

ELI TUCKER'S LETTER

Huckleberry Knob, N. C.,
Oct. 10, 1907.

Mr. Editor,

Dear Sir:—In my last letter I promised the readers of the Yellow Jacket that I would make a report of the Pete Pennyrite debate. Well, I want to be as good as my word, but the trouble is the debate wasn't held. Pete flew the track and went possum-hunting on the night set for the debate. He wouldn't ever try to hunt possums in the region of the school house, but went about five miles over on Fox Grape branch and never came home till morning.

There was a good sized crowd at the school house, with a nice sprinkling of ladies. Pete's friends kept insisting that Pete would put in an appearance, and kept the crowd waiting for about an hour, but finally people began to drop off one by one as the word came in that Pete had gone another way that night.

The subject Pete had selected was: "Resolved: That the Democratic party offers better inducements as a governing and enlightening power than the Republican party."

I had prepared me a little speech and was anxious to have a whack at Pete again, but I had all my trouble preparing it for nothing. It had been so long since I had given the Democratic party a general reviewing that I was kinder hungry for the opportunity once more. I wanted to carry the people back to the days of Democratic rule and ask them to live over for a few minutes those days when it made cold chills run up and down a fellow's back when he thought of that mortgage on his farm and that levy of the sheriff, and all those other grewsome realities that hung like a cloud of smoke and darkness over the people. If Pete had brought up the Democracy as a champion of white supremacy, I wanted to show how many negroes the Democrats had elected and appointed to office in different places. I wanted to cite the negro postmasters that Cleveland appointed. I wanted to remind him of the bill that Grover signed that placed the negro and white school children together in the same schools in the state of New York. In as much as I had heard that Pete said he was going to down me on the matter of the Republican party affiliating with the negro, I had intended to make my main fight along that line. I was going to cite the appointment by Cleveland of that negro Taylor as minister to Bolivia, a white man's country. I wanted to mention the appointment of Astwood, another negro, as consul to Calais, France. Also Taylor, Trotter and Matthews, all negroes, as Recorder of Deeds in Washington, D. C. And that Matthews was later elected judge of Albany, as a Democratic nominee, and that he had powers as a Supreme Court Judge. I was going to remind him of that "Bryan Dollar Dinner" at New York on April 12th, 1900, at which negro men and negro women were in attendance. I was not going to stop there. I meant to show that a Democratic president had appointed negro postmasters galor right here near home. If he had never heard of it before I was going to cite the appointment of the negro postmaster at Chestnut Knob, in Virginia; another negro appointed as postmaster at Bluestone, Va.; another at Junta, Va.; another at Barnesville, Va., whose deputy was a one-legged Confederate soldier.

Mr. Editor, I have no desire to arouse the feelings of the people by reference to the negro in politics, but whenever I hear of a Democrat making the boast that his party is the "white man's party," I am compelled to let the truth come out on the Dems if it takes the hide. If I were a Democrat and couldn't find no better argument to direct at the Republicans than that "my party is the white man's party," I'll just be everlastingly dad-bummed if I wouldn't abandon politics, make me a set of harness out of grape-vines and hitch myself alongside a club-footed jack-ass and hire out to haul water for a nigger laundry.

Mr. Editor, I am sorry that Pete "petered" on the debate, and I am living in hopes that I may yet smother him out and give him a chance to defend his party. It is getting time now that we are going to see a great deal sand in the papers about the very same things I have called attention to. The Democrats are always

ready to raise the "nigger" racket. They made it a point in their last campaign in their charge that Roosevelt put a little white girl and a negro boy on the platform at Chicago and had them to wave the American flag. Every little Democratic paper in the land repeated that till they actually believed it was true.

All the prosperity of a Republican administration, the achievements on land and sea, the immense increase of wealth and the impetus given every industry are not sufficient to dim the Democrats' dream of negro rule. It is their remedy of last resort. It is the "hellaboo" that keeps the "Solid South." Free silver and imperialism may grow dull as campaign slogans, but "negro domination" has kept its savor. It smells sweet to a Dem politician when things look squally as to his election, and he goeth out and proclaimeth it in a new voice, and it knocketh the persimmon. But I am getting a little lengthy, and the mail is due, so I will ring off till next issue.

Yours for Republicanism,

ELI TUCKER.

The Devil Writes to the Socialists

Hades, Oct. 5, 1907.

My Dear Socialist Children:

Bless your dreaming, restless agitating old souls. Don't get worried over your defeats and failures on earth. Remember there is a bright future in waiting for you fellows. I suppose you understand that I am a Socialist up one side and down the other. I believe in dividing up with the other man. Yes, I propose to see to it that a little lazy Socialist gets as warm a reception when he comes to hell as the widest-mouthed agitator that ever toured the country in a Pullman car. What's the use of a Socialist party if it isn't to give every fellow an equal showing with every other fellow? But the thing that concerns us most just now is recruits. We need more adherents. Nothing does me more good than to see the boys a-tumbling to me. We have a lot of work to do yet before we can carry the United States. I find that the Democrats are somewhat in our way, and I am puzzled to know what to do with them. I used to place a lot of confidence in the Democrats, but they wanted to be the whole thing or nothing, so I kinder gave them the basement to use as they pleased. I used to think the Dems could beat anything on the pike when it came to preaching an industrial doctrine that would result in sending folks to ruin, but you fellows have the Dems skinned a mile. The Democrats have done me lots of good in days that are gone, but their star seems to have set for the present. It is true that they captured the country under the free trade wave of Clevelandism, and as a result of that trick they brought on a panic that made my business hum, but they had to hike it when the Rads came around. I know the people will not walk deliberately into another Democratic trap for a generation at least, so that is one reason why I transferred my headquarters to Socialism. Well, of course I was a good Socialist all the time, but I hadn't been able to make you fellows see the point like I hope you see it now.

Socialism! There is something in that word that goes to the spot. It's the word to knock the persimmon. Why, bless my life if some of the old seasoned church members on earth are not so infatuated with the idea of Socialism that they would sooner give up their religion than to part with the Socialist faith. And that's what tickles me so well. I can see something ahead when such people are blowing my horn. You know I never could depend upon my work being done by men from the riffraff. When I wanted to make a fat haul—one that started a little army of sinners roaring to hell—I didn't depend on waiting the trap with small fish. The plan is to secure the most popular fellow I can get to O. K. my schemes. If he is a preacher, so much the better. It tickles me to see so-called Christian people enlisted under the banner of Socialism. You see we have got to have some respectable people identified with our party, or else it will be a failure.

I believe I called your attention, boys, in my letter last May, to one thing about Socialism that I want to urge again. That is the social side of Socialism. I am not saying anything against the doctrine of "free love" but what I am after is this: We have got to denounce such cases as that fellow Earle who swapped off his wife. We are going to have the whole Christian world on our heels lambing the very gewgaw out of us if we don't put our seal of disapproval on such business. It will be time to begin that business after we get established. If John Ruskin had left off the practice of free love he would have done more for Socialism than he did. We all know full well that the "affinity" policy of Socialism will rob marriage of all its sanctity and would ultimately bring about the ruin of civilization, but we don't want to go at it too fast. Let's get the world grabbed. Let's creep into favor with the respectable part of the world and come at the thing in a more decent way. As proprietor of hell in general, I don't want to see a botch made out of a thing.

As quick as I learned what Earle was up to I wired Debs and Wayland to run a double-headed red-headed editorial in the Appeal to Reason denouncing such practice as the blackest crime that ever stained the pages of social history, and the dad-gasted fools were too cowardly to do it.

I also advised Wayland last spring to take steps to have all those books from the pens of such authors as Engels, Ellis, Allen, Morris, Bax, Wildes and Bebel put in a heap and burned before any mere peddle read them, or send them to me for safe keeping until we get Socialism established in the United States. It looks to me like anybody with common sense would know better than to keep offering to the people such books as those from the authors mentioned. They come out too plain and tell too much. They are all right for such men as Earle to read, but they repel more people than they win. If I had gone to Mrs. Eve reciting the bad things that would come as the result of eating the apple she would have ordered me out of the garden post-haste. But I kept that back and went at her with the bright side of the picture and she tumbled like a young porpoise. So what you fellows want to do is to keep everlastingly hammering away at the government. Howl at the oppression of labor by capital. Wall at the tyranny of plutocracy. Denounce the graft and extravagance of Uncle Sam. Show the beauties of Socialism to the laborer and tell him how, under its benign influence, he will receive the product of his labor. Tell them all these things and let me take care of the social side. I'll fix a place for Earle—in fact, I've got a place already prepared.

I hope this letter will do you fellows good. I have written it in a hurry and somewhat under an embarrassment. News has just reached me that my last letter to you fellows by some means got into that dad-gasted Yeller Jacket and was sent to the world. We must be more particular with these letters and not allow them to get misplaced. We never can make any sort of a show so long as all our private business is laid bare-faced to the world. Next time I write you I shall use secret ink and you will have to bring the words out with a red-hot shovel and read while the sheets are hot. If you will do this we can possibly keep our private business to ourselves.

My next epistle will probably contain a suggestion by which we can arrange a compromise with the Democrats and all get together on one plank and work together. Burn this letter and look out for my next.

Yours for Socialism and Democracy if we can fuse,

SATAN DEVIL.

Why in the blazes aren't the Democratic leaders "pointing with pride" to the history of the glorious old party that got us into that awful fix about ten years ago? Why do they prefer to always speak of future triumphs? They ought to recite to the forgetful old farmers what fabulous prices they received for their stuff under the last Democratic administration. They ought to tell the laboring man what a demand there was for labor then and how easy it was to make money and pay debts. They ought to point out to the merchants what a difficult matter it was during those years to sell anything on credit. Reckon they hadn't thought of an electioneering scheme like this.

Democratic Prayer

Great Master Bryan, we would just like to know where we are at and what we are here for. We are worse befuddled than we were when we last called upon thy name. We hardly know which end is up or which side foremost. We are bothered. There are great big black spots before our eyes and we can smell sulphur burning. Mighty chief, what is the matter? When shall we see our way clear and feel the sharp thrill that victory will bring to our tired legs? Glorious leader, turn on a little more light.

We have read the last issue of thy Commoner and studied the Nebraska State platform, which we take to be of thy planning. It leaves us in the dark worse than ever. We thought we were for free silver, but never a word for the precious metal do we find. We looked for an expression on finance, and behold not a word. We thought we were opposed to the construction of the Panama Canal, and yet we find a plank favoring the early completion of the canal. We thought Admiral Dewey set to rest the "imperialism" issue the other day when he spoke for the retention of the Philippines, but here your State platform comes condemning the holding of the Philippines.

Ain't we in a devil of a fix?
Ain't we sailing down the dark alley to oblivion?

Haven't we fixed our own clock till we can't discern day from night nor winter from summer?

Oh, isn't it horrible?
Isn't it tough to be everlastingly disappointed and disrupted?

And then you say you favor an eight-hour day.

What?
How in the name of the Great Hopping Toad do you expect us to ever catch up working only eight hours?

We are six weeks behind now and we can't hire labor at any price.

Shall we shut up shop and quit?
Shall we turn down the orders for stuff that are pouring in upon us and go fishing?

Must we ruin our own business to obey the eight-hour plank?

Don't it look like we are heading blindly to somewhere or other?

Again you declare in favor of it being required of every party that it makes known where it derives its campaign money from. Oh, Master, wouldn't that put our tails in a stick in Kentucky? How we would hate to have to tell the people that the Whiskey Trust gave us thirty-five hundred dollars for the state campaign this year. How it would make the donkey rear up to have it posted on its sides that the brewery people were backing the Blue Grass Democracy.

If we are coming to the point, Worshipful Master Bryan, that we must tell where we got it, won't we be in a pickle of a fix.

Master Democrat, forego us the humiliation of this one ordeal. Cut out that plank and let us go it flat-footed.

Again, Great Editor, we are about to get tumbled into a mix-up over a leader for next year. Some of our boys are cussing thee to beat all sixty.

They say they are Democrats, but they will just be dried-apple damned if they are going to follow a has-been thru the slaughter-house into an open grave?

They won't say who they are for, but they say they can't follow thee. Now, Peerless Prophet, we are for somebody or other, we don't know who.

If thou art going to run again, we are for thee.

If not, then we are for the next best runner, and may the Lord help us to find a man who can run better than Parker and Grandpap Davis.

In next issue of the Commoner tell us where we can find our dear little free silver baby.

And don't forget to tell us if thou wilt run.

We are getting anxious.
We are watering at the mouth for a man to holler for.

We are shaking at the knees for fear of his defeat, and altogether we are gravitating from bad to worse, and our likker is nearly all gone.

Help! help! ere we perish and dry up on the burning sands of despair and dry rot.

Amen.

THE WIGGLERS.

You've no doubt observed many different kinds of politicians. You've seen the turn-coats and the straight-jackets. The venomous copperhead has crossed your path. The fellow-on-the-fence has haled you. But did you ever accost a wiggler? Of course you have. You've seen the fellow that talked one way to-day and another way to-morrow; the fellow that talks to suit every crowd he happens into. That's a wiggler. When cornered on any proposition, he has an adroit way of wiggling out of it. You will find the most of them in the Democratic party. Ask one of them what he is going to do about waiting up to the polls next year and giving this unprecedented era of prosperity the black-eye, and he'll wiggle and say, "Just wait—the present administration will make some bust before the next election. I—I—I—of course I cannot go back on the Democratic party." Ask one of them what he thinks of putting this country on a free trade basis, and he'll wall his eyes and dance around awhile and finally say, "Well, it's Democratic, and I'm in for it."

The wigglers constitute the down-and-out crowd. They wiggle for issues. They wiggle for pie. They wiggle to get something on the party in power. They wiggle worse than a barrel of rain-water full of wiggle-tails.

The Democratic leaders, chiefest among whom is William Jennings Bryan, are wigglers for your well-trimmed vandykes. They wiggle up Salt River every four years and they wiggle back again to try it over. They get up little wiggy platforms to wiggle votes on. Take up the last three Democratic pronouncements, and you'll find them wiggy affairs. They are wholly unlike. They are monuments of Democratic wiggling. In one you'll find free silver, in another imperialism, and in the other you will find issues not hinted at in the other two.

Just keep your eyes on the indicator from now until the polls close in November, 1908, and you'll see some Democratic wiggling that will make you weep with laughter. Yes, sir, wigglers fits 'em to a gnat's heel.

PIE-ROOTERS.

There is no use in talking!
Of all kinds of rooters, the political pie-rooter takes the cake.

He's as industrious as a red ant and has the patience of Job.

He will spend long laborious years just for one slice of political pie.

He will lie, steal and sometimes commit murder to get to the pie-counter.

You will find the pie-rooter in and out of office.

In office, he fares sumptuously every day; out of office, he starves and lies to get back in again.

You couldn't trust the average pie-rooter any further than you could throw an old army mule by the tail, and yet a slick one can make you think that he is another Jesus Christ come back to earth.

He can make black look white, and white black.

He can be flat busted and make you think he is a millionaire.

He always has a string of yarns that he delights to spin to gain the listening ear in order to make people think he's the biggest man on earth.

All parties are cursed with pie-rooters.

Some more than others.

It is this breed of cattle that do most of the devilment.

They are star players at the graft game.

They are up-to-date on every political trick that has ever been hatched in the human brain.

The only way to oust the pie-rooters is to make politics absolutely honest.

It is possible we shall have them with us always.

It is the duty, however, of every honest man to spot 'em and biff 'em at every opportunity.

One pie-rooter in a community can cause more trouble than any other kind of political sinner.

An uproar is what he enjoys.

He revels in feuds.

He likes to get neighbors to fall out with one another.

His glory means the commonwealth's downfall.

Put honest men in office and you checkmate the ravages of the pie-rooters.

This is the only way.