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Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., Oct. 6, 1899.

SHAKESPEARE'S VIEW.

Causes of the Fall of the Great Roman Nation. Victim of the Greed for Money. The Once Grand Republic Was Bled to Death by a Corrupt and Heartless Plutocracy—Centralization of Wealth the Forerunner of Decay. Moral for the Present Day.

Wherever Shakespeare focuses the searchlight of his genius, all that is most obscure becomes plain, and in the play of "Julius Caesar" he has illuminated the causes of the fall of the Roman republic with the radiance of his almost superhuman intellect, writes W. V. Byars in the Mississippi Valley Democrat. The Romans who made the republic the greatest of the earth were wonderful men—wonderful in their manliness, their disinterested love of country, their sober and self denying lives, their stern resistance to all which offended their sense of virtue. The republican of early Rome was capable not merely of dying nobly for his country. He knew how to live nobly for his country. The men were abstemious in drink and diet. The glutton and drunkard were looked on with equal contempt. The women were reserved, calm, dignified, full of a noble modesty. Their dress was so simple, they wore so few ornaments, their tastes were so unostentatious, that their husbands and fathers did not need to sell their own virtue to gratify that feminine love of luxurious display which, whether in Rome under the Caesars or in France under the late Bourbons, is always the surest sign of national decay, the surest indication of the coming revolution.

In the time of Julius Caesar all this survived merely as a tradition. The polished and learned Cicero could admire it and betray it by such weakness as we see illustrated in the Ciceros of our own times, men of good intentions without moral courage or the strong individuality which virtue alone can give. The statesmen and soldiers of Rome had become dissolute and effeminate. Julius Caesar, the greatest of them all, had become so corrupt that in his triumph his own soldiers sang aloud doggerel ballads accusing him of the most infamous vices. In his Gallie wars he took with him as companions the young sons of Roman millionaires, curled darlings of the Roman plutocracy, who, having nothing else to do, longed for the smell of blood and the sight of carnage to give them what the Parisians call "a new emotion."

The educated upper class robbed the conquered without pity until from an aristocracy virtuous and self denying they became a plutocracy luxurious, licentious, cruel to an almost incredible extent. The vices which in every country accompany this social and political condition are too horrible for contemplation.

Had the people been sound the public would have been saved, even had there been no Cato, no Brutus, ready to fall upon his own sword for liberty. But as Shakespeare shows the Roman common people they, too, had lost all virtue. They had become a mere mob of hero worshippers, liable to be led here and there by any designing scoundrel who made a trade of courting their favor in order to sell his popularity at the highest market price. Caesar had become the idol of the mob because "he brought many captives home to Rome whose ransoms did the public coffers fill." The idea that their greatest gain must come through the robbery and oppression of the weak had taken so strong a hold upon them that the republican idea no longer influenced them at all. Imperialists, rejoicing in the oppression of others, they were the easy victims of plutocracy which had fed fat its abominable vices on the spoils of the world.

The idea of civil liberty which had made Rome great survived only to reproach its degeneracy. The civil wars between Sulla and Marius, Caesar and Pompey, had confirmed the power of plutocracy. Base adventures from all over the world, money lenders, usurers, speculators, robbers of the public treasury, allied themselves with the survivors of a decayed aristocracy. Men whose backs had been cut by the whips of the lictors, mere vagabonds and petty thieves, were advanced by the power of money to the highest station. The world was searched over to find enough to be worthy to intoxicate them. They held the doors of preferment, and the young men of Rome who wished advancement must either renounce his hopes or prostitute his powers to their purposes. If he were base enough for their use, his advancement would be rapid.

Mena, Pompey's freeman, dragged his thrice three ells of purple toga along the sacred way while virtue starved in the byways. The army was used now by Pompey, now by Caesar, to turn the trade of subjugated provinces to Rome, and under the colonial system at its climax the wealth of the world was centralized in the city, where, of course, it was controlled by the most desperate scoundrels of the plutocratic class imperialism had created. It was against such conditions that the dagger of Brutus was raised in protest. The end was inevitable, and Shakespeare tells what it was in the close of the tragedy:

Mena—How died my master, Strato?
Strato—I held the sword, and he did run on it.
Antony—This was the noblest Roman of them all. All the conspirators save only he, did that they did in envy of great Caesar. He only, in a general honest thought, and common good to all, made one of them. His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

"This 'Gates Ajar' design is a handsome one," said the tombstone man. "It is just what I want," said the widow, "he never shut a door in all our married life without being told."

The Missouri Victory.

Influences are at work with a view of demonstrating that the election of Judge Shackelford in the Eighth Missouri congressional district is a vindication of some new found Democratic gospel and its sponsors. As a matter of fact, the campaign was fought out on the old lines. Here is the full text of the official campaign letter sent to each voter in the district, Democrat, Republican and Populist:

"The result of the election to be held in this district Aug. 29 is made doubly important by the fact that it is regarded by both the great parties as the opening engagement of the great battle of 1900. The contest rises above all personal considerations. The nominee of the Democratic party stands for the restoration of silver coinage, against the further increase of the national debt by the substitution of national bank currency for the present greenback circulation; against a big standing army, which the imperialistic policy of the present Republican administration makes necessary, and against the dangerous aggregation of trusts which have reached such startling proportions under the protecting influence of Hananiam. The Republican nominee in this contest is the avowed advocate of the single gold standard and if elected to congress will vote with his party not only against restoring silver to its coinage rights, but also to wipe out the present greenback circulation and substitute for it national bank currency, which entails no burden upon the people. The Republican nominee also stands for the imperialistic policy of President McKinley, which has for its purpose the establishment of colonial dependencies similar to those of Great Britain, a policy which entails a constantly increasing standing army and completely reverses the principles upon which the American republic was founded."

The above should settle the controversy over the lines on which the battle was fought and the victory won. All the speakers followed the instructions to keep the money issue at the front. The so called Populist candidate was what we call a middle of the roader. That brand of Populists are against silver. They bear no relation to the Kansas-Nebraska Populists. The regular Populists of the Eighth district made no nomination and supported Shackelford. It was a victory for silver and fusion, and nobody can make anything else out of it.

Disinter the Corpses.

This is the irreverent way in which Urey Woodson of the Kentucky Messenger speaks of a dead and decaying political corpse.

Simon Boliver Buckner has come to life again. He has at least managed to lift the lid of his political coffin a wee crack in order to mutter this in ghostly tones:

"It is very natural that Colonel Bryan should support the pretensions of a nominee who, as is conceded by the mass of his own supporters, obtained his nominations by fraudulent methods, because a crime similar to that enacted by the Kentucky convention was perpetrated by the Chicago convention in 1896 in wrongfully ejecting the Michigan and Nebraska delegations and illegally seating the contesting delegation from Nebraska, of which he was a member, and which legal action made him a possible candidate for president. He could not consistently refuse his support to a nominee whose position is so closely allied to his own."

The Democrats of Kentucky could well afford to disinter Simon Boliver and inject the elixir of life into him in order to induce him to go over the state and repeat this attack on Bryan. It is of such as Buckner that the majority of the present bolters are composed. Few of them, however, are so indiscreet as this senile person. By all means resurrect him and exhibit him in the campaign throughout the state.

At His Old Game.

From Washington comes the interesting information that the Hon. Thomas Henry Carter of Montana has staid over at the national capital long enough to assure our noble executive that he (Thomas Henry) is prepared to pledge the sold vote of the entire west to our noble executive upon a platform defending the old flag and approving the war in the Philippines. This is not surprising. The Hon. Thomas Henry Carter laid the foundations of his fortune while pursuing the honorable calling of a book agent, in which vocation he developed to its fullest extent the faculty of administering what is colloquially known as "the bull con" to all and singular his victims. He has never lost this valuable accomplishment, and he is undoubtedly exercising it upon our noble executive with some clear and well defined purpose.

If the truth were known, Mr. Carter probably dropped in to see about some census appointments, and with a view to establishing amiable relations with the pie dispenser he proffered offhand certain goods which he has about as much ability to deliver as had his satanic majesty when upon a historic occasion he proposed to transfer certain real estate to which he didn't have even a tax title. It is not worth while to take Mr. Carter seriously.—Chicago Chronicle.

Plutocratic Farmers.

According to the Republican editors, prosperity has made bondholders and plutocrats out of the western farmers.—Atlanta Constitution.

"Wan av these wingin' doors wid 'Push' on th' outside an' 'Pull' on th' inside remind me av politics," said the janitor philosopher. "Ye made 'Push' until ye git inside, an' th' in' everything is 'Pull'."—Chicago Record.

Victory Sure in 1900.

I think that the Democratic party in the Chicago platform gave a free, full and clear expression of the Democratic creed governing a number of subjects. I think we ought to abide by that platform without any amendment or modification. I shall be entirely satisfied with any nominee who will sincerely accept that platform as the basis of his political administration. Mr. Bryan is the leader of the party on the silver plank, and he will be the logical leader on the issue that will be formed if the Republicans succeed, as I suppose they will, in passing their currency bill. If the Republicans insist upon the legal enactment of the single gold standard, silver will be the predominant issue of the next campaign.

The Republicans will attempt to disguise the purpose and effect of their legislation, but the real question will be this: Shall the coinage of the silver dollar be prohibited and the legal tender power limited to \$10 in one payment? On that question I have little doubt that every Democrat and every bimetalist in the United States will vote for the Democratic nominee. I think a silver man will be elected president.

I think the United States government is doing everything that is requisite to crush out Aguinaldo's munitions of war are supplied by some combination somewhere on the coast of Asia. That combination is fighting the United States for a mercenary and malignant purpose. It is counting upon popular sentiment in the United States to recall the American troops and make terms with Aguinaldo. That expectation is utterly vain and without any foundation in fact. The people in this country are satisfied with the results already accomplished by this war. They are determined to press it to a successful conclusion. We deplore the revolting features. We regret that innocent men are being led to their death by Aguinaldo and his selfish adviser, but that is only an incident in the suppression of any insurrection. I am of the opinion that Mr. Root is going to make an admirable secretary of war. He is a very able man and a very fine lawyer, and he seems not to be involved in any of the complications that have caused disturbance in army circles.

There will be no difference of opinion among the American people in regard to the war. Both leaders of the two great political parties, Mr. McKinley of the Republicans and Mr. Bryan of the Democrats, concur that the war must be prosecuted to a successful conclusion. No political party that opposes the United States government in its earnest attempt to suppress the insurrection in the Philippines will be sustained by the American people, and I am satisfied that the Democratic party cannot be led into that attitude.—Senator Morgan.

The Coinage Ratio.

"We do not hold the ratio of 16 to 1 to be, like the law of the Modes and Persians, unchangeable. It is neither sacred nor supernal. It involves no fundamental principle. What we want is to open our mints to the free and independent coinage of both gold and silver at some precise ratio. We believe the parity of the two metals can be maintained at the ratio we propose. We want to try it. We want to begin where we left off and determine by careful and guarded experiment whether we are right or wrong. At all events, by experiment, and by experiment alone, will we reach the ratio at which gold and silver dollars can be coined on equal terms and kept at par. The American people must soon determine whether they will have bimetalism or abandon it. If we are to have it, we must begin it, and the difficulty of beginning it is augmented by every year it is delayed."

We regret to say that the extract is from Mr. Stone's speech delivered on Saturday evening, Aug. 19, at Bunceon, Mo. Mr. Stone has evidently forgotten that the ratio of 16 to 1 cannot be eliminated from real bimetalism. There are three reasons why the ratio cannot be eliminated:

1. It is the legal and long established ratio.
2. It is the ratio of production on a basis of 500 years' experience.
3. Any attempt to change it would depreciate the present full legal tender standard silver dollar, of which there are now some 340,000,000 in existence. The commercial ratio is the least important of all of the aueged obstacles to monetization of silver. It would at once adjust itself to the natural and legal ratios in answer to the inflexible law of supply and demand. To admit that there is a doubt on this point is equivalent to denying the whole principle of bimetalism.

Ohio Platforms.

Mayor Jones is running on the golden rule; Nash, Mark Hanna's candidate, is running on the gold rule; John R. McLean is running on good old Democratic principles. It remains to be seen which of the candidates will make the best impression in Ohio.—New York News.

Their Own Business.

It is as difficult to understand why a dog runs on three feet, instead of four, as it is to comprehend why a woman will wear a skirt cut so long behind that she must hold it up all the time, when she might avoid all the annoyance by making it a little shorter. But if the dogs prefer to trot on three feet, holding up the other, and women prefer to go about grasping their skirts with grim determination, it is probably their own business, and poor frail man, who chews tobacco and spits the juice on the sidewalks, ought not to complain.—Oil City Blizzard.

Impertinism Disapproved.

The issue forced by the Republicans in the Eighth Missouri district and upon which they counted for gains was the expansion policy of President McKinley. The issue of imperialism and of the Philippine war was clearly defined in the platform and while the result proves the fidelity of the Democrats to the party programme it signifies more—it signifies popular disapproval of the McKinley administration's policy.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A Hard Row to Hoe.

Missouri Republicans who desire to enlist the national organization of their party in the disheartening work of making Missouri a Republican state are having a hard time of it as the two great parties now stand on the vital issues of the day.—St. Louis Republic.

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What Gage is Doing.

The attempt of the treasury department to relieve the currency famine is an extremely instructive lesson in governmental finance. There is a widespread demand for currency of small denominations for the ordinary business transactions of the people. Paper money is the kind wanted, not silver dollars or gold dollars or five dollar goldpieces. To meet this need the best the treasury can do is to issue gold certificates of the denomination of \$20, with the open confession that even this measure will be of doubtful utility. Not one dollar will be added to the sum of money in the country by this maneuver. Its effect will be simply to add to the number of \$20 bills when the demand is for ones and twos. This may prove a relief in some directions, but it certainly cannot help the small business transactions in which the small bills are needed.

But two ways are now open for the injection of new blood into the currency circulation of the country, says The Bayonet. One is the issue of national bank notes, and the other is the coinage of gold. The first is an exceedingly clumsy method, the operation of which depends not on the necessities of the business community, but on the price of United States bonds and the probable profit in the issue of notes based thereon. The second has lately furnished a substantial addition to our stock of money, but in an unpopular form, since people do not like to use gold money itself, and the issuance of paper money against gold is restricted to notes of large denominations.

These considerations point strongly to the desirability of currency legislation which will furnish to the people the kind of money they need at the time they need it most. The present secretary of the treasury would have the banks perform this office. But why can't the government perform it as well? Whether the banks or the government is to control the national currency is one of the storm centers of the financial question and is bound to so continue as long as the administration purposes an addition to the privileges of the national banks.

Sheltering a Thief.

Captain Oberlin M. Carter, United States corps of engineers, was tried by a court martial nearly a year and a half ago and found guilty of having defrauded the government of over \$1,600,000. He was sentenced to a fine of \$10,000, three years' imprisonment and dismissal from the army. There was not the slightest doubt of his guilt. His case was reviewed by 30 legal and military officials, and all found conclusive proof that he was a criminal. His crime was infinitely worse than that of a common thief or burglar, for he appropriated funds which had been intrusted to his honor as an officer. In spite of these facts, Captain Carter has up to the present time retained his freedom, his position, his sword and his salary. He has been living in luxurious apartments and squandering gayly the money which should have been spent on the harbor improvements of Savannah.

The blame for obstruction of justice can be traced through the red tape mazes of officialdom up to President McKinley. Either because Carter is from Ohio or because of the political influence of his friends McKinley has shown an indefensible desire to lighten or remit his sentence. This conduct of the president must necessarily have a very injurious effect upon the public mind, destroying confidence in the impartiality of the law. For the lesser crime of obtaining \$50,000 under false pretenses Lord William Neville is now serving out a sentence of five years in the Wormwood Scrubs prison, England. He was a lieutenant in the British army, and his father was one of the pillars of the Tory party, yet he received prompt punishment for his crime. Why has there been this long delay in Captain Carter's case? The American people would like to know the secret of Mr. McKinley's affection for this unformed swindler.—New York Journal.

Bryan is Very Poor.

A great many of the Republican papers after the nomination of Bryan in 1896 sneered at him because of his poverty and argued from the fact that he had not amassed a fortune that he was not a fit man to be president of the United States. This line of attack is still persisted in and reminds us of an old Englishman who resided in Springfield, Ill., on hearing the result of the national convention of 1890. "What!" said he. "Abe Lincoln nominated for president of the United States? Can it be possible? A man that buys a 10 cent beefsteak for his breakfast and carries it home himself!"—Bayonet.

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