

committee of that state. This is not an attempt at reorganization but an effort to extend the party machinery to every county and keep the organization in fighting trim. State headquarters will be kept open all the time so that there will be constant communication between the party officials and the various sections of the state. While the members of the committee may not feel it to be their duty to emphasize any particular party principles, they were all loyal to the Kansas City platform and can be trusted not to give aid and comfort to those who seek to republicanize the democratic party. It will be gratifying to the readers of *The Commoner* to know that Mr. McLean does not dominate the committee and that his political methods will not be employed. Harvey C. Garber, of the good democratic county of Darke, is chairman, and Messrs. Baker, Burnett, Frey and Salen are his associates. The committee is harmonious and effective work can be expected from it. The organization deserves and will doubtless receive the cordial support of the rank and file of the party. The members of local organizations are chosen by the democrats for whom they are to act, and with care in the selection of these local representatives the party can be saved from a repetition of the mistakes of last fall. Only lethargy among the voters can make it possible for the reorganizers to obtain control of the party machinery in Ohio, and recent experiences ought to make the Kansas City platform democrats alert.

“Smartness” and “Honesty.”

Those people who have attributed the defeat of the democracy to its adherence to the principles of bimetalism may be interested in reading an editorial that appeared in the *Lincoln (Neb.) Journal*, a stalwart republican newspaper, of April 18. The editorial follows:

The *Portland Oregonian* declares that “McKinley defeated Bryan in '96 because of the adoption of free silver at 16 to 1 by the national democracy as a part of their creed.” Nothing is more absurd. The adoption of that novel and seductive battle cry came perilously near snatching victory for the party that nearly bankrupted the nation in four years, when its defeat was apparently as certain as sunrise. Had the Chicago convention been held sixty days later nothing would have saved McKinley from defeat. Bryan and 16 to 1 swept the country like a prairie fire for three months but the election did not come soon enough to catch the people in the first whirl, and the republicans had time to rally with their fire extinguishers and check the conflagration. The republican rally was accomplished during the last thirty days of the campaign. It was the most brilliant political flank movement if smartness is better than honesty in politics ever seen in our national history but the extra month of reflection and debate saved the country from a most tremendous economic disaster. Without sixteen-to-one and the meteoric Bryan on the tall end of the special trains, the democrats would not have carried a single state outside the “solid south” in '96. It was the last quarter stretch that winded Bryan and his Chicago steed. The strategic strength of the Chicago flank movement was the capture, bag and baggage, of the populist uprising when it was at its zenith.

Without undertaking to discuss at this time the merits of the issue of bimetalism it is interesting to observe that this republican newspaper admits what very many careful observers have believed, that the so-called “silver issue” was not responsible for the defeat of the democratic party in 1896. It is true, as this republican newspaper admits, that “the republican rally was accomplished during the last thirty days of the campaign”; and it is particularly interesting to observe that, referring to this republican “rally” this republican newspaper says, “It was the most brilliant political flank movement if smartness is better than honesty in politics, ever seen in our national history.” This is the most candid state-

ment that we have ever been privileged to read in a republican newspaper. Men well versed in politics understand that the republican victory in 1896 was assured “during the last thirty days of the campaign.” It is interesting to learn from an eminent republican authority that “it was the most brilliant political flank movement, if smartness is better than honesty in politics, ever seen in our national history.”

The Administration “Aroused”.

The Washington correspondent of the *Chicago Record-Herald* after saying that the president intends to take vigorous measures to put a stop to the alleged Weylerism in the Philippines, says:

At last the administration has been aroused to an appreciation of the fact that the American people want to know the truth about the situation in the Philippines and they also want all guilty officers punished. As is often the case, the public mind was deeply stirred by the ugly news from the Philippines before official Washington realized that something was wrong.

President Roosevelt himself, having heard of the deep agitation of the people over these disclosures, brought the matter to the attention of the cabinet today. With great earnestness he said this sort of thing must stop, and that the guilty must be punished.

It will be observed that the president's action is attributed by this correspondent to the fact that the administration has been “aroused to an appreciation of the fact that the American people want to know about the situation in the Philippines and they also want the guilty officers punished.”

According to this correspondent President Roosevelt acted because he “heard of the deep agitation of the people over these disclosures.” The people, however, will be somewhat amused by the statement that “the public mind was deeply stirred by the ugly news from the Philippines long before official Washington realized that something was wrong.”

As a matter of fact, “official Washington” knew the truth long before the truth dawned upon the public mind, and it was the final revelation of the reports, deliberately suppressed by the administration agents, that prompted the “public mind” to reach a conclusion, in spite of the effort on the part of the officials to withhold the truth, where merely suspicion formerly existed.

No Free Press in the Philippines.

The editor of *Freedom*, a Manila newspaper, has been arrested charged with sedition in publishing an article from an American periodical. The *Associated Press* dispatch says that this editor “also added remarks of his own censuring the United States commission rule and saying that when it started in July last, every paper in the city upheld it, since which they had all dropped by the wayside as they would not support arbitrary government, especially when evidence of carpet-bagging and rumors of ‘graft’ were too thick to be pleasant.”

A mass meeting was held in Manila at which it was decided to send a cable message to President Roosevelt urging him to take steps to prevent the commission from using the sedition law in such cases to prove lese majeste against editors.

It has not been forgotten that one distinguished and much loved republican once said that “our priceless principles undergo no change in our new possessions.” It is not the least surprising that the men who had the temerity to suppress the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July in the Philippines have the audacity to curtail freedom of speech, particularly in a Philippine city where we have been told that civil government has been established, order has been

restored, and veneration for United States sovereignty has been firmly established.

Even Justice Brown, in his opinion in the *Downes* case, intimated that there are some things which even congress cannot do with respect to our new possessions. Justice Brown drew a clear distinction between such prohibitions that go to the very root of the power of congress to act, irrespective of time or place, and such that are operative throughout the United States and among the several states. And Justice Brown added, “Thus when the constitution declared that no bill of attainder or ex post facto law could be passed, and that no title of nobility shall be granted by the United States, it goes to the competency of congress to pass a bill of that description. Perhaps the same may apply to the first amendment that congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or property or the free exercise thereof, or freedom of speech or the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

It is true Justice Brown said that he did not wish to be understood as expressing an opinion as to “how far the bill of rights contained in the first eight amendments was of general and how far of local application,” but when, in his remarkable decision, Justice Brown rather leaned toward the notion that freedom of speech was a right guaranteed to all men under the American flag, it is difficult to understand with what reason the Philippine commission may violate a right with which even congress dare not interfere.

The American citizen, however, needs no solemn judicial decree on this question. He knows that once freedom of speech and the liberty of the press is denied in the city of Manila, the interests of the Filipinos and the interests of the United States will be as mercilessly handled by the “carpet-bag” government as the Filipinos in arms are handled by the military authorities.

The Packers' Agreement.

Several New York papers have printed feature articles showing that great distress has resulted among the poor because of the high price of beef. It is pointed out that many working men, the character of whose work requires meat as a food, have been compelled to do without this necessity.

The *Brooklyn Eagle* rushes to the defense of the beef trust and makes an interesting plea. In the beginning the *Eagle* is careful to say that “It is clear there is no trust in any such sense as there is a steel trust, a sugar trust, or a merger of the Northwestern railroads.” The *Eagle* explains that there are five large beef firms, but they are not consolidated in any legal form. It admits, however, “There seems to have been an agreement among these five firms not to undersell each other and to maintain prices.” The *Eagle* says that “Undoubtedly these firms did not propose to sell their beef lower, and undoubtedly they kept the price as high as they could. That is the very first principle of business.” The *Eagle* then proceeds to account for the increase in the beef prices on the lines laid down by Secretary of Agriculture Wilson. This increase is due “to the rise in the prices of beef on the hoof, to the cost of corn, and to a general rise of prices, beginning with wages, due to general prosperity.” According to the *Eagle*, the increase of beef prices is to be accounted for in part by the claim that there has been “a general shortening of the hours of labor.” The *Eagle* concludes that the increase in all of these things “is part of the general increase due to the good times.” This *Brooklyn newspaper* consoles itself that “More men have money to pay high prices for beef at present than they had two or three years ago,