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**Merchants and Civilization.**

A friend asks what significance there is in the gathering of commercial men in convention. Well commercial men have led the civilization of this world from the beginning. Commercial men first started caravans into central Asia; they first built rude boats and started out to explore the oceans of the world. The exchange of what a man has for what some other man has and to make money by the transaction has been, perhaps, the most persistent attribute of human nature. How long since the caravans started no one knows, but we believe the Tyrians were the first successful sailors. The caravans brought in the spices and the "dyed garments" from the east to the shores of the Mediterranean; the Tyrians first ventured out to sea in row boats, and later supplemented the oars with the sails of many colors that we read of in the bible. The models of boats have been found in the ruins of Tyre as finely lined as any modern boats. The Tyrians explored the Mediterranean and passed out of the "Pillars of Hercules" and along the coasts north and south. They were sailors and merchants combined and took to the sea to sell their wares. How many thousands died from pirates, from storms, from being tossed on strange shores, there is no record, but they perceived; they built better and better ships and extended their voyages farther and farther. It was to Hiram of Tyre that Solomon applied for ships and men and cunning workmen.

In more modern days the commerce that the merchants of Venice created is more familiar history. But really it was the merchants and sailors of Germany and Holland that finally brought around the freedom of central Europe. They manufactured goods, they built and adorned cities, they built ships and explored all the shores of the North and Baltic seas; at last they put away the kings that sought to draw too much tribute from them, and from early in the thirteenth to almost the close of the fifteenth century were the great controlling force of central and northern Europe and before either Luther or Calvin appeared, had liberty for their watchword, which then included both personal freedom and freedom of conscience.

They formed a great league and that league grew until it dictated to kings. It was from these that England first learned to understand the possibilities of trade with England. Old Francis Drake captured one of their ships loaded with the rich goods of the Orient, and though the proof was clear that the act was that of a buccaneer, he sailed his prize into an English port and Old Queen Bess would never give it up. Though England had circumnavigated the world, she was far behind the Germans and the Dutch in her shipping and commerce until after the dispersion of the great Armada. Then she took on a prestige that she had never had before; then it seemed to dawn upon her merchants that because of her

location and manifold harbors she possessed advantages which her rivals could never compete with and she began in earnest to make her conquest of the seas. But those old German and Dutch merchants and sailors, while demanding all privileges for themselves were not at all disposed to reciprocate; they were mighty near pirates themselves when it came to dealing with ships of other nations in distress, and it required almost three centuries to teach them that other people had rights which they were bound to respect. One great source of their revenues was the profits of their fishing boats in the Baltic. That sea in those days fairly swarmed with herring, on one of its shores were salt springs where they could cure their catches, and as all Europe was Catholic at the time their sales were almost limitless. They had a law that no ships might put to sea in the winter months, but they made an exception if a ship was loaded with herrings and beer, on the ground that both were needed and both were in a measure perishable. They had no compasses to sail by, their ships were clumsy and their rigging most crude; they as a rule hugged the shore and there were no lighthouses. But they persevered, and grew rich, the nature of their occupation made them both brave and saucy, and they finally worked out at least the beginning of the deliverance of Europe from the thralldom of priests and kings.

**The Nominations and Platform.**

The Republican convention nominated Mr. Taft for president and Mr. Sherman for vice president. Mr. Taft is a very great man. A fine scholar, a great lawyer, his order of mind is that of a trained judge; his executive ability has been tested in many ways and has been equal to every occasion. He brought order and peace to the Philippines; he brought order and effective work at Panama; he prescribed the remedy for Cuba, and below his splendid abilities he is one of the most genial and resolute men in the nation. He has few, if any, superiors. If elected president he will take the office as a trust; he will not run it by impulse or by inspiration. His aim will be to do the best he can for all the people of the United States. He is in every respect a strong, great, thorough American. If elected president he will be nearer like Abraham Lincoln than any man since his day, although he has never been subjected to the hard discipline that Lincoln was, but he has had varied and extensive experience. He knows how to handle men. He is a just man in all his instincts, and rich and poor will alike get their deserts from him. He is as kindly and wise as was Lincoln; he is as brave as was Lincoln; he has his whole country at heart as much as ever Lincoln had it. There will be no emanations of wild impulse or angry passion from the White House if ever he is the president. He has no awe of great wealth, and where wealth is taking advantage of the laws or of the conditions of the country to do wrong things, he will find a remedy. At the same time he does not assume in advance that rich men are naturally rogues. He has been in the limelight for several years and has never failed. If anyone thinks he will not be president if elected they are mistaken in the

man. He understands thoroughly where the responsibility will be and who will have the praise or the blame as may be, and both as a selfish and a patriotic thought he will want to do his best.

We do not know so very much about Mr. Sherman, except that he has been twenty years in Congress; that among his fellow members he stands first-class as an able, careful, broad-minded American, and better than all his public record is that among his neighbors and friends where he has lived all his life, their belief is that he is one of the biggest men in all this nation.

The platform generally is a good one. It puts in an anti-injunction plank which in effect is that unless the emergency is extreme no restraining order shall be issued except the other side be first given a hearing. Mr. Gompers wanted to make labor unions exempt from the operation of the injunction law. That would mean simply the beginning of chaos. Of course, it would not be granted. The papers tell us that Mr. Bryan thinks that plank in the Republican platform is a make-shift and a fall-down. If Mr. Bryan and the Democracy go any farther they will make a mistake. The country is yet too young for any political party to start out with a proposition to throw discredit on the courts of the country. Conservative people will not have that for they rightly judge that the safeguard of the country is its courts.

On the tariff the platform is all right. The only criticism is that it ought to have been done four years sooner. One significant expression in the platform is that the tariff must go no further than the difference between the wages of this country and of foreign countries; that the labor in this country must be protected, and it is true that through a tariff the burden to the people is the least and that the laborers and producers generally in this country must be protected against the pauper labor and child labor and half-fed labor of the old world.

The plank on the merchant marine is merely a makeshift, a platitude, indeed, because it simply expresses a wish without stating any means through which the wish can be accomplished.

The platform is entirely silent on the mining of this country, except that it asks for a mining bureau because of the extensive proportions to which mining has attained. We presume the framers of the platform had in thought mostly the coal and iron mines of the east, for it had not a word, in tracing up the causes of the wonderful prosperity of the country since the Republicans were in power, it had not one word for the vital, moving principle of the country, which is gold, and with which the few miners in the west have supplied the government and the nation and made possible all its advances. Of course it took credit to the Republican party for the prosperity, and perhaps it was natural for the framers of the resolution to ignore the effect of gold and silver mining in the last sixty years, although it is a plain case that the prosperity boasted of is more due to the mining of those precious metals than to any other ten causes combined.

In a few days now the Democrats will have their convention and then the campaign will be-

<i>All grocers sell it</i>		<i>Made in a clean bakery</i>
<i>This label on every loaf</i>		<i>This label on every loaf</i>