

## The Commoner.

lowed a contest of a year's duration between the gold element on the one side, led by the administration and supported by the banks, railroads and most of the daily papers, and on the other side the bimetallic element, led by the silver committee. The battle was fought out at the primaries and the administration, in spite of its powerful allies, lost.

When the convention met, about two-thirds of the delegates were under instructions to vote for a platform favoring the free coinage of gold and silver at sixteen to one, and yet, notwithstanding this well known fact, the administration forces, under the direction of Mr. Whitney, tried to induce the delegates to violate their instructions and betray their constituents.

The minority opposed the money plank of the platform and offered a substitute favoring international bimetallicism. A few weeks later the same men met at Indianapolis and, forgetting all about international bimetallicism, declared for the gold standard and nominated a separate ticket. Then forgetting all about the ticket which they had nominated, they for the most part voted the republican ticket. During the campaign every conceivable fraud was resorted to. Wherever a republican court would aid them (as in Nebraska) they had the bolting electors put on the ticket as "democrats" to deceive the voters.

The Palmer and Buckner ticket carried just one precinct in the United States and yet the men who put that ticket in the field volunteer as leaders of the democratic party and promise to win a glorious victory.

They do not seem to think it necessary to discuss the principles which the platform shall contain or to suggest any remedy for existing ills.

When the election of 1896 was over the leading gold democrats of the nation met at the Waldorf Hotel, boasted of their opposition to the democratic ticket and claimed credit for the election of a republican president.

After four years of republican administration, marked by high tariff legislation which the gold democrats always professed to abhor, marked by trust domination which the gold democrats always pretended to dislike and characterized by imperialistic tendencies against which the leading gold democrats loudly protested, another national campaign was fought. Some of the men who left the party in '96 returned in 1900 and were warmly welcomed, but a majority of the prominent gold democrats supported the republican ticket again last year, proving either that they regard the money question as more important than industrial independence, which is attacked by the trust, and the declaration of independence, which is attacked by imperialism, or else that the same principles which lead them to support the financial policy of the republican party also lead them to support the other policies of that party.

The election of 1900 resulted in a second defeat more pronounced than that of 1896, but not as overwhelming as the defeat of 1894.

Now the men who were responsible for two national defeats are talking about harmony and

offering to guarantee success, provided the party will follow the instructions which they give. And what are the conditions?

First, that the party shall abandon the doctrines set forth in the platform of 1896, reaffirmed by nearly every democratic state convention in 1900 and reiterated by the national convention of that year.

Second, That it shall drive away the populists and silver republicans who came to the support of the democratic ticket when the gold democrats went over to the enemy.

These conditions are impossible ones. The men who make these demands would not feel at home in any democratic party worthy of the name, and they would not only drive democrats out of the party, but would repel allies and keep young men with democratic inclination from coming into the party. Whether circumstances reduce or increase the importance of the silver question, the same principles are involved in other phases of the money question, in the question of monopoly and, in fact, in all the other questions now before the country.

The harmonizing of personal differences is an easy matter.

Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Hill were thought to be personal enemies, but the money question brought them together and at the Chicago convention the latter offered the resolution endorsing the administration of the former. Mr. Hanna and Mr. Foraker are supposed to be personally unfriendly but they act together when the roll is called. The harmonizing of radical differences of opinion between conscientious men is, however, more difficult.

Reconciliation between the two elements of the democratic party must be brought about, if at all, in one of two ways: First by such a change of opinion in either element as will produce "concord or agreement."

The minority denies that it has changed and there is no evidence of change in the majority.

Second, the two elements might be brought together by some question of sufficient importance to overshadow the questions about which they differ. But in such case the platform must represent the views of the majority on minor questions. When the gold democrats supported the republican ticket in '96 they did so on account of the money question and were willing to overlook the tariff plank in the republican platform. So in 1900, some of the most loyal and earnest supporters of the democratic ticket were republicans who were opposed to imperialism and who were willing to overlook differences on minor questions.

The struggle between plutocracy and democracy must be fought out and the democratic party must take one side or the other. There is no middle ground. If those who have opposed the party in recent years are willing to take the democratic side in this fight there will be no difficulty in "getting together" and there will be no lack of harmony. If, however, the men who have been voting the republican ticket expect to come back and convert the democratic party into a plutocratic party, to be run along republican lines and according to republican methods they will have to announce their plat-

form and make the issue at the primaries. The six million and more voters who supported the ticket will not be led into the republican party without a struggle. There is no sense in inviting an opponent into your house to see which can put the other out, and those who remained faithful have a right to know whether the reorganizers come as friends or as enemies.

The objection to the reorganizers is not based so much upon what they have done as upon what they are doing and propose to do, if they obtain control of the party.

### Fining the Family.

Hearst's Chicago American takes exception to the present method of fining a man for drunkenness, and then keeping him in jail until he works out (or stays out) his fine at so much per day. It very properly suggests that this method is expensive to the city because the city has to pay the prisoner's board, and that it is a burden to his family because the family loses the benefit of his labor.

The American says:

But we are bound to say that we think our public magistrates might find some way of discouraging drunkenness without making women and children suffer.

A man gets drunk and is locked up. He is fined ten dollars. If he pays the ten dollars usually means that his wife has pawned some of the furniture, besides scraping up every penny in the house.

Meanwhile, having appeared drunk in a police court, the man has lost his work. He and his wife and children then begin life again without any money, with some necessary articles in pawn and without any visible source of income.

Drunkenness is a hideous thing, of course, but it seems a little out of reason to inflict on a poor man for drunkenness a fine that means ruin, when a prosperous man can get drunk in his club or at home, with obliging cabs to act as intermediaries between the club and the home and with all the conveniences.

In Boston a system prevails of allowing a man fined for drunkenness to pay his fine in installments. We wish that our magistrates would consider the advisability of adopting this system. It has one great advantage in the eyes of men who don't care much what happens to the poor. It really means a saving to the prosperous class, by diminishing public expenses.

When a man is fined on the installment plan he can nearly always pay. This puts money into the public treasury, since he does not have to go to jail.

The system also saves the self-respect of a great many men whose getting drunk was probably no worse than that of college boys in holiday time or Wall street brokers after a very big day on 'change.

The system also enables a man who has got drunk to go on supporting his family. It is better than the system which locks the father up in jail and leaves the rest of the family to shift for itself.

### The Watch on the Rhine

BY MAX SCHNECKENBURGER.

A voice resounds like thunder-peat,  
Mid dashing waves and clash of steel:—  
"The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine!  
Who guards today my stream divine?"

Chorus:

Dear Fatherland, no danger thine:  
Firm stand thy sons to watch the Rhine!  
They stand, a hundred thousand strong,  
Quick to avenge their country's wrong;  
With filial love their bosoms swell,  
They'll guard the sacred landmark well!  
The dead of a heroic race  
From heaven look down and meet their gaze;  
They swear with dauntless heart, "O, Rhine,  
Be German as this breast of mine!"  
While flows one drop of German blood,  
Or sword remains to guard thy flood,  
While rifle rests in patriot hand—  
No foe shall tread thy sacred strand!  
Our oath resounds, the river flows,  
In golden light our banner glows;  
Our hearts will guard thy stream divine:  
The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine.