accused Clark of making a treacherous bargain, must have lodged in the latter's mind or he could not have expressed himself as he did in his convention letter to Senator Stone. The fact is, however, that Mr. Bryan made no accusation of bad faith against Mr. Clark—neither directly nor by innuendo or insinuation. The utmost that can be inferred from what he said, as in any way reflecting upon Mr. Clark, was that Mr. Clark was the unconscious factor in a plan "to sell the Democratic party into bondage to the predatory interests of this country;" not that he had been false, but that he had been duped. And this was true. Mr. Clark's manifest innocence of the bargain relieves him of all possible imputations of bad faith; but it added nothing to his qualifications for the Presidency in times like these. Mr. Bryan would have been basely disloyal to all that he represents in public life if he had allowed a personal friendship or obligation to blind him or silence him. It is better by far to be called "ingrate" by self-seeking friends than to be traitor to a people's cause.



Speaker Clark and his friends don't seem to realize that the very nature of their assaults upon Bryan goes to prove that Bryan performed a public duty in securing Wilson's nomination.