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The Denver Platform.

Who drew the Denver platform? And what were the circumstances of its adoption?

Of gossip on this subject there has always been a plenty. It was said last year that Mr. Bryan rejected all aid, framed the document himself, put it into the hands of Gov. Haskell, then his nearest friend, and practically ordered the convention to accept it. Certain it is that he was much pleased with that part of the convention's work, and in his canvass interpreted it without an if, an and or a but.

Fortunately, as the Senate is just now discussing that platform, there are members of the body who should possess full information. Clarke of Arkansas, Stone of Missouri, Newlands of Nevada, Simmons of North Carolina, Frazier of Tennessee and Daniel of Virginia were members of the platform committee at Denver. Did they accept the convention's expression of principles perfunctorily? They accepted the candidate, and in the campaign did what they could for him. But at least two of them—Mr. Simmons and Mr. Daniel—have in the present tariff debate shown but small consideration for what was said by the convention on the subject of tariff reform.

Mr. Bryan is aroused, and wants to know the reasons of those who have gone, and are going, contrary to the party's creed formally pronounced. It is not a case of ambiguous language. Take the case of lumber. Nothing could be clearer than that was made. The democratic party was pledged to free lumber; but senators and representatives of that party are now supporting a duty on that article.

And is it not strange to hear that, as the party lost the fight, the platform went by the board, so to say? Are we to understand that had the democracy won last year all of its votes in Congress would now be found in the free lumber column? Why? If democratic constituencies are behind the democratic votes for a duty on lumber, would they not have been behind them in case of success at the polls? If not, why not?

But, it seems, Mr. Bryan himself on one occasion when in the House, repudiated a plank that had appeared in a democratic national platform. And so the plot thickens. Let us hear more about that. No victory was ever more disastrous to a party than that of 1892 was to the democracy. Populism that year became a secret ally of the democracy, and Nebraska voted only indirectly for Mr. Cleveland. The populist ticket, drawing from the republicans, carried the state, and there and elsewhere the populists played the democratic game. Mr. Bryan was a democrat, but helped corral the populists, and was so active he incurred the reproach of being a populist. A year or so later he was warned away from a Virginia campaign on the charge that he was not a democrat, but a populist.

Well, this debate need not close when the final vote is taken on the Payne bill and maybe it will not. Mr. Bryan's paper is a weekly publication, and there are nearly seventy-five weeks before election day in November, 1910.

Fireworks Regulations.

The fact that children have been accustomed to fire off gunpowder in different forms on the Fourth of July is no justification for continuing the barbarous practices which have made that day a time of terror and mutilation for years past. It is to overcome this tendency on the part of the youngsters who indulge in the dangerous noise-making processes of the Fourth that the movement for a safe and sane celebration has been inaugurated. Parents who decline to take part in such a reform because it may deprive their children of the "fun" to which they have been accustomed on the Fourth, are standing in the way of a change which is intended to save life. Their own children may be the next victims of unrestrained "celebrating." There is no assurance of safety as long as it is possible for juveniles to buy exploding devices. Some years ago cannon crackers were put under the ban in this city, and it was supposed to be impossible to obtain them. But new forms were invented to circumvent the regulation, being within the measurement limits prescribed, but compensating by greater power for the lack of size. These crackers have been the cause of many accidents. One of the surest ways of advancing this reform is to execute rigidly the regulation against the sale of powder and fireworks of all descriptions.

Having observed the situation of the empire on a base ball field, Mr. Taft may naturally feel more or less diffident about taking a hand in legislative differences.

Suspicion is growing that G. Bernard Shaw writes a few plays incidentally to his regular work with a special view to the celebrity that comes from having them suppressed.

Seattle is already claiming that its exposition beats the Jamestown record.

National Decadence.

When David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University, remarked in the course of an address at Bryn Mawr College the other day that France is a decadent nation he and all his hearers were startled by a sudden uprising of the school's French teacher, who denounced the statement as a lie. The incident was temporarily closed by the withdrawal of the impulsive Frenchman, but it has since been reopened. Ambassador Jusserand, who by a strange coincidence is now in California, the scene of Dr. Jordan's educational labors, charged with the duty of presenting to San Francisco the medal bestowed by the French nation upon that city for its plucky recovery from earthquake and fire, has taken serious issue with Dr. Jordan. This fact has rendered it important for the critic of the French to explain or retract his statement. The latter would have been the wiser course, but Dr. Jordan has preferred to justify his remarks. His explanation is not entirely happy. He says:

"I meant that France is a decadent nation only in the sense that it has deteriorated with Italy, Spain and other countries because of the wars and other conflicts in which its people had engaged.

"The United States is decadent in the same way. The civil war cost one million of men, the majority of whom did not leave offspring, though possessed of all the qualities to make a great race.

"There are now, and always have been, great men in France, representing the best there is in the human race. But it is the average stature and energy of the mass of the people which have been injured by war—a fact which has been repeatedly asserted by French authorities themselves. There is no such thing as a decadent race, but where the strongest men are drawn off by war the average stock is correspondingly lowered."

The dictionary definition of decadence is "a process of deterioration, a decline in force of excellency, decay." If the civil war started a process of decay in the United States it has remained for Dr. Jordan to discover the evidences ahead of all other analysts and philosophers. It is to be observed that he declares in his explanation that "there is no such thing as a decadent race," a statement at variance with his general declaration. If there is no such thing as decadence why use the word at all in an analysis of national forces? If there is such a thing as national decadence the process must have originated with the first conflicts between masses of men. It is impossible on such a basis to conceive of national progression and evolution.

National growth is a matter of far more than population. It involves other elements than physical virility. It is hardly to be conceived that the United States would have been more advanced as a people had the civil war not been fought, had the problems which it solved been left alone, had secession been permitted, had national disintegration been allowed to progress. The cost of this great solution in blood and treasure was immense, and the country suffered intensely from the effects of the onslaught and the strife. But that it entered into a process of decay or deterioration in consequence is not to be admitted for a moment.

Dr. Jordan's experience may suggest the wisdom of greater care in the preparation of addresses to be given even before girls' colleges. In these days no platform speaker can hope to go unheeded or, if he blunders in fact or in tact, to remain unanswered or unrebuked.

Mack and Guffey.

This news is from Pittsburg:

"Col. James M. Guffey held a two hours' conference with Norman E. Mack, chairman of the democratic national committee, in this city yesterday. Mr. Mack was on an automobile trip with his wife. It is the first time the two democratic politicians have met since the Denver convention.

"Col. Guffey said tonight: 'I met Mr. Mack yesterday and had a long talk with him. We did not discuss politics.'

"Mr. Guffey was asked if he and Mack had buried the hatchet. 'We have always been the best of friends,' he replied.

"'Did you discuss the candidacy of Gov. Harmon for President?' Mr. Guffey was asked.

"'No, we did not talk politics,' he replied."

As they clasped hands at the close of the interview, Col. Guffey said to his friend: "Mack, the newspaper boys will find out about this meeting and put to me the usual question. Do you consider that we have talked politics?"

Mr. Mack smiled, and replied: "Let me have your views on that point."

"I don't think we have. All about Denver and what followed is reminiscence, not politics. Politics is something alive—something kicking today, or likely to be kicking in the near future. For an instance, if I were to ask your opinion of what those dodgasted fellows in Congress calling themselves democrats are doing on the tariff question, that would be politics. Or if I were to ask you for an expression of opinion as to the gabble about Bryan for another nomination, and you were to give it, that would be politics. Do you follow me?"

"Perfectly, and agree with you."

"But Denver is but a reminiscence. You already knew my opinion of Bryan and Haskell and all that bunch. And, for that matter, the country knows it. I expressed it last year with frankness, and nothing has occurred since to change it. A man in meeting an old friend is entitled to run over in conversation any old matter of the past. Don't you think so?"

"I do. And let me add without flattery that your conversation today has been most interesting. I've enjoyed every word of it."

"So then if I tell the boys that we did not talk politics you will bear me out? They are an incredulous lot."

"I will. I don't know that my support will help you any, either with the boys or the public, but I'll back you. As you and I understand matters, we did not talk politics."

"By the way, tell me something about the magazine. I have seen the prospectus, but you know how careful a fellow must be about a prospectus. Between ourselves, what is the game?"

"Just as stated. No joke. Things are so muddled that something must be done, and it occurred to me that I could not put time or means to better use than by spreading democratic principles."

"Well, say. If you find out what they are, let me know, and I'll help you spread 'em."

As most of the civilized countries of the world are discussing the question of increased naval efficiency, Japan should experience no uneasiness when this government decides to fall into line.

The New York opera manager who met with an automobile accident probably found the experience tame compared to his customary encounters with tenors, prima donnas and musical critics.

Many people will object to joining a controversy as to whether Betsy Ross made the first American flag until it has been decided whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare.

Anybody who has to work hard while others take summer vacations should consider Senator Aldrich and feel comparatively lucky.

The real object of regulating Independence day celebrations is to prevent the general need of observing July 5 as a day of repentance.

If warships discover any reliable method of economizing in coal they should communicate at once with the ordinary consumer.

There have been moments when Senator La Follette has almost seemed to favor secret service surveillance of statesmen.

The Alabama man who proposed to 200 women before he found one who would accept him seems to have the making of a patient and industrious family man.

Whether or not a navy is a promoter of peace, it is undoubtedly a promoter of international hospitalities.

Bloody Breathitt.

It was idle to suppose, as some persons did, that the killing of Judge Hargis by his son would put an end to the feuds in Breathitt county, Ky. Bloody Breathitt will remain bloody for years to come. When the feud or the mob spirit takes possession of a community, town or county, it is not easily conquered. The man Callahan shot yesterday has figured in the lawlessness of his section for years, and had extraordinary luck in keeping a whole skin as long as he did. Some one of his enemies—not necessarily the one who shot him—will next be picked off, and so the work will go steadily, if not merrily, on.

None of the people concerned in the Philadelphia car strike got exactly what he wanted. But a strike that does not result in a great many things that nobody wanted is more or less a subject for congratulation.

SHOOTING STARS.

BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

Technical.

"Uncle Silas," said the man who takes an interest in people, "I am afraid you went fishing last Sunday."

"I specks I kin prove er alibi. When you jes' hangs a line in de water an' never gits a nibble, you can't call dat fishin', kin you?"

Casual Comment.

"You think that peach-basket hat improves her appearance?" said one girl.

"Yes," answered the other. "It is so large it almost hides her face."

A Jungle Jingle.

Said the gnat to the gnu
In an African street,
"I'm expecting in you
Some gnourishment sweet."
But the gnu sped away
With a step that was light
And answered, "Gnay, Gnay!
At least gnot to-gnight!"

Modern Disadvantage.

"Some of the greatest men in our history studied by the light of pine knots."

"Yes," answered the young man, "they could afford pine knots. They lived before there was any lumber trust."

Prompt Action.

"I want to ask your advice," said King Midas. "You've heard that everything I touch turns to gold."

"Yes," answered the financial expert.

"What shall I do about it?"

"Get out a prospectus and start in declaring dividends so that our stock can be floated before the myth experts get busy."

The Post Card Crop.

All the violets have faded,
Other flowers have passed away;
For the summer leaf has shaded
Spots where sunbeams used to play.
But the tourist tribe, light-hearted,
Forth on various ways set sail,
And the post card crop, once started,
Never has been known to fail.

Pictures of the torrid tropics,
Glances at a northern shore,
Sidelights on a thousand topics
Lightly flutter to your door.
Viewed as "works of art," they're flagrant.
They are just a bright bouquet,
Souvenirs with memories fragrant
Of the friendships far away.

The Rivers Are Still There.

From the New York Sun.

It is easy to understand the Mississippi valley politician who in one breath paints radiant pictures of the great river swarming with re-created fleets and in the next breath demands that Congress shall appropriate untold millions for deep waterways so as to make those commercial navies possible. He is in his business for what it will produce in available cash. He wants "boards" everywhere, countless myriads of paid agents and a refreshing shower of government money through fifteen anxious and receptive states. Then he can point with pride to his work as a rainmaker, and whether as a congressman or a local legislator or in the still more lucrative position of a "boss" he will grow fat with influence and take a new lease on his job. But just why the merchants, the shippers, the producers and the traders of the valley, if they believe their interests will be promoted by a restoration of the old steamboat lines, do not get together and revive the ancient conditions is not so clear. The Mississippi is as deep and as navigable as it ever was. We have just had evidence that the largest vessels can go as high up as Natchez—about four hundred miles from the Gulf of Mexico. All well informed persons were aware of that, as indeed they are aware of the further fact that the river is entirely practicable for hundreds of miles above Natchez and throughout the system of its confluents and tributaries—the Ohio, the Missouri, the Cumberland, the Tennessee, the Arkansas, the Red, even the Yazoo and the innumerable accessories that drain a domain larger than France, with Spain and Portugal thrown in for lagnappe.

Fly Fighting.

From the Indianapolis News.

Civilization follows the trail of the fly catcher rather than the cow catcher. The plague of flies that was sent on the Egyptians would, in the mind of the modern agent of sanitation, easily rank as the greatest of all plagues. "The fly in the ointment" means that there can be no anointing. Health boards everywhere are sounding warnings against the fly. The old-fashioned housewife who allowed neither light nor air in her parlor lest a fly enter was fighting the battle all alone. There ought to be no flies in a civilized community, but until we reach that blessed state the battle must go on. The fly is the product of filth, and should be feared as typhoid fever or any other scourge. There is no excuse for it, yet it exists. The screen door is a confession, and at the same time a necessary protection. Until the whole community joins in the battle to prevent the breeding of flies every one must alike guard against the winged poison that is everywhere in the summer air.

Terror in Chicago.

From the Chicago Post.

A reminiscent touch of the mad, wild ways of our younger days was given Chicago yesterday when City Forester Prost issued public warnings "against the planting of dense shrubbery along parkways because of its use as a place of concealment by hold-up men." And won't the Indians use it, too? Will not the savage Pottawattomies ambush us on our way downtown if we permit anything larger than a violet to grow along our defenseless boulevards? And how about the trees which Mr. Prost is going to set out? Won't the wildebeeste and the banderlog take pot shots at us from their leafy branches? Evidently the public safety demands that all living things of green within the city walls shall be torn out at once. Either that, or we'll all have to carry firearms, as we did when Capt. Whistler held sway over old Fort Dearborn.

The Menace of Rabies.

From the Philadelphia Ledger.

That rabies is a disease preventable by strict quarantine and by strictly enforced regulations concerning dogs is a fact that is likely to be more and more impressed upon the consciousness of this community, if the reports to the state live stock sanitary board of the prevalence of the malady shall be confirmed. Although the extent of the malady has doubtless been greatly exaggerated by the natural fears of the people, the counter error of ignoring it ought not to be allowed to prevent the taking of needed precautions.

Food for Feuds.

From the New York Herald.

A Kentucky sheriff, noted for his part in Breathitt county feuds, has been shot because of a row over the management of a church. When church disputes can start Kentucky feuds it is evident that feuds are not going to die out for lack of material to thrive upon.

Chase Him.

From the Birmingham News.

The harder road the house fly has to travel the better for the public health. Are you making things disagreeable for the house fly?

Stands for War.

From the Milwaukee Free Press.

Senator Bailey's latest outburst shows that deliberations of the recent peace congress had no effect upon him.