

the death of an adversary should find no public expression. It implies simply that the presence of death should make our estimates of public men no less genuine in substance than kindly in form.

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Grover Cleveland was a man of pronounced characteristics, a rugged man intellectually as well as physically. He was tenacious of his opinions, loyal in his friendships, and faithful to his purposes. With his public record, only the somewhat distant historian will be able to deal fairly; for it was made under influences of a kind that are yet in ferment. Had he been a labor leader, he would have been journalistically as infamous as plutocratic papers could have made him appear; for he was temperamentally inclined to "class consciousness" in the extreme, and he had the full courage of his convictions. As it happened, his "class consciousness" identified him with plutocratic interests with which in the abstract he probably had little sympathy. A lifelong Democrat, his democracy was of the traditional type. Although he sometimes gave excellent expression to democracy in the fundamental sense, it was usually evident that he grasped the significance of his words in this respect no more than he appreciated the free trade tendency of his famous tariff-reform message. In the political era that is opening now, Mr. Cleveland could have submitted to be a Republican candidate with greater ease, probably—political traditions aside—than he could have consented to be a Democratic candidate. He did not belong on the side of the disinherited industrial masses. While some doctrines to which he held pointed that way, his social environment tended to turn the current of his sympathy in the opposite direction.

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It was at Syracuse in 1882 that Mr. Cleveland's reputation reached beyond Buffalo. As the delegates to the New York Democratic convention gathered there, they found the hotel walls covered with small steel portraits of an unfamiliar face, bearing in print the equally unfamiliar name, "Grover Cleveland." These portraits were mysteries. They gave no intimation of the object of posting them; and so famous a newspaper man as Amos Cummings, afterwards a member of Congress, fell into the error, first of satisfying himself that they were advertisements of a patent medicine dealer, and then that they were portraits of a man whose Buffalo friends were trying to strengthen politically at home with the prestige of his having been named for Governor in the

convention. When the convention assembled and the roll had been called on nominations, Cleveland's name was there; but not prominently, and few expected to hear of him again. But as the secretary was trying to disentangle the vote, there came an interruption from John Kelly, who addressed the chair and changed the vote of Tammany Hall from one of the other candidates to Cleveland. Another delegation in a distant part of the hall immediately did the same thing. Then another, and another, and another, until the secretary was relieved of his difficulties, for Cleveland clearly had the nomination. In a moment it was made unanimous. No sooner had this been done than an immense portrait of the stranger candidate rose at the back of the hall, and Cleveland's career began. He was elected by the phenomenal majority of 200,000; not because he got a phenomenally large vote, but because Judge Folger, the Republican candidate, burdened with the taint of custom house bossism, got a phenomenally small one. But his great majority for Governor of New York in 1882 made Cleveland the Democratic candidate for President in 1884. The rest is national history.

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As a former President of the United States, Mr. Cleveland bore a relation to the American people which calls for respectful consideration of his memory, regardless of partisan bias or personal sympathies. Time will assign him his true place as a statesman and disclose more clearly his character as a man. Meanwhile the best wish of the men who opposed him earnestly in life would be that those of his policies which they antagonized may be reversed as wrong, but that his motives and objects may come to be universally recognized as right.

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BRYAN THE GENUINE.*

Against the background of American public life today, two men stand out in bold relief as leaders of the masses of the people. One is Theodore Roosevelt; the other is William J. Bryan.

No one of intelligence and candor will deny this, whatever may be his personal estimate of either man. But in comparing their popularity, there is a factor that cannot be fairly overlooked.

*The portrait of William J. Bryan which accompanies the above editorial was taken especially for The Public by Alfred Cox, 215 Wabash avenue, Chicago. While this half-tone reproduction is good, the original photograph cannot be reproduced with perfection. It is artistic as a photograph, and as a portrait of Mr. Bryan it excels all other portraits of him that have come to our notice.

Mr. Roosevelt's floats in the buoyant atmosphere of official power, whereas Mr. Bryan's is self-sustaining.

No one could predict the effect of his return to private life upon the popularity of Mr. Roosevelt; it might be strengthened, or it might grow weak. Much less could any one predict the effect upon it of his being affiliated in private life with a political party out of power and almost bereft of hope of power; it might expand, or it might collapse. All that can be said of his popularity is that Mr. Roosevelt in powerful office as the representative of a powerful party is as popular—possibly a little more popular or a little less so; but as popular, let us say—as is Mr. Bryan in private life as the representative of a minority party. No comparison can be fair which ignores this difference.

It is not our purpose, however, to make comparisons between these men. Were we to do that, we should have to bring into view more subjects for comparison than their popularity, and more points of contrast than the factitious advantages in that respect which Mr. Roosevelt has and Mr. Bryan lacks. Our purpose is to consider Mr. Bryan as an actual and prospective figure in American history.

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Here is a man who at the age of 48, like Abraham Lincoln at the age of 51, has held but one public office—the same that Lincoln held, a seat in Congress. Yet in greater degree than Lincoln then, he is the idolized leader now of men who are making history worthy of their children's children's pride. There is a reason for this in Bryan's case as there was in Lincoln's; and as in Lincoln's the reason lies below the surface and is the same reason.

Bryan's enemies say that he is "a mere talker." With quite as much truth Lincoln's could have said the same of him. Even for a livelihood, Bryan depends no more upon talking than Lincoln did; for, if Bryan makes his living by talking on lecture platforms upon public questions, Lincoln made his by talking before juries upon private quarrels. It is as true of Bryan as it was of Lincoln before his election to the Presidency—no more and no less; and whether in professional fields for a living or in political fields for the common good,—that he is a talker, a "mere talker" if you please. But what is a "mere talker" who commands an ever widening and deepening respect, as Lincoln did for ten years before he became President, and as Bryan has done for twelve? Such a talker must be a thinker;

an honest thinker, and one withal who takes his hearers frankly into his confidence.

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In that quality we have the secret of Bryan's otherwise unaccountable popularity. It was the secret of Lincoln's. Bryan is a commoner, as Lincoln was. He feels with the common people, as Lincoln did. He thinks with them, as Lincoln did. And because he feels and thinks with the common people, he talks for them.

Nor does his talk fall upon unwilling ears. The people are tired of the "gum shoe" in politics. They have learned that the man who "says nothing and does things" is likely to resemble the burglar as much in his purposes as in his methods. They have learned that the man who "acts first and talks afterwards," usually does his thinking afterwards as well as his talking. So they welcome the talker. If he turns out to be a babbler, an empty phrasemaker, he quickly loses his hold. Indeed, he seldom gets a hold, for the people in the mass are sensitive to sound. The discord of a false note grates upon their ears. But if he proves to be a talker of honest thought and frank expression, he gains in popularity as he gains in intellectual grasp, and there is no objection to eloquence.

This is the kind of talker William J. Bryan has proved himself to be.

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The first words of Bryan that caught the national ear, his metaphor of "a crown of thorns" and "a cross of gold," touched a chord that will not cease to vibrate while plutocracy survives. It was genuine and thrilling to all who appreciated its allusions.

To literary experts, to be sure, it sounded like sophomoric rhetoric. Unattuned to the people's thought, their cultured minds lost the delicate allusion of Bryan's bold figure.

To languid pietists it came as a sacrilegious association of labor unions with the tragedy of the Carpenter of Nazareth. Impervious to true religious influences, they were dead to this suggestion of brotherhood.

To the plutocrat it was a reckless appeal to "lower class" hatreds. Indifferent to anything but financial success, he had no ear for the moans of the crowned and crucified, no eye for Bryan's rugged picture of man's inhumanity to man.

To all except those whose experience and thought enabled them to appreciate the allusion, this metaphor made Bryan seem like the babbler that Paul seemed to the philosophers of Athens.

But among the common people there were millions who appreciated the allusion; for they had themselves hung upon the plutocrat's cross of gold and worn his crown of thorns.

From the day of that historic utterance to this day, the greatness of Bryan's utterances has depended upon the listener's appreciation of their allusions. His speeches have been for the common people. The literary critic, the pietist, the plutocrat—except as they may since have come more in touch with the life of the masses as it is lived,—are still obtuse. Missing Bryan's allusions, they are incapable of understanding his popularity, which they are bound nevertheless to concede. But the people in the mass, who have always understood his allusions, for these go to the very heart of the lives they lead, are now attracted as seldom before to any man by their confidence in the sincerity of this one.

They have been charmed by his eloquence; but that alone is not enough to make a popular leader. They have been stirred by his democratic thought; and neither is that enough. But now that they are also convinced of his sincerity, they are ready to cry, "Behold the man!"

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So spontaneous and general has this cry for Bryan been, that nothing could resist it in his own party. The overwhelming expression of confidence he has received from the rank and file of that party is unique. For he has had no money to spend, and none has been spent for him. Except in scattered places, he has had no support from party managers, either local or national; on the contrary, nearly the whole weight of official influence within his party has been against him. Being out of office he could use none of the powers of patronage; patronage like money, in so far as it has been used at all in this pre-convention campaign, has been used almost altogether to defeat him. Nearly all the powerful newspapers of both parties have carried on a systematic campaign against him. Every influence that is usually great enough to make or unmake popular leaders, has been used to unmake him. Yet in a convention of a thousand delegates, almost eight hundred are either personally in favor of his nomination, as their constituents are, or have been instructed for it by their constituents. In other words, the masses of the Democratic party have decided in advance of the convention, and from their own volition, that their Presidential candidate shall be this man—this man without money beyond the modest income he earns with his own labor, without political

power other than the confidence the common people repose in him, without influential friends and surrounded by powerful enemies.

With no political capital whatever except his abilities, his fundamental democracy, his independence and courage, and the confidence of the masses of his party which he has won by giving them his own, William J. Bryan has mastered the political situation, and mastered it for his cause regardless of himself.

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What Bryan has thus done within his party he can do for his party. The same principles will be at stake in his campaign against plutocracy now triumphant in the Republican party, as in his campaign against plutocracy now aborted in the Democratic party.

And his appeal will be to the same kind of people. As the masses of the Democratic party are outraged by the aggressions of plutocracy, so are the masses of the Republican party, and they are ripe for revolt. This election will not depend upon the favors of corporations nor be influenced by the recommendations of privileged persons or classes. Support from those sources will be regarded by the voters as suspicious upon their face.

With William J. Bryan as the candidate of the unprivileged classes, of the men who live in the sweat of their own faces, of the American democracy, against William H. Taft as the candidate of the privileged classes, of the men who live in the sweat of other men's faces, of the American aristocracy,—with these two men as opposing leaders in a contest between aristocracy and democracy, party lines will be shattered, new alignments will be made, and democracy will win the election if it can win it at all.

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But more important than the winning of the election is making it worth the winning. Wrong often wins, but its victories are evanescent. Wickedness often gains a point, but it gains only to lose. The victories of peoples or of individuals, of parties or of leaders, are those in which they win for what is right.

As an individual, William J. Bryan has steadily won victories of that kind. A man of ideals, he has been true to his ideals. In devotion to them he has grown and strengthened in all the true qualities of great leadership.

As the party leader he will win victories for his party, in so far as his party makes its ideals democratic and its devotion to them as faithful as Jefferson's was, as Lincoln's was, and as his

own has been. In him the people have recognized integrity, ability, enthusiasm, candor, and democracy. He has become to them as he is in fact, Bryan the Genuine; and by that sign shall his party conquer.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE OREGON SITUATION IN FULL.

Portland, June 21.—Many Oregon newspapers, including the chief daily—The Oregonian—are reproaching or bewailing the slough into which the State has fallen, as they view it, and are ashamed of it as a "freak State," the fertile soil for every lunatic idea possessed by the army of cranks. It is certainly true that as the reformer must expect to be misunderstood and abused, so that aggregation of reformers, the reform State, must expect to be ridiculed and misrepresented as a State by the conservative mind. But the interesting point is not what the angry or satirical critics say, but what are the facts, and what relation do those facts bear to the welfare of mankind. As one of the cranks, neither safe nor sane, let me present the view some of us have taken for years, and the results from the attempted reforms.

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The fundamental fact was, and is, that the great inequality of social development lies in the inequality of opportunity. The inequality of opportunity is due to special privileges created by law; and the government was not, and is not a government of the people, by the people, for the people, but a government of the people, by the Bosses, for the Interests. True, Oregon, as a sparsely settled State afforded land for homes, and the pressure of special privilege was not felt as in the denser populations; but true, also, its great forests, water power, latent wealth and its dependence on railways (the only feasible modern highway) made it a rich field for the exploiter. The consequence was as usual that the political power was used for special interests, not for the welfare of the people, and the people had no choice whatever in the elections. They took the slate offered and voted like sheep. The party convention settled every question. The primaries settled the convention, the Bosses settled the primaries, and the Interests settled the Bosses.

Every legislature was a lobbying spectacle and a scandal. Legislatures which had the duty of electing United States Senators were stacked up for the purpose as far as possible, and contending aspirants vied with each other in the purchase of votes. In one case the minority faction was sufficiently strong to prevent the organization of the Legislature by refusing to attend and make a quorum, and the State enjoyed a rest from scheming legislation. But it was a sorry spectacle. In short, corruption and the lobby and a contempt for the plain voter marked the whole political program.

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The passage of the Initiative and Referendum amendment to the Constitution operated instantly,

as if by magic. A wholesome fear of the people fell upon legislators. The lobby disappeared as useless; and while legislators are not now Solons or Hampdens, they are more nearly the servants, rather than the rulers of the people.

To cut up by the root the Machine Power, which power lay in the ability to stack up a convention of dummies and hand it a "slate," the Direct Primary Law was passed, a law which uncovers the real purpose of a primary election, and recognizing that in the primary the nominations were in effect made, requires that in fact and law they shall be actually made at the primaries; and it illegitimizes convention nominations. This law also had an instantaneous effect. No conventions have since been held, and the bosses find their employment gone.

But by reason of its novelty and the obstinacy of the influential men in the dominant party (Republican), who sulk in their tents, this law has not in my opinion thus far been the success which it can easily be made; though with all its present defects I would rather have it as it now operates than the old system of a convention and a slate. Under the old system the Bosses felt a certain personal responsibility and also desired the voting strength at the polls gained by a strong candidate. Therefore each party selected with some care the most available man. Under the present system there is no organization, no personal sense of responsibility. Each candidate selects himself and nominates himself and conducts his nominating campaign at his own expense, or with the aid of friends or influences which hope to profit by him if elected. The consequence has been that the best men—the self-respecting men, the successful men—will not nominate themselves, shout their own merits and hustle in the crush and crowd for a nomination. Cheaper men, shallower men, men of more demagogic pretense than solid ability, now secure the important nominations. It is a serious defect, but can be remedied and in my opinion will be, as I shall suggest further on.

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The laws of this State provide that the people may nominate and vote for United States Senator, which, of course, under the U. S. Constitution, can only have the effect of a nomination to the State Legislature. The first experiment under this law was six years ago, when ex-Governor Geer was nominated by petition, as may be done under our law, and I was nominated by the Democratic convention. Governor Geer received the majority, and I did what I could to influence the Democratic legislators to vote for him, hoping to at least establish a movement toward accepting the verdict of the people. But the Democratic legislators refused to vote for a Republican. Their vote would not in any event have been decisive, as they were a small minority and could not in any sense exercise any influence on the result. The popular vote in this case was not taken very seriously. Governor Geer was said to be not the party nominee, but self-appointed—that is, nominated by a petition circulated by his friends, and, as his enemies said, inspired by him. It was generally accepted that the showing I made at the polls was not a genuine expression of popular opinion, but was a fake vote thrown away on me by the anti-Geer