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David B. Hill is wise in announcing that he is not a presidential candidate. He will be patriotic also, if he sticks to his resolution.

Talking about presidential candidates, why not nominate Mr. McKinley for a third term? His election would doubtless perpetuate the "extraordinary prosperity" of which he boasts, and be no more defiant of American traditions and polity than his Philippine policy. Besides, if we should get into the habit of reelecting presidents during good behavior, business would be freed from the quadrennial election disturbances that now afflict it, and greater stability of government would be assured.

It was not a very high compliment to the prosperity of Tennessee that President McKinley paid in his Memphis speech. He said that even now the Tennessee "enlistments in the new army, according to population, exceed any other state in the union." As a rule men do not enlist in times of peace, if they can find anything else to do.

Soon after Mr. Bryan began the publication of the Commoner, we predicted that although the paper had disappointed some of its friends for lack of aggressiveness, it would come up to the full measure of their expectations when he had "found himself" as an editor, that is, when he had become accustomed to handling public questions from the point of view of the independent editor instead of that of the responsible candidate and leader of a national party.

As a candidate Mr. Bryan was refreshingly candid. But the candor of a candidate is timidity itself in comparison with what that of a man in his present situation should be. This prediction of ours now proves to have been well founded. Mr. Bryan's editorial, "A Bit Personal," in the Commoner of the 26th, has a ring to it that will encourage the democratic democrats from ocean to ocean.

Mr. Bryan is not planning for another nomination, he says; if he were he would not be editing a paper. Should he become a candidate again it will be because it seems necessary for the advancement of the principles to which he adheres, "and that does not now seem probable." But he does intend to take an interest in politics for a long time yet, and in that connection will "support those who as candidates advocate democratic principles and who can be trusted to enforce them if elected." There are no enemies to punish, adds Mr. Bryan. "No matter what a man may have said or done against the ticket in 1896 or in 1900, that man becomes my friend the moment he accepts democratic principles." Finally, he promises to say whatever he thinks ought to be said, and to write whatever he thinks ought to be written. This is a candid, aggressive, inspiring declaration. It is one of many things Mr. Bryan has said and done which prove him to be a man who neither thrusts himself selfishly into the first place nor retires with mock modesty into the last place. He stands for principle regardless of persons.

Evidently the municipal ownership idea is catching on in politics. So astute a politician as Congressman Dick, of Ohio, has made a speech in which he declares that "sooner or

later the telegraph and telephone lines of the country will be owned and operated by the government, and it is proper they should be." When it is remembered that Mr. Dick is not only a congressman and a politician, but an Ohio political manager, the significance of this remark with reference to the future policy of the republican party is apparent. Unless the democratic party "gets a move on it," the republicans will come in ahead on this vital question.

In Iowa some democrats are trying to get their party into line on the public ownership question. At Des Moines on the 26th 52 democratic leaders agreed to a party policy involving the taxation of franchises and ultimate public ownership. But this move is opposed by the Chicago Chronicle, that sterling democratic organ for revenue only, as socialistic. The epithet "socialistic" is used, of course, without the slightest regard for its meaning. Says the Chronicle—

Municipal ownership is now the plea of every demagogue in either of the old parties who lacks the intelligence to address himself to the real evils from which the people suffer. After municipal ownership we shall have state ownership, and after state ownership national ownership will follow inevitably. Twenty or 30 years more of tariffs, subsidies and privileges will make every owner of a public utility, from a rural gas plant to the steel trust, anxious to unload on the public. When government, which is mischievously engaged already in many enterprises which it ought to let alone, concerns itself with all of the industries of the people there will be no room in this country for even a pretended democratic party. The 52 Iowa democrats who embrace this socialistic proposition so lightly are better qualified to give advice to republicans, monarchists and populists than they are to counsel the democracy.

There is much less socialism in what the Chronicle condemns in that