

## The Commoner.

### Free For All.

In the discussion of possible presidential candidates some are prone to regard the sectional question as of overshadowing importance. Those who live in what are known as the doubtful states are especially liable to this error, because they are naturally willing to furnish the candidates. It is not only customary to look to a few doubtful states to furnish the candidates, but it is not uncommon to have some portions of the country excluded from consideration entirely. For years it has been assumed that a southern man was unavailable, and a western man almost as much so. New York, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana have furnished to the two leading parties nearly all the candidates nominated since the civil war. New York furnished the democratic presidential candidate in 1868, 1872, 1876, 1880, 1884, 1888, and 1892, and in those campaigns the candidate for vice-president came from Indiana three times, from Ohio once, and from Illinois once. From 1868 to 1900 the republican party took its presidential candidate from Ohio four times, from Illinois twice, from Indiana twice, and from Maine once. During that time New York has furnished the republican candidate for vice-president in five campaigns, Indiana once, and New Jersey once. Thus it will be seen that a comparatively small section of the country has enjoyed a practical monopoly on candidates. This is an unfortunate condition, and one that cannot be defended by reason. Candidates should be chosen because they represent principles and because they are deemed fit to serve the people in the executive office. Each party should be at liberty to select its best man, no matter in what state or section he lives. The race should be free for all, and then public men everywhere would be stimulated to offer themselves. Neither the Atlantic coast nor the pacific coast should be barred out; neither the extreme north nor the extreme south should be forbidden to offer its favorite son. The local influence of a nomination is generally overestimated. State pride is a nice thing to talk about, but it does not count for much in votes. If a man has qualities which make him popular at home, those same qualities will make him popular elsewhere, but very few men will vote for a political opponent merely because he lives in their state, and what little support he wins in that way is offset by the partisan fear that his success may strengthen his party locally. A candidate's strength comes from the principles and policies for which he stands—the only personal element being the confidence that the people have that he is honest and will faithfully carry out his platform.

For a quarter of a century the southern states have been ignored in the selection of candidates. The republicans have had but few white republicans in the South to choose from, and the democrats of the South have voluntarily renounced their claims out of fear that they might embarrass the ticket. Certainly we are far enough away from the civil war—certainly the passions aroused by that conflict are sufficiently cooled, to permit a southern man

to aspire to either the presidency or the vice-presidency. Even before the Spanish war called into the volunteer army both federal and confederate, the south had earned its right to be considered a part of the Union, but surely the commingling of the sons of those who wore the blue, and the sons of those who wore the gray, and their service side by side at Santiago and at Manila, ought to silence those who have thought it unwise to place a southern man on the ticket. Slavery has gone never to be restored, and the democracy now dominant both North and South comes nearer to the ideals of Jefferson and Lincoln than does the commercialism of Hanna or the imperialism of Roosevelt.

It is not time yet to select candidates for 1904, but when the time arrives, the democratic voters should see to it that the platform represents their wishes and that the candidates fit the platform.

If some one living south of the Mason-Dixon line is chosen for either the first or second position on the ticket, his place of residence will not weaken him—not though he be an ex-confederate soldier. We are engaged in a mighty struggle against plutocracy, and we need the whole nation to pick from when we select our standard bearers. Merit, not section, should determine the nomination; fidelity to principle, not locality, should control.

### Aguinaldo's Offer.

In another column will be found a dispatch which recently appeared in the New York World and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, describing an offer made by some Filipinos claiming to represent Aguinaldo.

When Mr. Bryan was in New York he received a letter from a gentleman saying that two Filipinos were in the city and desired to call, but the letter was not read in time to be answered before the Filipinos arrived. They were refused admittance, and a friend was sent with a verbal answer to the letter explaining that Mr. Bryan did not think it proper to confer with them, and stating that the democratic party was not opposing imperialism because of friendliness to the Filipinos but because imperialism was dangerous to American institution. The Filipinos said that Aguinaldo was willing to issue a proclamation promising to lay down arms in case of Mr. Bryan's election, and also willing to contribute to the democratic campaign fund, but Mr. Bryan refused to consider either proposition, and did not require them to furnish any evidence of their right to represent Aguinaldo or speak for him. As the matter has been discussed in other papers, the story and this explanation are given to the readers of THE COMMONER.

### A "Central Bank."

That interesting magazine called "Money" has an article entitled "The Growing Desire for a Central Bank." This article refers to the proposition credited to J. Pierpont Morgan that a central bank be established with a capital of \$100,000,000. It also refers to the proposition credited to Oakley Thorne, president of

the North American Trust Company of New York, that there shall be established a "bank of banks, in which each bank of the country could be interested." Commenting on this, "Money" says:

"While it is not impossible to provide for so large a bank under existing laws, it is manifest that a special act or charter from congress would be almost a necessity to give the institution the standing, which it should have. A large capital is not the only requisite for a successful bank of banks; certain corporate powers are also indispensable, and its aggregate of operations of all kinds must be entirely free from any interference by state laws and plans for state taxation, as the fiscal agency of the federal government.

"Thus the bank should have such note issuing powers without the prerequisite of bond deposits as would enable it to give the country the ample extra supply of notes required during crop movements and authority granted to act as a bank for rediscount for all other banks, no matter where located. And for these purposes as well as for the necessities of international trade, a federal charter permitting the establishment of branches would be necessary; something not possible under the present national banking laws."

It is further declared by "Money" that with a federal charter for such a bank there could be carried on "the two reforms demanded by the interests of the people of the United States and their industrial enterprises, viz: the retirement of the greenbacks and the abolition of the trust system." Such a bank "Money" concludes to be necessary because of the changed business conditions brought about by "the recent changes in the status of the union, and its accession of great colonial possessions as well as the great expansion of national enterprises."

It will be noticed that this magazine does not say that "these two great reforms" are demanded by the PEOPLE. It says they are demanded by "the INTERESTS of the people and their industrial enterprises." In other words, demanded by the "interests of the people" according to the interpretation made by the financiers of Wall Street—demanded by the "industrial enterprises" operated and controlled by the trust magnates who believe or pretend to believe that everything that adds to their enormous wealth, everything that adds to their already great advantages over the public is to the interests of the people and conforms to the necessities of "industrial enterprises."

It is interesting to be told by this financial publication that the proposed great central bank should be given "note issuing powers without the pre-requisite of bond deposits." This, according to "Money," would enable the central bank to give the country "an ample extra supply of notes required during crop movements." This proposition comes from men representing a class that has always contended against fiat money. They insist that the retirement of the greenbacks is essential to ultimate financial stability. And yet they would supplant these greenbacks with notes issued by a great central bank "without the pre-requisite of bond deposits." In other words, according to their reasoning, the greenback issued directly by the government, redeemable according to the government's policy in gold, is not sound money, but notes issued by a great central bank