

The Public

LOUIS F. POST, Editor

Volume IX

Number 424

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1906.

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EDITORIAL

Bryan and the Presidency.

Mr. Bryan's attitude with reference to the Presidential nomination in 1908 has been disclosed by a St. Louis friend, M. C. Wetmore, who publishes a letter just received from Egypt, where Mr. Bryan wrote it. In this letter, as reported, Mr. Bryan says:

I am satisfied that the things I have been fighting for are growing, but who will be most available in 1908 is a question that cannot be answered now. I shall not do anything to secure another nomination, and do not want it unless circumstances seem to demand it. Time alone can determine that.

In that frank declaration there is nothing new to Mr. Bryan's more intimate friends. When the tide of popular sentiment began a year and a half ago to break away from the plutocratic channels

in which it had been flowing, and its trend toward democratic ideals became more and more obvious, Bryan's popularity as a national leader visibly grew. So his friends naturally turned to him as their candidate for the presidency in 1908. But his invariable response was in the same spirit and to the same effect as his recent letter to Mr. Wetmore. He recognized the tendency of public opinion to accept the ideas for which he had been fighting; and he was not insensible to the fact, equally plain, that the popular tendency toward his cause was running also toward himself. But he firmly refused to forestall the future. He would not consent to make his personality an object of contention to the possible detriment of his cause, nor assume the responsibility of entangling his friends in any premature campaign for his nomination. Time might develop a better or more available candidate, he said, and he wished in that event to be free in his own mind and to leave his friends free in theirs, to decide in the interest not of a man to whose personal fortunes they were bound, but of the common cause to which they were devoted. This is one of the things that honorably distinguish William J. Bryan in American politics. He is a leader and not a place hunter.

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Carl Schurz.

With the death of Carl Schurz there passes away the most distinguished of the democratic exiles whom we received from Germany upon the collapse of the popular uprisings of 1848. No puritan New Englander of two hundred years before contributed more to the democratic spirit in American life. Carl Schurz was a man of ideals and convictions, whose convictions never lacked courage and whose ideals were instinct with democracy. It has been said that he was uncompromising and therefore impracticable. He was uncompromising, as every man has been whose memory has survived his funeral wreaths. But he was not impracticable—in any worthy sense. He was indeed impracticable when crime was afoot and he was wanted for a partner. But in adjusting differences of policy for worthy ends, he was one of the most practicable of men. Being human, he did not always clearly distinguish between eddies and currents in the great stream of democratic progress. He consequently misread the popular unrest of 1896, and like other genuine democrats similarly deceived by superficial