

THE OBSERVER.

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C.

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E. J. HALE, Editor and Proprietor.

E. J. HALE, Jr., Business Manager.

THE PLATFORM JUGGLERS.

The expressions, heard on every hand now, that "straddling" and "platform juggling" are things of the past, and that the party which expects to win the coming presidential contest must declare itself unequivocally on the issues of the campaign, are not idle boasts to be forgotten with the closing up of the lines as the shock of battle approaches. It is agreed that party ties never sat so lightly upon the people. That is a most healthy indication of political alertness on the people's part, however damaging it may be to the plans of those who put their faith in mere party organizations. As the people are the sovereign in this country, and it is certain that the party organizations have not well used their trust for some years past, it follows that the people should not only take steps to manage their own affairs but that the more they study public questions the more likely are they to manage them in the public (that is, in their own) interest.

These things being so, the greater is the wonder that public men of ordinary discernment should continue to ignore the signs of the times. Here, for example, we find the mephistophelean Senator from Ohio (we mean the senior one of that description) saying to the reporter of the New York World these foolish words:

"The financial plank of the Ohio Republican platform I regard as a sound expression on the money question, on which Gov. McKinley entertains the same views that I do myself. I believe, as I have repeatedly said, in the widest possible use of silver as money, consistent with its maintenance at a parity with gold."

The fact that McKinley should have allowed his managers to commit him to such a straddle on the leading issues of the day as that of the Ohio platform on the currency question and that Mr. Sherman should add the potent weight of his approval to it, is no longer a sign of what the popular judgment, or even the party judgment, is to be. It is an evidence of one of two things. Either Messrs. McKinley and Sherman are so accustomed to leading public thought that they fail to perceive the determination of the public to do their own thinking; or, recognizing the fact just mentioned, they still hope to bend the public will to their own, so as to "sidetrack" the financial question and force the tariff as the issue. The latter is probably the truth. Is that good "politics"? That depends. It is good politics for Major McKinley, personally, for, in a campaign run upon any other issue than that of the tariff, he would be literally, in the slang of the day, a "back number." But is it good politics for the ordinary politician? Certainly not, if his purpose be to serve the people and to meet their unmistakable desires. They care but little for the tariff now that the McKinley act has been repealed. Their minds are set upon a reconstruction of the money system. For the course of Senator Sherman and the other Republican supporters of McKinley not interested in the personal fortunes of the great one-ideal protectionist, another explanation must be sought. It is the only explanation which fits the case and it is this: All the dominant political forces are controlled by the money power, of which Senator Sherman is a conspicuous and a consistent agent. Bear this in mind and you have an explanation of the McKinley boom. McKinley is a mere instrument for the carrying out of the larger

purpose. His complete identification with protectionism was seized upon as the likeliest and the handiest weapon of the sidetrackers.

If the reader will consider the quotations given elsewhere from the Springfield Republican and the New York World on the meaning of the Ohio money plank, he will get a clear view of the two parts of the matter under consideration. The Springfield Republican represents the very best element of independent thought at the North. It has the reputation of being outside the pale of the confidence of the party manipulators. It declares that the Ohio deliverance is a straddle. It is perfectly safe to assume that between McKinley and an out-and-out gold standard candidate, the Eastern Republicans would vote solidly for the latter no matter what party name he bore. The quotation from the World throws another light on the subject. On the financial question, the World and Senator Sherman are at one. And both recognize in McKinley's candidacy the possibility of the same net result. The World is more outspoken than the Senator. It points to Mr. Cleveland's nomination as the logical outcome of McKinley's. In the hope that this may be the actual outcome, it is altogether probable that both the newspaper and the Senator are also agreed. But with this interesting difference: The Republican Senator desires McKinley's nomination, so that his friend, Cleveland, may be nominated and elected; the Democratic newspaper desires it so that its enemy, Cleveland, may be nominated and beaten.

The McKinley boom is worked by the gold-standard men of both parties. Let the heathen platform jugglers imagine a vain thing, if they desire. The people's interest lies in holding the politicians down to the real issue, and, unless all the signs fail, they are going to do that, or know the reason why.

CURRENT COMMENT.

Read the very interesting article which we copy to-day from the New York Times on "The Partition of Africa." First we had the partition of America, now comes that of Africa, next we shall have that of Asia. Everywhere the English-speaking race is seen in the lead, whether we consider what has been settled in the history of the past four hundred years, or what is taking place now, or the vantage grounds for future action now occupied by that race. The commercial instincts of the British and their insular habit have forced them to be free traders. That is the secret of their outstripping the Latin races in the colonizing and conquest of the globe. By failing to follow the English lead in respect to commercial freedom we have bottled ourselves up. By adopting, in our isolated condition, the English monetary system, we have still further injured ourselves, because that system is fit only for a nation which has attained the position that England has, viz: as a creditor of all the other nations, ourselves included.

"Cheering to Democrats."

Our Washington correspondent (gold-bug) writes:

"It is not probable that the secret meeting which was held here several days ago for the purpose of giving a committee of republican manufacturers from Pennsylvania an opportunity of trying to make a deal with the republican silver Senators who refused to support the House tariff bill, will result in an independent political party with silver and protection for its foundation. But the refusal of the republican silver senators to enter any deal that will allow protection legislation either during this or the next Congress, unless it be coupled with the free coinage of silver, was very significant. It indicates that the straddle proposed by McKinley will not be accepted by the silver republicans at the

National Convention, and that means a spilt and the refusal of the silver republicans to support the St. Louis ticket and platform, for that convention is sure to be dominated by anti-silver republicans. All of which is cheering to democrats."

To which may properly be added the proviso: cheering to the Democrats, provided their nominee is of a kind to attract the recalcitrant silver Republicans.

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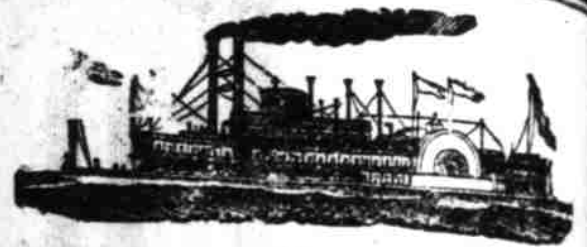
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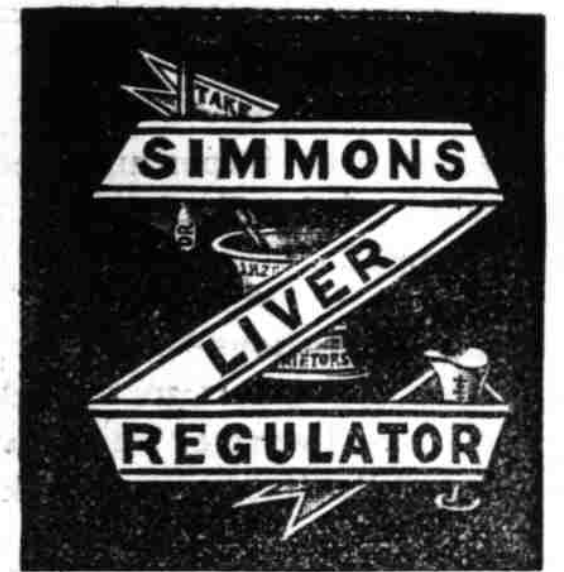
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