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Democracy versus plutocracy, is, as Bryan proclaimed it at St. Louis, the underlying problem of the present Presidential campaign. It would be the burning issue, if the two great parties were ranged on opposite sides. At any rate it will in some manner be an issue of this campaign, and it is likely to be the burning issue in American politics for many Presidential campaigns yet to come.

As Bryan said in proclaiming this issue, it is more important than the money issue, than the tariff issue, than the trust issue, than the issue of imperialism; and, as he indicated, this is true not because those issues are minor as mere matter of comparison with the issue of democracy versus plutocracy, but because they are its branches.

Highly important as are all these branch issues—finance, tariff, trust and imperialism—no possible gains on any of them at this time can compensate for retrogression as to the parent issue of all, democracy versus plutocracy. But how shall democratic voters express themselves against plutocracy, if both the great political parties are bound hand and foot, as both seem now to be, by the great plutocratic interests of the country?

That is a question which every intelligent voter will answer for himself when in the voting booth "alone with God and his lead pencil." Meanwhile, the letters of acceptance of the candidates, when they appear, may aid the voter's

intelligence in deciding how to use that lead pencil. As to the Democrats who are active in organization politics, their duty is plain enough. It is to retain their party regularity in order to be in position to save the Democratic party and to utilize its power for democratic principles when this spasm of reaction shall have passed.

"As for his telegram to Mr. Sheehan at St. Louis," says P. H. McCarren, of New York, one of the delectable coterie that surround Judge Parker, in the course of an interview in the New York American of the 15th, "Judge Parker did a wise, noble and brave act." Mr. McCarren goes farther. Rising to the loftiest heights of commendation, he ingeniously declares: "He did just as I would have done under similar circumstances." None but the consciously immaculate could give such an endorsement. Truly, Thomas W. Lawson should be publicly tarred and feathered for charging a statesman so conscious of his purity as this McCarren, with being on the legislative pay-roll of the Standard Oil Co., formerly at \$10,000 per year and more recently and now at \$20,000 per year. And when added to this, McCarren asserts on his innermost honor that his management of the campaign for Parker will be "a labor of love", one gets a glimpse of his unselfish devotion to noble ideals. We can now anticipate the high plane upon which, under such leadership, the Parker campaign will be conducted, and can guess why McCarren refuses to soil its purity by proving that he is not on the Standard Oil's secret pay-roll. And as the campaign work is to be "a labor of love" there is no apparent necessity for making the proof; for the national committee will have no use for the \$100,000 which

Lawson offers to donate to the Democratic campaign fund if McCarren can prove he has not been and is not now secretly in the employment of Standard Oil.

The "true inwardness" of the Parker nomination is pretty fairly revealed; if revelation were necessary, by the types of "safe and sane" men who gathered for consultation at New York this week. There was McCarren, the regularly employed politician of the Standard Oil trust. There was McLean, the Democratic side-partner of the Republican "boss," Cox of Cincinnati, who especially represents municipal monopolies. Lined up behind these was August Belmont, who represents Wall street corruption in particular and all high-class "graft" in general. And over all was Guffey, the Pennsylvania Railroad's Democratic politician, who presided. McCarren and McLean don't count for much; but with the advice and assistance, especially the assistance, of Belmont of Wall street, and Guffey of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Judge Parker's interests as a candidate are not likely to suffer from lack of "safety and sanity" as the plutocratic interests regard "safety and sanity."

The announcement that ex-President Cleveland will take the stump for Parker is not well calculated to encourage expectations of Parker's success. Only once has Mr. Cleveland gone on the stump since his retirement from office. That was at Morristown, N. J., in 1902, in a Congressional contest. If he helped the Congressional candidate for whom he spoke then, the fact does not appear in the election returns. Quite the contrary.

"Why should election years check prosperity?" one of the

daily newspapers asks. This should not be a difficult question to answer. When business goes into partnership with government or government goes into partnership with business, governmental policies and administration are naturally of great importance to business. They are of more importance on account of the disturbing effects of change, than for aught there may be of good or bad in themselves. Bad policies and bad administrations are less prejudicial to business, when it is in partnership with government, provided they are stable, than fluctuating policies and administrations which are sometimes much better and never quite so bad. But the effect depends after all upon the partnership. If government would confine its operations to its own functions, business would never be disturbed by elections. It is only as government meddles with business, either to promote or to obstruct it, that business becomes sensitive to political changes. Abolish indirect taxation, including protective tariffs, and business would not be affected by sensitiveness to tariff changes. Abolish laws for the forcible collection of debt, thereby making commercial debts as safe as debts of honor among gamblers, and business would not be thrown into spasms by money questions. It is the unnatural partnership between business and government that causes elections to disturb business conditions.

Ideas differ about prosperity. The Cincinnati Times-Star of the 11th thinks that—

one of the most striking examples of the general prosperity of the country is the vast increase in the manufacture and sale of pianos. Last year the people of this country spent \$50,000,000 for pianos alone. This represents sales of close to 150,000 instruments.

On the other hand the striking butchers estimate this prosperity by the fact that their wages have been reduced to 17½ cents an hour. This would give them one piano about once in seven months, provided they had steady work ten

hours a day every working day and saved all they got.

A correspondent asks this pertinent question regarding the act of President Cleveland in sending Federal troops into Chicago during the railway strike of 1894 (p. 195):

Why was the presence of Federal troops sufficient to break the strike? The troops certainly could not compel unwilling men to go to work, and if their places could not be filled traffic could not have recommenced, Federal troops or not. That it did recommence seems to argue that there had been interference with men taking the strikers' places, which interference Federal troops suppressed.

It is this view of the subject, doubtless, that induces many people to condone Cleveland's act, though they regard it as in itself a usurpation. But some consideration of the peculiar psychological power which the mere presence of troops not responsible to local authority, exerts over masses of men, however law abiding, should satisfy every candid critic that the strike could have yielded in the presence of Federal troops without its having been lawless in the least. All of us object to Federal troops at the polls on election day. Why? Is it because we expect to commit lawless acts, or is it because we know that the presence of troops responsible only to a distant commander-in-chief operates to influence voters? It is obvious that elections so conducted would be farces. Similarly with labor strikes. The effect of the presence of strange troops, with power to arrest or shoot for any cause or no cause, and without local responsibility, would naturally have the effect of intimidating even the most peaceful strikers and of causing a panic of distrust and fear among them which would drive them like flocks of sheep back to their employment.

To strike is not merely to quit work. It is to quit work in a body, and for a common purpose. In order to break it, nothing is necessary but to create a panic among the strikers. That may be

done in many ways. But the most effective way is to create an impression that every striker, no matter how peaceable he may be, is liable to be shot at sight by strange soldiers, upon the slightest pretext. If men cannot vote freely, under these circumstances, and that is universally recognized, why should they be expected to strike freely under the same circumstances? It must not be forgotten, either, that in the case of this Chicago strike, the Federal troops were virtually under the orders of the lawyer for the combined railroad corporations, for he was the lawyer whom Mr. Cleveland, with characteristic delicacy, had chosen to represent the Federal government, and who did at the same time represent that government and one of the parties to the strike.

There was a great gnashing of teeth in St. Louis when the trade unions took advantage of the extra demand for labor caused by Exposition work, to raise wages abnormally; but St. Louis landlords, hotel keepers, restaurant proprietors, etc., etc., all of whom joined in condemning the "grasping workingmen," have no compunction about taking advantage of the extra demand for their commodities to raise prices abnormally. Why is it always so wicked for workingmen to do in a small way what their critics habitually do in larger and more aggressive ways?

When the Chicago school board refused, this week, to name a school building the "John P. Altgeld," but struck that name out of a committee's report and substituted "Ambrose Plamondon," the name of the father of one of the trustees—who flially voted for the amendment, by the way.—it acted considerably. Altgeld's fame needs nothing of this kind to keep it green; but the fame of Plamondon, whoever he may be other than a father, might wither and fade if his son and his son's associates on the school board had