

# THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Some of the incidents which made the convention at St. Louis the most dramatic held by any political party of recent years

By Charles Erskine Scott Wood

**P**HILOSOPHERS who study human nature either laugh or weep. Democritus laughed; Christ wept. The Democratic Convention was cause for laughter and for tears. So was the Republican Convention. So is every National convention.

The monkeyishness of it! Men screaming and chattering they knew not why, save that others were screaming and chattering, too. The childishness of it! Men dancing and jumping on chairs, parading about with banners and flags, drunk with the unintelligent, emotional frenzy of a campmeeting. The claptrap stage machinery of it!

## Parker's Nomination

For example, Judge Parker was nominated by Martin Littleton in a florid speech of rhetoric and epigrammatic platitudes, one of which was, "He is the servant of the party, not its master," rudely shattered by Judge Parker's telegram supplying a gold plank to the platform, which the convention had carefully omitted. At the close of this speech, there was a very evident stage preparation for a popular outburst. Men were stationed here and there to begin it and spur it on, waving flags and yelling. When it showed a tendency to subside, new devices were resorted to,—parade of delegates, or a fresh outburst from the band. Again and again, as it showed signs of a natural death, it was galvanized by some fresh feature sprung upon the audience with all the stupid skill of the manager of a new comic opera. By these means the uproar was kept going twenty-nine minutes, I think. I will not pretend to be exact on so important a matter, as gentlemen on the platform timed these explosions carefully, and gravely announced, "Cockrell's demonstration lasted ten minutes longer than Parker's," and seemed jubilant. So of each outbreak for each nominee; his adherents made desperate efforts to break

the record in minutes of insensate yelling. Much of it was started to new bursts by messenger boys and youths, admitted with their elders, who yelled for the boys' pure love of noise. The real anxiety of each band of partisans to keep its "demonstration" going longer than the other fellow's suggested that candidates could be chosen on the theory that the longest fit of childish and senseless yelling should be the decisive factor—as Judge Bridlegoose gave his decision to the lawyer with the heaviest load of books. In truth, to Judge Parker, as to each nominee, there was a natural outburst of applause, limited in its extent, and which, though prolonged by tactics, could not be made universal. There was just one outburst for a candidate which was spontaneous, universal and spontaneously prolonged: that was for Senator Cockrell of Missouri, who, when the votes were counted, got just forty-one votes. So much for the value of yelling.

There was only one man in the convention who, every day, at every hour of the day, in season and out of season, was hailed by an applause so spontaneous that it seemed as if every one of the twelve thousand acted on the same instant, and so prolonged that only his own efforts to restore order produced the desired silence. This was Mr. Bryan. The difference between his reception and all others was as the difference between musketry which rattles with increasing volume as the men catch the order, and an instantaneous overwhelming clap of thunder near by. No one could be blind to the fact that, though he was overwhelmingly beaten in the convention, and all the world knew it, yet if popularity had been the test, he would have swept the New York delegation and their friends like straws in the wind.

The Chicago Chronicle, in formally becoming a Republican paper, said (July 12): "When one thousand men repre-

## Bryan's Popularity



Mayor McClellan of New York, Tammany's choice for the Democratic candidacy.

senting the Democrats of the United States, most of them chosen with much difficulty as representatives of what is called conservative Democracy, permit a mere demagogue to bully them into wrongdoing, it must be that the demagogue is greater than the party."

Certainly the impression left on me individually is that when Mr. Bryan retired from the convention, exhausted, sick and defeated, he was and is the biggest man in the party, and more a power than ever. Nor is the reason a secret. He has the courage of his convictions. He is outspoken. He uses no trickery or subterfuge, but all men may plainly see his course and hear his views. He stands for the plain people—the masses. He fears a plutocratic oligarchy and the fall of free democratic government, and he is not afraid to say so. That is why he is "greater than his party," as the Chronicle chooses to put it.

It has become plain to a great many

people that we are following the path of every other republic in history. Wealth will and does govern, and our wealth is rapidly gravitating by legal monopolies and privileges into the hands of a few who can and will dictate to the many, or rather, will wield the powers of government over the many.

The cry of "demagogue" no longer frightens men from saying this truth, and the courage of Bryan is one reason why others are not afraid. True, he mistakes the remedy, in my opinion, when he proposes free coinage of silver at sixteen to one, rather than absolutely free money and free banking, all laws removed and the economic force left to adjust itself by natural laws, or when he proposes state ownership of railroads. But assuming that he is mistaken in a

particular remedy, there are millions who say to themselves, "His effort is for the greater freedom and prosperity of the masses, and better a mistake in the effort than *no effort*." "Better a loss of prosperity in an experiment than a loss of freedom." "Prosperity may be regained, freedom can not." Such thoughts as these are now in the minds of millions who used to hoot at Mr. Bryan as a young demagogue. The small banker is beginning to see that he, too, will have his day and be swallowed. Where are the hundreds of competing railroads of twenty years ago? Where the thousands of Democratic newspapers? Where the thousands of independent banks?

The tendency to centralization of all property is clear, and in one lifetime it has become apparent that there is no avenue of wealth which can be traversed by any man without crossing the path of a few men of great power, as Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Morgan.

#### Plutocracy

Mr. Rockefeller, to me, is only a type, only a piece on the human chessboard. I view him simply as a product of our laws and conditions. Knowing that it has always been the wealth which has ruled every country, and that that country is most democratic where the wealth is by natural causes distributed according to individual effort, I object to the concentrated wealth of Mr. Rockefeller and of such as he, as a menace to democratic liberty. I object because such wealth is not the natural reward of individual effort, but of laws which permit monopolies, and I would annul the laws which send a monopolistic flow of wealth toward this oligarchy. Such, I take it, is Mr. Bryan's view. He has no personal hatred for individuals, but he fears for democratic freedom. In honesty of intent, he seeks a remedy; others seek other remedies. But the remedies are all untried and must be uncertain till tried. Yet *something* must be done, so the particular remedies sink into comparative insignificance compared with the great danger which millions of common men are fearing more and more every day. In Mr. Bryan they see a fearless leader, a sincere man, a man who has surrendered all ambitions rather than surrender his principles; a man who, like Lincoln, is a great commoner, casting his lot with the plain people, becoming, by his eloquence and ability, their champion, whose clear aim, whatever may be his theories, is that there shall be a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

You can not down such a man by a defeat in a convention, nor by his death, because the man is a *cause*. It is the inevitable struggle, and another Moses for the people will rise up.

I believe that Mr. Bryan is stronger today than he ever was, and that if he can become the apostle of a sound theory for economic freedom, he will, if he lives, yet lead a revolution at the polls. The force of character is invisible, but irresistible. There is scarcely a child in the land who could not have told the difference between Mr. Hill and Mr. Bryan in the convention. One is a shifty politician—a "peanut" politician, if you please. His creed is "get votes." If you have a belief, give it up and suppress it, if it may frighten votes. Be tricky, or, in his

own language, "Skate over the thin ice quickly." Be cowardly; either talk double, or talk not at all, lest you lose votes. Votes, votes, votes! that is the creed, the principles and the ambitions of Mr. Hill. He is the mere politician. He, if any, is the demagogue. Mr. Bryan, on the other hand, says, It is better to be defeated right than to triumph wrong. He puts principle before votes. He is candid with the people. All men know his views. He is fearless, sincere and honest. Yet he was wiped off the slate in this convention by Mr. Hill and Mr. Belmont. Why? Back of Mr. Hill is wealth, power and the conservative ideas of the East. Back of Mr. Bryan are only the common people and the radicalism of the West. To-day the conservative wealth power triumphs. The answer emphasizes the truth of Mr. Bryan's fears. The plutocratic oligarchy, which, like the Erie Railroad, has no politics, turned in fear from Mr. Roosevelt, a man they could not dictate to. For his assault upon the Merger, for his interference in the coal strike, for what wealth calls his demagogic character, they fear him. He is "unsafe," just as Bryan is "unsafe," just as all men will be "unsafe" always and forever who interfere with privilege and wealth, just as all men in the past have been "unsafe" who attacked kingship or other legal monopoly. Cornelius Gracchus was "unsafe." Savonarola was "unsafe." Voltaire was "unsafe." Cromwell was "unsafe." Lincoln to the slave wealth was "unsafe."

Change is inevitable, yet the reformer is always "unsafe" to the upper classes who must be reformed that the masses may progress. And the eternal truth is that this world was made for the masses, not for the few. That which stands between the people and their natural right must go—slowly, it is true—but surely. And no man dare say that any question which permits an answer for the privileged few and a different answer for the great mass of men, is ever answered rightly till it is answered in favor of the many. This world is for the life which it bears, not for the parasites upon that life.

It is said "Wall Street" first attempted to defeat Roosevelt for nomination, but finding his hold on the people too strong, and losing their chief politician (Mr.

**Hill and Bryan--  
a Contrast**

Hanna), they turned necessarily to the other party; and in the mere vote-seeker, Mr. Hill, they find their tool.

Judge Parker is a most estimable man. Probably neither he nor Mr. Hill view themselves as the refuge of the plutocratic oligarchy. Probably both regard themselves as benefactors to the race in killing "Bryanism"; but to me it is clear that the aggregate money power of the country, which fears Mr. Roosevelt as a firebrand, an uncontrollable demagogue playing to the galleries, is supporting Mr. Hill.

The politician who battles for principle is a very "rare bird." The plain people who have their hands to the plough, who seek nothing—these have principle; but the mass of politicians seek office or graft. The campaign fund is a very great temptation, because even if you lose the fight still you have had the fund, and no questions asked.

The "pie counter" atmosphere was very prevalent at the convention. You breathed it everywhere. Men were abundant who wanted to be marshals or district attorneys or collectors—on down to the mere heeler for the campaign, who had his eye on "Belmont's Wall-street Barrel." Even Senator Tillman, in his address to the convention, said: "For God's sake, let us get together and win! I am tired of being out." If that remark is carried to a logical conclusion, as perhaps it is hardly

**Hankering for the  
Flesh Pots** fair to do, it means, Let us give up principles and combine to win. Let us get at the flesh pots. Tillman didn't mean that fully, but the weariness of being away so long from the "pie counter" was evident among all the delegates, for they were politicians, more or less. They were there to pick a "winner" with a "barrel." They were tired of following a "loser" with no "sack." But a convention is an absurdity as a representative of the people, and the people never tire of following a plain poor man like Lincoln, who is their champion.

What is the relation between a convention and the people? It is laughable. A few men select delegates to a county convention. This selects delegates to the state convention. This selects delegates to the National convention, and all the way

through the bosses are watchful to see that the selections are "safe." The state delegation gets to the National convention, and unless the several members are put on committees (as all can not be) they find their duties consist in wearing a badge and shouting. If put on a committee, they find some two or three men do the work which they ratify in silence. Senator Lodge arrived at his convention with the Republican platform in his pocket. Mr. Hill arrived at his convention with the Democratic platform in his pocket, and the only contestant in committee room



Judge Alton B. Parker of New York, chosen by the Democratic Convention as its candidate for President.

was Mr. Bryan. In short, the rank and file of a state delegation are mere figure-heads at a convention, and usually represent the state machine, so that the relation

**A Convention Is  
Not the People** between the people and the convention is extremely remote, and it by no means follows that the people will approve the work of politicians in convention assembled. Platforms really mean so little that candidates and the power behind them will be more looked at.

If, as in the case of the English monarchical republic, we could go to the people

on an issue, and then be put in control of all branches of government to be responsible for action on the decision, we might hope to make a victory on a platform amount to something. But with a Democratic president and a Republican congress, what can be done for a Democratic platform? Even when the Democrats had Mr. Cleveland and a Democratic congress elected on tariff reform, it amounted to nothing against the tremendous political pull of the allied tariff grafters. So, in the coming election, the people will look at Roosevelt, supposed to be hated by the "trusts," and at Parker, silent on all points, even after the omission of the money plank was called to his attention by the newspaper men at Esopus, till he was nominated by Hill and Belmont, and they will say, what is behind

**A Close Contrast** we know; what is behind Parker we fear; so that if it be a really popular election, Roosevelt will win. If the crowded population of the East can be purchased or intimidated, Parker will win.

There is no doubt that Parker was the worst nomination which could have been made except for the money power it enlisted, and that very strength is a weakness. The Bryan people would have taken any gold man: Olney, or Gray, or Tom L. Johnson, or McClellan; but Parker was the candidate of a faction, and, as is popularly believed, of an undemocratic plutocratic power.

On that memorable night of nominations, as speeches went on, one could not but be impressed with the idea that the speakers were speaking to tickle their own ears, to earn the reputation of "spell binders," rather than seriously to present a candidate. The crowd grew restless. Twelve thousand people were in the hall. When Champ Clark nominated Senator Cockrell, the whole place blossomed suddenly with small American flags, and became a sort of flower garden swept by a breeze.

The night wore on, and Senator Bailey, as chairman, again and again threatened to put out disturbers; but if a speaker's voice could not be heard, it was useless to try to stem the tide of disturbance. Cries of "Cut it short," "Sit

down," "Louder," made bedlam of the place. Often was witnessed the sad case of a speaker who in his first two minutes made a climax received with thunderous applause, and who did not know enough to then sit down, but pursued his dreary way to the end amid catcalls and hootings.

One of the eloquent exceptions was the speech of Clarence Darrow, of Chicago, in seconding Hearst. It was not a placating speech, but one of defiance. With fine, virile sentences he arraigned the Hill faction before him as those who had scuttled and deserted the ship of Democracy. But, through praise and blame, Hill, Belmont and the New York delegation sat serene. Indeed, after the first boom of applause for Parker, it was noteworthy that when, in the numerous seconding speeches that were made, spontaneous and quite hearty applause would break out at the mention of Parker's name, the New York delegation as a whole sat unmoved and did not join in the applause. Perhaps it was a desire to get to the end speedily and begin voting. Perhaps it was that security in the result which robs an occasion of excitement.

Mayor Rose of Wisconsin nominated



Senator Henry G. Davis of West Virginia, the Democratic nominee for Vice-President.

Wall in a plain speech, calling on New York not to insist on forcing down the throats of the convention a candidate who was not even the candidate of that part of the state which gave Democratic majorities. "Why is it," he asked, "that we must accept a candidate, who, silent himself, is vouched for by those who never give a New York Democratic majority, and is opposed by those who always give the Democratic majority in New York?" (That is to say, Judge Parker and Hill represented the state, which is Republican, and Murphy and the opposition represented the city, which is Democratic.) But to this also the New York delegation only returned pitying smiles. In fact, I was reminded of times when I have had to appear before a committee of a legislature whose members had the price of their votes in their pockets. They listened, but were serene and only impatient for their release.

A fiery individual named Sam White, from Iowa, jumped on a chair and said, "On behalf of the unbought and unpurchaseable Democrats of Iowa"— He was then suddenly pulled to the floor by other members of his delegation. The New York delegation for the first time awoke from its calm, and every man jumped to his feet. One began protesting and sought to get the chairman's ear. It was laughable, because there had been free whispers of the purchase of delegates by Belmont's agents; yet when the disheveled Mr. White was brought to the platform and allowed to complete his sentence, he said, "On behalf of the unbought and unpurchaseable Democracy of Iowa, I second the nomination of that sterling jurist, pure man and great Democrat, Judge Alton B. Parker." So everyone laughed, and the New Yorkers had their fright for nothing. On Mr. White's return to his delegation some one knocked him down, and for a time the night was enlivened by a fight. Then the chairman of the Iowa delegation took the platform and explained that the utterances of the fiery White were unauthorized, and would receive the treatment they deserved, and the Iowa delegation would vote for Mr. Hearst, at the proper time.

#### **Fisticuffs and Fraud**

It became so apparent that speakers



Charles Francis Murphy, "Boss" of Tammany, defeated by David B. Hill for the control of the New York delegation to the Democratic Convention.

were there to air their own eloquence, that finally, about two in the morning, all seconding speeches were by resolution limited to four minutes. But the crowd had very sensitive ideas on time. They would begin to yell "Time!" "Time!" before the speakers had talked a minute. One weakness of speakers they quickly caught. It seemed as if no seconder could get up and say, For such and such reasons I second Judge Parker; but it was always, I second one who, etc., etc.; who has, etc., etc.; whose purity of life, etc., etc.—until the crowd would yell, "Name him! Name him! Spit it out! Time! Time!"

When Nebraska's name was reached in the call for nominations, a gentleman in the delegation arose, but the calls for Bryan became so uproarious that finally he was obliged to rise and make the simple statement that Nebraska exchanged places with Wisconsin. His turn came at a little after four o'clock in the morning. Daylight had crept into the hall, which was still packed, a-flutter with flags and fans. Ten thousand people were there, from the crowded floor to those leaning down from among the rafters of the galleries: a crowd that had sat the long night through and grown intolerant of even

four-minute speeches. (All these things are worth considering by the philosopher at this convention.)

As Mr. Bryan wedged his way from his seat in the delegation to the platform, the air was rent with cries of "Bryan! Bryan!" and again you felt in your bones the sincerity of the thundering applause.

**Bryan's Power** No man's personality does this. He stands for an idea, and he would be dull indeed who could not then feel in that daylight hour that so far as the people were concerned, there was but one man in that hall.

The roll call had proceeded to the end, and the secondings of Parker left no doubt that Hill was triumphant and that Parker would be selected just as soon as the roll could be called. Bryan, who had worked sixteen hours on the platform committee, and had been fifty hours without sleep, stood there, waiting for the applause to subside. Hill sat in an aisle seat in the New York delegation, directly in front of him. Bryan let his eyes rest upon Hill's face for a moment, and Hill turned away slightly; then Bryan ran his eyes over the crowd. In all this he seemed to be absent-minded—as if thinking. Presently, he saw that the chairman—Senator Bailey—was vainly endeavoring to quiet the applause, which was becoming hysterical. So Bryan stepped forward, and, raising both hands, motioned for silence. The noise slowly died to a mutter that dropped suddenly to death-like silence, and Bryan began. For an hour he held that impatient crowd upon his

**Bryan's Eloquence** lips, in silence, save as a short roar of applause would mark some point he made. When he spoke of coming there to surrender the trust given to him by the Democratic party, two old men on the platform near me began to cry, and quite a noticeable flutter of handkerchiefs was seen over the hall. His speech was not rhetorical; there were no theatrical effects; but, earnestly and as a prophet of the people, in simple, clear phrases, he stated the peo-

ple's danger, and begged for some other choice than Roosevelt and the god of war, or Parker and the god of gold.

Take it all in all, it was the most impressive, the most really eloquent speech I have ever listened to; and though it can not read as it was spoken, it is given here in full, as the one great incident of an historical occasion.

When he concluded, there was silence, as if they waited for more; and then, as he turned away, there was an outburst of applause that rang to the roof and would not be quieted so long as he remained in sight.

**His Reception** I take it that the newspapers who ridicule this man can not see beyond to-morrow and the pay counter. In the after time, when all of us are dust and Time shall be winnowing that dust; when presidents shall count for their worth as men, and some who were not presidents shall be greater than some who were; when all shall be measured by their service in the uplifting of mankind; when the greatest of men shall be seen as mere puppets in the play of Destiny—then the names of Hill, Belmont and Rockefeller will be utterly over-

**Belittling Bryan Is Senseless** looked and forgotten, and pause will be made only over such names as Bryan, men of men, who have battled with what power was given them, honestly, for the good of struggling man—the toiling and stricken men, women and children of the common mass.

Wealth rules for the day in every age, but only ideas are eternal and move the world. Back of Mr. Belmont and Mr. Hill is money; back of Mr. Bryan is an idea. You can retard it, hide it, for a time, but you can not jail it or kill it.

"Sixteen to one" was a mere suggestion. It is as nothing compared to the great truth he announces and agitates: that the Republic stands in the shadow of a plutocratic oligarchy. His open-breasted battle against this danger gives him his strength and will give him his fame.

## BRYAN'S SPEECH

Gentlemen of the Convention: Two nights without sleep, and a cold, make it difficult for me to make myself heard. I trust that it will be easier in a moment, but as I desire to speak to the delegates rather than to the visitors, I hope that they at least can hear.

Eight years ago a Democratic convention placed in my hands the standard of the party and gave me the commission as its candidate. Four years later that commission was renewed. I come to-night to this Democratic convention to return the commission and to say that

you may dispute whether I fought a good fight; you may dispute whether I finished my course, but you can not deny that I have kept the faith. (Cheers.)

As your candidate I did all I could to bring success to the party. As a private citizen to-day I am more interested in Democratic success than I ever was when I was a candidate. (Cheers.) The reasons that made the election of a Democrat desirable were stronger in 1900 than in 1896; and the reasons that make the election of the Democratic candidate desirable are stronger in 1904 than they were in 1900.

The gentleman who presented New York's candidate dwelt upon the danger of militarism, and he did not overstate the dangers. Let me quote the most remarkable passage that ever occurred or that was ever found in the speech of nomination of any candidate for President. Governor Black, of New York, in presenting the name of Theodore Roosevelt to the Republican convention, used these words:

"The fate of nations is still decided by their wars. You may talk of orderly tribunals and learned referees. You may sing in your schools the gentle praises of the quiet life. You may strike from your books the last note of every martial anthem, and yet out in the smoke and thunder will always be the tramp of horses and the silent, rigid, upturned faces. Men may prophesy and women pray, but peace will come here to abide here forever on this earth only when the dreams of childhood are the accepted charts to guide the destinies of men. Events are numberless and mighty, and no man can tell which wire runs around the world. The nation basking to-day in the quiet of contentment and repose may still be on a deadly circuit, and to-morrow writhing in the toils of war. This is the time when great figures must be kept in front. If the pressure is great the material to resist it must be granite and iron."

This is a eulogy of war. This is a declaration that the time hoped for, prayed for, of perpetual peace will never come. This is eulogizing the doctrine to brute force and giving denial to the hopes of the race. And this President, a candidate for re-election, is presented as the embodiment of that ideal, the granite and the iron, to represent the new idea of militarism. Do you say you want to defeat the military idea? Friends of the South, are you trying to defeat the military idea?

Let me tell you that none of you, North, East or South, more fears the triumph of that idea than I do. If this is the doctrine that our nation is to stand for, it is retrogression, not progression; it is the lowering of the ideals of the nation; it is the turning backward to the age of force. More than this, it is a challenge to the Christian civilization of the world, and nothing less. (Loud applause.)

Twenty-seven hundred years ago a prophet foretold the coming of One who was to be called the Prince of Peace. Two thousand years ago He came upon the earth, and the song that was sung at His birth was "Peace on earth, good will toward men." (Loud cheering and applause.) For 2 000 years this doctrine of peace has been growing. It has been taking hold upon the hearts of men.

For this doctrine of peace millions have given their lives. For this doctrine of peace thousands have crossed oceans and given their lives among savage tribes and among foreign nations. This doctrine of peace, the foundation of Christian civilization, has been the growing hope of the world.

And now the ex-governor of the greatest state of the nation presents for the office of President of the greatest republic of all history a man who is granite and iron, and who represents not the doctrine of peace, but the doctrine that the destinies of nations are still settled by their wars. (Loud applause.) Will you of New York present a graver indictment against President Roosevelt than that? Will you of the South present a graver indictment against President Roosevelt than that? I do not ask what is the character of the man; he may have every virtue. He may be exem-

plary in every way, but if the President shares the idea of the man who nominated him; if the President believes with his sponsor at Chicago that wars must settle the destinies of nations, that peace is but a dream, that women may pray for it, that men may prophesy about it, that all these talks of orderly tribunals and all this are but empty sounds; if he believes these things he is a dangerous man for our country and the world. (Prolonged cheering and applause.)

I believe he ought to be defeated; I believe he can be defeated, and if the Democratic party does what it ought to do I believe he will be defeated.

How can you defeat him? I tried to defeat the Republican party as your candidate. I failed, you say? Yes, I did. I received a million more votes than any Democrat had ever received before, and yet I failed. Why did I fail? Because there were some who had affiliated with the Democratic party who thought my election dangerous to the country, and they left and helped to elect my opponent. That is why I failed.

I have no words of criticism for them. (Applause.) I have always believed, I believe to-night, I shall always believe, I hope, that



William Jennings Bryan, the most conspicuous figure at the convention.

a man's duty to his country is higher than his duty to his party. I hope it will always be true that men of all parties will have the moral courage to leave their parties when they believe that to stay with their parties will be to injure their country. The success of your government depends upon the independence and the moral courage of its citizenship.

But, my friends, if I failed with six millions and a half to defeat the Republican party, can those who defeated me succeed in defeating the Republican party? If under the leadership of those who were loyal in 1896—(applause)—we failed, shall we succeed under the leadership of those who were not loyal in 1896? (Applause.)

If we are going to have some other god besides this war god that is presented to us by Governor Black, what kind of a god is it to be? Must we choose between a god of war and a god of gold? Is there no choice between them? If there is anything that compares in hatefulness with militarism it is plutocracy, and I insist that the Democratic party ought not to be compelled to choose between militarism on one side and plutocracy on the other side. (Applause.)



We came here and agreed upon a platform. We were in session sixteen hours last night, if you can put sixteen hours into a night. We entered the committee room at eight last evening, and left it at twelve to-day. But, my friends, I never spent sixteen hours to better purpose in my life—(cheers)—because I helped to bring the party together, so we could have a unanimous platform to go before the country on in this campaign. (Applause.)

How did we get it? It was not all that I would have desired. It was not all that your Eastern Democrats desired. We had to surrender some things that we wanted in the platform. They had to surrender some things they wanted in the platform. But by mutual concession and mutual surrender we agreed upon a platform and we stand on that platform. (Great cheering.)

But, my friends, we need more than a platform. (Applause.) We have to nominate a ticket, and that is the work of this convention. Had you come to this convention instructed for any man to the extent of a majority, I not only would not have asked you to disregard your instructions, I would not if I could have prevented it, permitted you to disregard your instructions. (Applause.)

I believe in the right of the people to rule. I believe in the right of the people to instruct their delegates, and when a delegate is instructed, it is binding upon him. But, my friends, not a majority came instructed for any candidate. That means that you were left upon your responsibility to select a candidate, and a grave responsibility it is. Grave is the responsibility resting upon these delegates in this convention. I have not come to ask anything of this convention. Nebraska asks nothing but to be permitted to fight the battles of Democracy. (Cheers.)

Some of you have called me a dictator. It was false. You know it was false. (Cheers.) How have I tried to dictate? I have suggested that I thought certain things ought to be done. Have not you exercised the same privilege? Why have I not a right to suggest? (Applause.) (A voice: "You have.")

Because I was your candidate, am I now estopped to ever make suggestions? (Cries of "No, No.") Why, sir, if that condition went with a nomination for the Presidency, no man worthy to be President would ever accept a nomination—(applause)—for the right of a man to have an opinion and to express it is more important and sacred than the holding of any office, however high.

I have my opinions about the platform. I made my suggestions. Not all of them were received. I would like to have seen the Kansas City platform reaffirmed. (Applause.) I am not ashamed of that platform. I believe in it now, as I believed in it when I was running upon it; then, I was your candidate, but the people in the Democratic party did not agree with me, and their will was supreme.

When they veto my suggestions I have to accept. There is no other court which I can appeal to. I have not attempted to dictate about candidates. I have not asked the Democrats of this nation to nominate any particular man. I have said that there were many in every state willing to be President; and I have said that out of six millions and a half who voted for me in both campaigns, we ought to be able to find at least one good man for President. (Loud applause.)

I have made these suggestions only in a general way. I am here to-night as a delegate from Nebraska. I have not confidence enough in my own opinion to tell you that I can pick out the man and say that this man must be nominated or we shall lose. I have, I think, a reasonable faith in my own opinions; at least I have this faith, that I would rather accept my own and stand by them if I believed them right, than accept anybody else's if I believed them wrong. (Loud applause.)

Nebraska is not here asking for the nomination of any man. We now have a platform on which we all can stand. (Loud applause and cheering.) Now, give us a ticket behind which all of us can stand. (Prolonged cheers.)

You can go into any state you please and

get him. I have not as much faith as some have in the value of a locality. I have never been a great stickler for nominating candidates from doubtful states on the theory that their personal popularity would elect them.

I have had so much faith in the virtue of Democratic principles that I thought a Democrat ought to vote for a good man from any other state before he would vote for a bad man from his own state. (Applause.)

I do not believe much in this doctrine of state pride, and I have found that when people come with a candidate and tell us first that we must carry a certain state, and that that man is the only one who could carry the state, they do not put up a bond to deliver the goods if they are accepted. (Applause.) And, anyhow, a state that is so uncertain that only one Democrat in the nation can carry it can not be relied upon in a great crisis. (Applause.)

Now we have our platform. Select your candidate. If it is the choice or the wish of this convention that the standard should be placed in the hands of the gentleman presented by California; the man who, though he has money, pleads the cause of the people; the man who is the best beloved, I think I can safely say, among laboring men of all the candidates proposed; the one who more than any other represents opposition to the trust question—if you want to place the standard in his hands and make Hearst the candidate of this convention, Nebraska will be with you in the fight. (Cheers.)

But, my friends, Nebraska does not make any request. If you think that the gentleman from Wisconsin, who, though faithful in both campaigns, was not with us on the money question—if you think Mr. Wall, agreeing with the East on the gold question and with the West on other questions, would draw the party together—if you want to place the standard in his hands, Nebraska will be with you and contribute her part. (Cheers.)

If you prefer an Eastern man and find some one who will give both elements of the party something to believe in, something to trust in, something to hope for, we are willing to join you with him. My friends, it is not always that every available man is mentioned. There is in the State of Pennsylvania a man whom I mention, without consulting his delegation, without consent of the man himself; an Eastern man who voted with us in both campaigns, but against us on the money question, and, I believe, in sympathy with the people; a man twice governor of a great state (cheers); a man who only two years ago, when a candidate again, carried the great State of Pennsylvania outside of the two great cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburg. If you Eastern Democrats who have insisted that your objection to me was my belief in free silver—if you Democrats are willing to take a gold man, I am willing to let you have your way on that question in this man, for I will trust his honesty on all questions. (Applause.)

I only mention these candidates as illustrations. I came here to second the nomination of a man, and I come to second his nomination not because I can assert to you that he is more available than any other person who might be named, but because I love the man, and because on the platform we have adopted I don't think there is any good reason why every Democrat in the East might not vote for this man. I come to second the nomination of Senator Cockerell, of Missouri. (Long-continued applause, followed by cheers.)

He is the Nestor of the Senate. He is experienced in public affairs. He is known; he has a record. He can be measured by it; and, my friends, I would be willing to write my indorsement on his back and send him out to the world, willing to guarantee everything he did. (Loud applause.) They say that he comes from the South. What if he does? I do not share the feeling that some people have that the Democratic party can not take a candidate from the South.

They say he was in the Confederate army. What if he was? I do not share the belief of those who say we can not nominate an ex-Confederate. (Prolonged cheering and ap-

plause.) My friends, that war, that cruel war, was 40 years ago. Its issues are settled; its wounds are healed. The participants are friends. We have got another war on now, and those who know what the war between plutocracy and democracy means will not ask where a man stood 40 years ago; they will ask: Where does he stand to-day in this war?

My friends, I believe that the great issue in this country to-day is plutocracy versus democracy. You have said that I had just one idea, the silver idea. Well, awhile back, they said I had only one, but then it was the tariff idea. There is an issue greater than the silver issue, the tariff issue—the trust issue.

It is the issue between plutocracy and democracy; whether this is to be a government of the people, by the people and for the people, administered by officers chosen by the people, administered in behalf of the people. It is either this, or it is to be a rule of the moneyed element of the country for their own interest alone. The issue has been growing. I want you as Democrats here assembled to help us meet this question.

You tell me the Republican candidate stands for militarism. Yes, but he also stands for plutocracy. You tell me he delights in war. But there is another objection to him, and that is that he does not enforce the law against a big criminal as he does against a little criminal. Laws are being violated to-day, and these laws must be enforced. The people must understand that we are to have equal rights for all and special privileges to none. (Applause.)

We have had the debauchment of elections. It was stated the other day that in the little State of Delaware \$256,000 was spent in the state on one day just before the election of 1896. Some say that we must have a great campaign fund, and go out and bid against the Republicans. My friends, I want to warn you that if the Democratic party is to save this nation, it must not save it by purchase, but by principle. Every time we resort to purchase we cultivate the spirit of barter, and the price will constantly increase and elections will go to the highest bidder.

If the Democratic party is to save this

country, it must appeal to the conscience of the country. It must point out the dangers to the republic, and if the party will nominate a man, I care not from what part he comes, who is not the candidate of a faction, who is not the candidate of an element, but the candidate of a party, the party will stand by him and will drive the Republican party from power and save this country. (Applause.)

My friends, I believe that you could take a man from any Southern state who would go out and make a fight that would appeal to Democrats, all Democrats who love Democratic principles, and to Republicans who begin to fear for their nation's welfare—take such a man, and I believe that he would poll a million more votes than the candidate of any faction whose selection would be regarded as a triumph of a part of the party over the rest of the party. (Applause.)

I simply submit it for your consideration. I am here to discharge a duty that I owed to the party. I knew before I came to this convention that a majority of the delegates would not agree with me in my financial views. I knew that there would be among the delegates many who did not vote for me when I sorely needed their help. I was not objecting to the majority against me, nor to the presence of those who went away and came back. But, my friends, I came, not because I thought I would be delighted to be in the minority in our opinion, but because I owed a duty to the 6,000,000 brave, loyal men who sacrificed for me. (Cheers.)

I came to get them as good a platform as I could. I have helped them to get a good platform. (Applause.) I came to help get as good a candidate as I can; and I hope that he will be one who can draw the factions together, who can give to us who believe in aggressive, positive, Democratic reform something to hope for, and to those who have differed from us on the main question—that he can give them something to hope for, too. And I close with an appeal that I make from my heart to the hearts of those who hear me: Give us a pilot who will guide the Democratic ship from militarism, the Scylla of militarism, without wrecking her in the Charybdis of commercialism. (Great demonstration.)

