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EDITORIAL

THE MEANING OF “BRYAN.”

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TO-DAY, July 26, two State conventions are held in Nebraska—the Democratic and the Republican convention. The manoeuvres of the Nebraska Republicans, the conflict among the Nebraska Democrats, and the posture of the bourgeois, especially the Republican bourgeois press on the “issue” in Nebraska, are powerful aids to the understanding of what “Bryan” means. The aid is all the more powerful seeing that the “issue” is no less paltry an issue than the issue of county option.

Mr. Bryan has been fighting for “county option.” The Democratic primaries have resulted adverse to the Bryan option policy. A majority of fully fifty-six delegates are instructed flatly against the Bryan hobby. Surely, “county option” can hardly be dignified into a vital issue, leastwise into a national issue, in the success of which the Top-Capitalist class can scent danger to its interests, or in whose defeat these interests would find restful safety. Furthermore, an evidence of the utter unimportance of the “issue” to Top-Capitalism is furnished by the fact that the outspokenly Top-Capitalist political organization, the Republican party of Nebraska, has decided not only to insert in its platform Mr. Bryan’s county option plank, but also to endorse several other Bryan frills, such as the referendum and initiative. Significant, under these circumstances, is the loud delight with which the Top-Capitalist press has been hailing in advance “Bryan’s Defeat Decisive” in today’s Democratic convention; and the loud delight casts significant light both upon the Republican manoeuvre to adopt the Bryan “issue” of county option, and also upon the nervous excitement with which the “issue” was combated in the Democratic primaries.

The issue is not county option. The issue is “Bryan.”

Of all dangerous men to-day in the country, and in Top-Capitalist estimation, Mr. Bryan is the most dangerous. And, for once, the instinct of the Interests is correct.

Mr. Bryan's one and leading theory is "Money"—its free coinage at the ratio of 16 to 1 without international agreement. As far as that goes, the theory is so absurd that, catastrophic though its enforcement would be to society, there is not the slightest chance of its success. The man who holds such views, the body that supports him, are so distinctly marked Ichabod that, in so far as their theory goes, they have not a ghost of show. So far, Mr. Bryan would be, to the Interests, an ideal adversary. His defeat is established by himself. But there is more to this.

It happens with the bourgeois who lives in the past, that he must snort radical phrases. The phenomenon is seen markedly with the Single Taxer; it is seen still more markedly with Mr. Bryan. This snorting of radical phrases by a man of Mr. Bryan's elocutionary attributes is highly distasteful to Top-Capitalism. No elocution can "wash down" absurd economics. But even clumsy language, let alone resonant phraseology, that tears the mask and wrappage of sanctity from enthroned Interests,—that sticks—that does damage incalculable. True enough such snorting does not, can not, organize Revolution; it, however, mightily prepares by attuning the mass-mind for sound, effective, eventually revolution conduct. This work Mr. Bryan has been doing for the last fourteen years. Thus it happens that "Bryan," while "trying to make a carom" (the pushing through of irrational economics) is "pocketing the ball" (training the mind to revolutionary temperature).

This danger Top-Capitalism scents instinctively in "Bryan." Having accomplished the job of raising and then the job of luring and running the Socialist party into the ground of mooncalvery; and fatuously believing it has scotched the Socialist Labor Party; Top-Capitalism has to-day but one ambition—the ambition of destroying Mr. Bryan's prestige. A Bryan, worsted in his own State's own Democratic convention, is looked for as a busted Bryan.

Hence the hurry of the Nebraska Republicans to adopt the Bryan local option plank besides frills; hence the sinews of war furnished to Nebraska Democrats to oppose Bryan's plank; hence, above all, the loud delight of the Top-Capitalist press,

in advance of the event, to announce "Bryan's Defeat Decisive."

"Roosevelt" means a bull in a china shop; "Bryan" means a poisonous thorn in Top-Capitalism's flank.

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