

The Commoner.

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"The People Sovereign."

In his seventh annual message to congress, President Monroe said:

"Meeting in you a new congress, I deem it proper to present this view of public affairs in greater detail than it might otherwise be necessary. I do it, however, with peculiar satisfaction, from a knowledge that in this respect I shall comply more fully with the sound principles of our government. The people being with us exclusively the sovereign, it is indispensable that full information be laid before them on all important subjects, to enable them to exercise that high power with complete effect. If kept in the dark, they must be incompetent to do it. We are all liable to error, and those who are engaged in the management of public affairs are more subject to excitement and to be led astray by their particular interests and passions than the great body of our constituents, who, living at home in the pursuit of their ordinary avocations, are calm, but deeply interested spectators of events and of the conduct of those who are parties to them. To the people every department of the government and every individual in each are responsible, and the more full their information the better they can judge of the wisdom of the policy pursued and of the conduct of each in regard to it. From their dispassionate judgment much aid may always be obtained, while their approbation will form the greatest incentive and most gratifying reward of virtuous actions, and the dread of their censure the best security against the abuse of their confidence. Their interests in all vital questions are the same, and the bond, by sentiment as well as by interest, will be proportionably strengthened as they are better informed of the real state of public affairs, especially in difficult conjunctions. It is by such knowledge that local prejudices and jealousies are surmounted, and that a national policy, extending its fostering care and protection to all the great interests of our union, is formed and steadily adhered to."

This sentiment from one of the greatest as well as one of the earliest presidents is respectfully commended to the present chief executive, who not only meets a new congress, but is himself new to the responsibilities so suddenly and unexpectedly thrust upon him.

The people have been agitated by conflicting principles; they have discussed conflicting policies and they have been led or misled by conflicting evidence. It would be well for the president to take the people into his confidence at the very beginning of his official career and state to them the facts as he understands them and the policies which he believes it best to pursue. If he believes that a "branch bank" is a desirable thing, let him frankly say so and give his reasons; if he believes that an "asset currency" is safe, let him declare it; if he thinks that the silver dollar should be made redeemable in gold, let him say so and also state whether he recognizes the fact that the retirement of the silver dollar is the natural and necessary result of its being made redeemable in gold. If he thinks that a national bank note, issued for the profit of banks and controlled in volume by banks for their own interests, is better than a greenback, let him state his position and invite judgment upon it. If he thinks that a private monopoly is a good thing, let him explain why; or, if he believes that it is indefensible and intolerable, let him point out an efficient remedy.

If he believes in the strenuous doctrine that this nation will decay unless it diverts itself with the pastime of subjugating or killing off "inferior races," let him openly announce his ad-

vocacy of an imperial policy and reconcile, if he can, the principle of such a policy with the principles of a republic. If he believes in taxation without representation and government without the consent of the governed, let him apologize, in the name of the American people, for the war of the revolution and for the loud professions which we have made on the subject for more than a century. If, on the contrary, he accepts the doctrines set forth in the Declaration of Independence, let him reconcile them with the actions of our carpetbag government in the Philippines, or use his great influence to bring the government back to its old foundations.

The president has shown that he possesses physical courage; will he now prove his possession of moral courage? Will he be entirely frank with the people, outline his policies and ask judgment upon them? Or, will he resort to the ambiguity that has characterized the utterances of most of the republican leaders? The people are the exclusive sovereign, and they are entitled to candor and honesty from those whom they entrust with authority.

Thanksgiving, 1901.

*The Lord hath been our strength and shield,
Our faithful friend and guide;
Hath granted yield from vine and field
Rich comfort to provide.*

*Our feet He leads
Through verdant meads
The living streams beside.
And for His love we homage pay
To Him this blest Thanksgiving Day.*

*With swelling song and glad acclaim
We come from fields and marts
To magnify His holy name
With humble, thankful hearts.*

*Through all the years
His help appears
With love that ne'er departs.
For this we come and gladly lay
Our tributes this Thanksgiving Day.*

*For all the Lord hath done for us
We chant a glad refrain
From coast to coast, from sun to sun,
From valley, hill and plain.*

*Our Shepherd, guide,
Whate'er betide
His love will still remain.
And bowing at God's throne we pray
His blessings this Thanksgiving Day,*

—Will M. Maupin.

Suspicious Rejoicing.

Why do the republican papers rejoice over every event which they can torture into a victory for the reorganizing element of the democratic party? It is only fair to assume that the republican editors have a partisan interest in weakening the democratic party. It is only fair to assume that they will be pleased by any indication of weakness on the part of their political opponents. Why is it, then, that they exult whenever gold and corporation democrats secure control of the party organization? Why is it that they constantly sur-

press all evidence encouraging to Kansas City platform democrats, and magnify everything that gives hope to the men who oppose the Kansas City platform? Read, for illustration, the republican comments on the recent election. The republican papers gave columns of editorial space to the suppression of the Kansas City platform by the Ohio convention and declared that the democrats of that state had put themselves in good fighting trim by discarding the so-called "heresies" that had "handicapped" them. They also vociferously asserted that the democratic candidate for governor in Iowa was opposed to allowing national issues to enter into the campaign. Now, they point to the republican majority in Iowa as a defeat for silver, and they either ignore the result in Ohio altogether, or, as some of the papers do, explain it by saying that Mr. Kilbourne was at heart a silver man and that he did not poll as large a vote as he would have polled had he been an advocate of the gold standard.

The result in Nebraska is especially pleasing to the republicans, although the republican candidate this year polled fifteen thousand votes less than the fusion state ticket and Mr. Bryan polled last year.

The Chicago Tribune says that Tuesday's elections "are gratifying," and that they "indicate plainly that the democratic party is rehabilitating itself by returning gradually to its old doctrines." How fortunate it is that the gold standard papers, that call themselves democratic, and the republican papers are able to agree so completely as to the best course for the democratic party to pursue. This harmony is so harmonious as to arouse the suspicion that either the republicans are badly deceived as to what is best for their party or that gold democrats are very much mistaken as to what is best for the democratic party.

Our Duty to the Boers.

The struggle which the brave Dutchmen of the Transvaal are making for national existence will soon require American attention, however much political leaders in this country may seek to close their eyes to the situation.

It is not too much to say that the battle which the Boers are waging against Great Britain is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, among all the heroic struggles in the world's history. No thoughtful American would suggest that the United States take actual part in the war. There are, however, some things which the United States can do, which would be natural for them to do, and which will in time be essential for them to do, if the administration would reflect the very apparent sentiment and sympathy of the people.

American presidents have never hesitated to express public sympathy with a people struggling for liberty and a republican form of government. There is in such sympathy something besides the sentimental; there is an intensely practical feature. The United States of America furnishes a living protest against the monarchical theory of government. Every monarchy that is transformed into a republic strengthens the United States. Every republic that is erected on foreign soil is distinctly a benefit to our own republic. When a republic is crushed, or dies, the United States suffers, perhaps unconsciously to many of its people, but suffers nevertheless. Hence, in a contest between two little republics in South Af-