

The Fairfield News and Herald.
SUPPLEMENT.

IMPRESSION FROM ANDERSON.

(Greenville News.)

The meeting at Anderson on Saturday was interesting and in several respects important. It was the occasion of Captain Tillman's first appearance as a candidate in this Piedmont country, where he must find his strength when the contest becomes close and hot and the time for voting is near. This section is the home of the ideas Captain Tillman claims to represent. He brings no new doctrine here. The farmers of Anderson, Abbeville, Greenville, Spartanburg and Laurens were fighting for economy, lower taxes, fewer office holders, no public luxuries and fair apportionment and had found strong allies in the Piedmont country before Captain Tillman appeared as a portentous figure in the political sky.

For four or five years they have been hardening their faith and concentrating their strength for reform with Tillman as an incident. On the answer to the question whether they will exchange that for Tillman with incidental reform, Captain Tillman's political fortunes depend.

For these are people who stick—quiet people, slow to think and act sometimes, cautious and shrewd, but once enlisted in a cause sure to be found the last rally for it, to be trusted to hold an unbroken front at the centre when the lines in advance of them have been broken down, the flanks are wavering and the enemy is coming on headlong and apparently irresistible.

If Captain Tillman can capture and hold the Piedmont belt he will have a force telling in aggression and a citadel for defence. The Anderson meeting gave the first opportunity for study from direct, immediate and collected observation of the question whether this important advantage will be his.

I always try to be entirely frank in dealing with the public. I earnestly, strongly hope to see Captain Tillman beaten and I intend to do all I can to beat him.

Admiring him as I do for some of his qualities, respecting his rights and liking him personally, I regard the methods used by his friends and himself as unwise, unfair and undemocratic. During the ten years I have controlled the Greenville Daily News the paper has steadily and consistently favored and fought for the ideas represented by what is called the Farmers' Movement. I love those ideas and believe in them with my whole heart and soul and value the Farmers' Movement as the means for giving them effect. I believe if Captain Tillman and the horde of lesser men clinging to his coat tails and clustering on his shoulders to get into power with him are allowed to ride this Movement they will break it down and destroy it. This statement is made that those who read what I have to say of the meeting at Anderson may allow for possible bias and understand that the wish may be father to the thought.

I made, however, a strong and earnest effort to observe the proceedings with even judgment and impartial eyes. My opinion is that the newspaper man in his professional conduct ought to be without sentiments, emotions or prejudices—a machine for recording facts as they occur and for studying causes and following them logically to effects; and I try to live up to it.

After study and observation made with this effort to be impartial, I came from Anderson with the distinct impression that Captain Tillman had lost ground there during the day. There appeared to me a cooling of the ardor and a lessening of the confidence of his friends in the crowd and more disposition than there was at the first to accept the fact of there being two sides to his candidacy and occasion for some sober thought.

In the first place, there are 3,500 white voters in Anderson County at a rough estimate. About 3,500 votes were cast there in the primary of two years ago. Taking out the women, boys and the scattering visitors from other counties, it is safe to say that were not more than 1,000 Anderson voters at this meeting. That is not such an outpouring as Anderson would show in bright weather and with the roads good if her people were as intensely interested in Captain Tillman's cause as they are supposed by some to be.

There is no doubt that the crowd was largely in favor of Tillman. The only means we on the stage had of judging was by the cheering and the volume of that for Tillman was from twice to three times as loud as that for Colonel Earle. Yet it must be remembered that it was a Tillman meeting, called by Captain Tillman's friends to hear him.

The significant factor of the meeting, to my mind, was the large number of men who said nothing. They sat in row after row—solid, ruddy, sturdy, comfortable looking farmers; the kind of men whose influence in local election is eagerly sought by politicians, whose quiet weight tells heavily on public sentiment in their neighborhood. They were interested listeners; they heard all that was said, caught every point that was made, laughed at everything funny—and gave token, by word or act, so far as could be seen, of how they thought or who they favored.

Five or six men in a crowd can make a good deal of noise. One or two hundred can do a power of cheering and emit a great volume of sound. The impression made on me was that Captain Tillman had in the crowd from one to two hundred determined, active and eager partisans who will support his claims on every occasion and make a great show of strength and force; that there were thirty or forty or maybe fifty as determined and active against him—most of them probably young men from the towns—and that the bulk of the solid farming vote while favorably disposed toward him is in a condition to be controlled one way or the other by events between this time and election time and consideration of past events and present reasons.

Colonel Earle spoke under many disadvantages. He began with the knowledge that the crowd was against him and he was embarrassed by the open hostility of some of Captain Tillman's more enthusiastic partisans who appeared to be willing to shout him down altogether but for the conservative influence of those around them and the demands of Captain Tillman and Chairman Latimer for free

speech and fair play. Yet there was an assurance of being impressed by him in the crowd—not definable in words or figures but nevertheless distinct. The shouters seemed to be somewhat subdued toward the close and there was a noticeable absence of anything like the exultation or satisfaction that comes to a body of men along with the moral consciousness of success or triumph.

I left Anderson impressed with the belief that Captain Tillman's first effort in the up country was a failure; that he had certainly gained no ground and probably lost some; stronger than ever in the hope that his boom is now near its strength and that as the people have time and opportunity to analyze his methods and position and reason out the tendencies and consequences of both they will reject his leadership—which to me appears boss-ship.

I have written this in the first person and used instead of the editorial "we" the individual "I"—with a distinct repulsion to the letter and an effort to get around it every time it has been written here—because I wanted the matter to appear simply as the impressions made on one man who tries to be honest, impartial and outspoken by an event which has importance and significance in our political history.

The strongest impression of all was the danger there is in parts of the country where people are less orderly and law-abiding and more excitable than our people of serious trouble resulting from hot words on the stand during these meetings. The most important lesson to be taught just now is the need of peace, forbearance and good humor in all circumstances and efficient policing at such gatherings. Without them one or two drunken men or fools on either side might start a riot which would bring unending disaster to the State. Nothing worse could come to us than a blood feud between classes. A. B. WILLIAMS.

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JAMES PAGAN,

Supervisor of Registration.

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