

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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Another Lesson.

The defeat of Perry Belmont in a strong democratic district ought to show the eastern democrats the folly of nominating for national positions men who are known to antagonize democratic principles. In 1896 Mr. Belmont was a conspicuous supporter of the Palmer-Buckner movement which was organized in the interest of the republican ticket. In 1900 he was one of those who gave nominal allegiance to the democratic party, not with any desire to advance democratic principles, but for the purpose of betraying the party again into the hands of the enemy. That he should ask for the honor of a seat in congress where he could misrepresent the democracy of his state shows how little respect he has for the interests of his would-be constituents. His defeat was well merited and ought to serve as a lesson to those who assume that the voters of the party will vote for any one who may happen to be nominated, even though he be a republican masquerading as a democrat.

Mr. Belmont has given no evidence of a change of heart since 1896, and until he does he ought not to expect the confidence of those who were loyal then. When he does undergo a change of heart he will be so ashamed of his past conduct that he will be content with the position of a private in the ranks until he can prove his repentance by his works.

A Change of Base.

Although we may deplore the lowering of ideals that has taken place in the Outlook, we must give its editor credit for recognizing the inconsistency between the Declaration of Independence and the Philippine policy of the republican administration. In a recent editorial he speaks of the principle that "all governments exist for the benefit of the governed." One does not have to be learned in the science of government nor far advanced in the knowledge of language to recognize the wide difference between the principle above stated and the self-evident truth that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." The principle stated in the Outlook is one that has been asserted by every king and potentate who claimed to rule by right divine. A man would be a monster who would defend a government upon any other theory, but while this is the theory usually put forward in defense of monarchies and aristocracies, the all important question is, Who shall decide what is for the "benefit of the governed?" Shall this question be decided by a king, or by a few, or shall it be decided by the people themselves? The trouble with one who rules by arbitrary power is that he insists upon deciding what government is best for his subjects, and then he insists upon shooting them if they do not agree with him in regard to the merits of the government which he proposes, and under which they must live. The whole difference between a government resting upon force and a government resting upon the consent of the governed is involved in the difference between the Outlook's idea of government and the theory of government set forth in the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson defended the view embodied in the Declaration of Independence. In his first inaugural message he said: "Sometimes it is said

that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others, or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him?" Lincoln announced the same doctrine when he said that God never made a man good enough to govern another man without the other man's consent.

It behooves us to analyze the principles which underlie imperialistic policies, and when those principles are understood they will be found to be not new ones just discovered, but the old and blood-stained ones, trampled under the feet of the soldiers who enlisted under the banner of Washington.

Why Not State of Jefferson

Why is there so much delay in admitting the territories? The republicans have in two campaigns pledged themselves unequivocally to the admission of the territories, and yet they seem more interested in ship subsidy bills and other measures that they dared not specifically indorse, than in the measures which they so strongly advocated.

Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma, including the Indian Territory, are ready for admission. It is to be hoped that the controversy over single or double statehood will not prevent the admission of Oklahoma. If Oklahoma and the Indian territory cannot agree upon a name, why not drop "Indian Territory" and "Oklahoma" and substitute the name of "Jefferson" for both? The state of Indiana preserves the Indian name, and the name of Oklahoma can be preserved in some local way. The land embraced in the Indian and Oklahoma territories is the last of the Louisiana Purchase to be incorporated into a state. It would be a fitting tribute to Jefferson to thus give his name to a part of the territory purchased under his administration. It would probably require a year for the necessary formalities, so that the admission of the state and the adoption of the name would be a fitting celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the purchase of the great trans-Mississippi region.

Washington's name has already been given to a state, and Jefferson stands next to Washington among the presidents and beside him in services rendered to the American people.

Is Mr. Babcock a Deserter?

Republican circles are considerably agitated these days because of the proposition made by Congressman Babcock, a republican member, that the products of trusts be placed on the free list. In spite of the fact that the republican party has made a very consistent record as a high protective organization, the fact remains that Mr. Babcock has eminent republican authority for the position he takes.

On October 15, 1888, John Sherman, then a United States senator, in a speech delivered in the senate, said: "Whenever this free competition is evaded or avoided by combinations of individuals or corporations, the duties should be reduced and foreign competition invited."

On August 26, 1890, Senator Plumb of Kansas, in a speech delivered against the then pending tariff bill, said: "There are dozens of lines of manufactures covered by the terms of this bill which are controlled by trusts. I do not know of any better way to start in, at least to reduce the exactions of

the trusts, than to cut down the shelter behind which trusts are created."

The late Governor Mount of Indiana, in December, 1899, in a public speech said: "I emphatically favor removing all tariff protection from every industry that belongs to a combination formed in restraint of trade."

In 1899, when the paper trust was bearing heavily upon newspaper publishers, republican newspapers throughout the country declared that if the paper trust did not become less exacting, republican newspapers would insist upon the removal of the tariff duties by which the paper trust found it possible to impose upon the newspaper publishers. It may occur to republican newspapers that, after all, Congressman Babcock may have high republican authority for the position he now takes. Probably some republican newspapers and republican statesmen will repudiate their former utterances in order that they may make it appear that Mr. Babcock is a traitor to his party.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Babcock, in his attitude upon the trust question, stands on the democratic platform as adopted at Kansas City in 1900. That platform declared, "Tariff laws should be amended by putting the products of trusts upon the free list, to prevent monopoly under the plea of protection." It need not be expected, however, that the republican party will adopt Mr. Babcock's plan, because to do so would be an indorsement of the Kansas City platform; but—and this is a still more important reason—the adoption of the Babcock plan would mean the destruction of considerable advantage which certain trusts now enjoy.

The Nicaraguan Canal.

The Nicaraguan canal bill passed the house January 9 by a vote of 308 to 2. Although but two votes were cast against the measure, it was evident that there was considerable opposition because of the various amendments proposed during the bill's consideration. For instance, the proposition that the president be empowered, if, in his judgment it seemed best, to purchase and complete the Panama route, providing the same could be purchased for \$40,000,000, received 102 votes, 170 votes being cast in the negative. Mr. Cannon of Illinois led the fight in favor of the Panama route, or rather, against the bill itself; and yet, on the final proposition as to the passage of the bill, Mr. Fletcher, a republican member from Minnesota, and Mr. Lassiter, a democratic member from Virginia, were the only members voting against the measure. It is to be hoped that the senate will, without unnecessary delay, pass the Nicaraguan bill. It is important that the construction work on this great enterprise be commenced as soon as possible. It is true that the eleventh hour offer of the Panama canal people may persuade some to the notion that, "all things considered," the Panama route would be the better one; but those who have no particular reason aside from the question of public interest for preferring one route over the other, will find it difficult to escape the conclusion that, however disinterested the offer of the Panama people may be with respect to the primary question of the canal's prompt construction, there are some interests that would take advantage of this late-day offer to delay the building of any canal across the isthmus. Senator Hanna, for instance, is, by the