

## The Commoner.

by those who have no remedy to propose for the trusts, but oppose any remedy suggested.

But he gets even nearer to the republican line, if possible, when he says, "The people want a safe and conservative administration of public affairs." That is just exactly what the republicans always promise. "Safe and conservative"—everybody wants a safe administration and conservatism is an almost universal trait. But the republicans prate so much about "safety" and "conservatism" that a democrat ought not to use the terms without explaining what he means by them. An administration that would be "safe" for the monopolies would not be satisfactory to those who are the victims of every private monopoly, and an administration so conservative that it would not undo anything that the republican party has done would be no better than a republican administration.

Mr. Hill adds: "There must be no question of our intention to fearlessly maintain the national credit under any and all circumstances." As the democratic party has never attacked the national credit that advice is gratuitous unless Mr. Hill means to condemn the Chicago and Kansas City platforms; and if such is his intention, he ought to make the attack openly and boldly.

In another part of the letter he says, "We should conciliate rather than antagonize the great business interests of the country." How is this conciliation to be accomplished? The policies advocated by the democratic party are as good for the ordinary business man as they are for the laboring man or the farmer, but the great railroad interests are opposed to the democratic party because the party opposes extortionate rates, rebates and discriminations; because it opposes watered stock and fictitious capitalization. It cannot conciliate these interests without abandoning the people generally. The great banking interests of the country are against the democratic party because the democratic party is not willing to turn seventy-five millions of people over to the tender mercies of a few financiers. It cannot conciliate these interests and at the same time protect the rights of the wealth producer. The great manufacturing interests want a protective tariff and the great trust interests want to be let alone. Mr. Hill says that the great business interests can easily be conciliated "without the surrender of a single essential party principle." It is to be hoped that he will at an early day give the party the benefit of his definition of "essential" party principles.

Mr. Wells of St. Louis was nominated for mayor to please the "business interests"—they would not be satisfied with a candidate who had voted the democratic ticket or who was willing to admit that he believed in democratic principles. Shall we teach them democratic principles or at their demand abandon democratic principles?

Mr. Hill is so skillful in the use of words that he should have no difficulty in making his meaning plain. It is not necessary for him to borrow republican phraseology. He owes it to the party to give expression to his views in clear and unambiguous language. If he joins with Mr. Cleveland, Mr. Whitney et al. in their effort to republicanize the democratic party he

will be a tower of strength to their side. If he intends to cast in his lot with the six millions and more who kept the faith in 1896 and 1900 he should avoid the verbiage that republicans and gold democrats have employed to conceal their sinister purposes.

### The New Woman.

Rev. Thomas B. Gregory, writing in the Chicago American, laments the "passing of woman." He seems greatly worried, and pours forth his regrets as follows:

Mother, as well as the "pies that mother used to make"; wife, with the unspeakable charm and beauty that once went hand in hand with her; sister, with the tender endearments that used to be associated with her name, and home and its atmosphere of peace and joy, are slipping away from us.

Mr. Gregory thinks that the new woman is "neither wife, mother nor sister," but, "as the Frenchman would put it, simply a female." He does not state the case fairly. There has been no change in woman, unless it be for the better. It is true that today more women than formerly are required to toil in order to earn their daily bread. This fact indicates an unsatisfactory condition, but is Mr. Gregory devoting his energies and his talents towards the remedying of this evil?

It is true, also, that women are today taking a more conspicuous part in the formation of public opinion. There are today hundreds of women's clubs and similar societies where none existed a few years ago, but these organizations do not injure woman, either individually or in her relation to society. On the contrary, they aid and improve her in both respects.

During our wars, and during every great crisis in the world's history, it has not been thought necessary to keep women in ignorance of the events happening around them. Civilization has nothing to fear from the "new woman" who aspires to an intimate acquaintance with the things which deeply concern society; but it had much to fear from the "old man" who elevates his nose whenever he sees a woman brave enough and energetic enough to earn her own living, when circumstances makes this necessary, or ambitious enough to keep in touch with the happenings of the world.

The husband, the brother, and the child are better off as well as happier when the wife, the sister, and the mother have, in addition to affection, education and business capacity. The world needs the brain of woman as well as the brain of man, and even more does it need the conscience of woman.

The Rev. Mr. Gregory will learn, if he will make an impartial investigation, that there has been no such thing as "the passing of woman"; he will learn that our social and political conditions would be more advanced than they are today if the men of America had made the same relative progress during the last fifty years that the women of America have made.

To say that the wife is a helpmeet is better than to say that she has an "unspeakable charm and beauty", to say that a mother instructs, as well as nourishes, her child, is better than to praise the "pies that mother used to make."

Woman is the complement of man, and neither will suffer if she is his intellectual companion, as well as his wife, his mother, and his sister.

### Justice to the Populists.

The populist party, ridiculed by the republicans and denounced by the gold democrats, has really been a great educator. It is an historical fact that many political organizations have been influential in moulding public opinion, even though they have never secured control of the federal government. The populists have never had at any time more than a score of members of Congress, and yet they have given an impetus to several reforms which must ultimately be accomplished.

For years the democrats preached tariff reform in states like Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and the Dakotas but they seemed to make little progress because republican prejudice was a barrier to democratic doctrines. The populists did not denounce a protective tariff in their platform, but in attacking the republican party they weakened the protective sentiment among their members and today tariff reform is much stronger in the west than it would have been without the assistance of populism. The Wilson Bill, the only tariff reform measure enacted since the war, could not have passed without the aid of populist votes in the senate.

The first national platform written by the populists demanded the election of United States senators by a direct vote of the people. That was before the matter received serious attention in Congress, but since then the House of Representatives has three times adopted a resolution proposing the necessary amendment. In 1900 the democratic platform endorsed this reform and it is now receiving the support of many prominent papers which until recently have been silent upon the subject or opposed to the change.

The populist party is an advocate of the system known as the initiative and referendum, whereby the people can compel the submission of important questions and pass upon the acts of legislatures. This reform has been endorsed by many democratic state conventions and was last year approved by the national convention of the party. South Dakota, at the 1898 election, adopted an amendment providing for the initiative and referendum, in spite of the fact that the republicans carried the state by a considerable majority. Even more recently, a republican legislature in Oregon has given its endorsement to direct legislation.

The republican governor of Wisconsin is urging the adoption of a system abolishing political conventions and providing for party nominations by a direct vote of the people—a system entirely in keeping with the contentions of the populist party.

Prior to the organization of the populist party, comparatively few men advocated the municipal ownership of public utilities, and yet today business men in every part of the United States are openly defending this policy. Whenever the question has been submitted to the voters a large majority has generally been polled in favor of this reform, once denounced as populist but now regarded as prudent business policy for a community.

The populists favor a postal telegraph system