

republican administration had raised money to carry on a war and still had ample revenue after repealing the war taxes.

The Wilson bill, with which the republicans have found so much fault, made adequate provision for the revenues of the government, but the supreme court, by a majority of one, reversed the unanimous decision of a previous court and held the income tax law unconstitutional, thus taking away a considerable part of the revenues which the Wilson bill provided for. It was this that crippled the Wilson bill; but for it that bill would have yielded ample revenue for all the needs of the government.

Only a part of the money secured by Cleveland's sale of bonds was used to meet a deficit in the revenues. The money borrowed by Cleveland was borrowed in pursuance of a republican policy established at the dictation of Wall street and declared by Mr. Carlisle in his testimony before a house committee to have been unnecessary and injurious, but Carlisle insisted that the custom once established had to be continued. He was wrong in his conclusions, but his testimony places upon the republican party the responsibility for the bonds which they charged up to Cleveland's administration. Mr. Cleveland's financial policy was republican and ought not to be charged up to the democratic party.

Is it any special credit to the republican party to have collected a large sum of money by taxation? Can the republican party boast now of its system of taxation when it collects nearly the entire revenue for the support of the federal government from internal revenue taxes and import duties, both of which overburden the poor and under-burden the rich? It does not require a great deal of genius to spend other people's money, and the only genius that a republican congress has shown is an ability to spend money collected by unfair and inequitable taxation.

The doctrine "Let well enough alone," if it means anything, means that we must make no attempt to lower the tariff or destroy the trusts. If things are entirely satisfactory, we must not risk a change no matter how extortionate the monopolies may be. It also means that we must not stop to consider principles of government or the dangers of imperialism so long as we have enough to eat and wear. This is the doctrine of materialism and commercialism—the doctrine that places the stomach above the head and makes the claims of appetite superior to those of mind and heart.

They want to be let alone while they employ the people's money to exploit distant lands in the interest of a few corporations—while they convert a republic into an empire.

Yet while the republicans are shouting "Let well enough alone" and insisting that nothing shall be done to change the tariff laws or the trust laws, they are themselves insisting upon such a change in the financial laws as will give greater privileges to the bankers and greater profits to the financiers. Their boasting is not only groundless, but they themselves are not willing to be bound by their own logic. They are not willing to "let well enough alone" in the matter of the merchant marine; they want to take from the taxpayers enormous subsidies to fill the purses of a few big steamboat owners. They protest against being disturbed in the possession of the advantages which they enjoy, but they insist on being allowed to reach out after new advantages and new privileges. The democrats will be prepared to meet the republicans not on one issue alone, but all along the line.

### Peace in South Africa.

As stated in the last issue of *The Commoner* a treaty of peace has been agreed upon between England and the Boers. Except that it recognizes English sovereignty it is much more favorable to the Boers than was expected. Those who lament at the Boers' loss of their independence will re-

joice that the burghers were able to secure as large a share as they have in the government of their country. Their sacrifices have not been in vain, for they have taught England a lesson that will make her slow to encroach upon the rights which have been conceded to them. Their struggle has been the wonder of this generation, if not of history. Seldom have so few held out so bravely against such great numbers, and probably never has so inferior a force made victory so costly.

If our nation had not itself been engaged in an imperial policy in the orient there is no doubt that American sympathy would have been expressed and that that sympathy would have gone far toward moulding a public opinion that would have forced England to grant independence to the Boers. Intervention was not needed and was not asked, but instead of giving sympathy to the Boers this nation by its official conduct constantly gave encouragement to England and we are now called upon to mourn the death of two republics that might have lived had we been true to our history and our traditions.

### The Coal Strike.

Walter Wellman, the special correspondent of the *Chicago Record-Herald*, is doing excellent work in connection with the strike of the coal miners against the coal trust. In one of his articles he thus speaks of the coal trust:

Here is a skillful combination of many corporations engaged in interstate trade to control the entire output and the selling prices in an industry to which the public pays more than \$250,000,000 a year. They destroy all competition, choke individual initiative, suppress as far as possible the laws of supply and demand, nullify the great principle upon which all industrialism is founded—rivalry between men engaged in the same business as to which shall produce and sell the cheapest that which the public has to buy.

The coal trust not only extorts from the consumer and crushes out the individual mine owner, but it proceeds to fix arbitrarily the terms and conditions upon which its multitude of employes—the real wealth producers—must work or starve.

According to Mr. Wellman the amount collected from the people is more than \$250,000,000. Of this sum the operators claim to pay \$57,000,000 to their employes, but Mr. Wellman charges that according to the statistics furnished by the Pennsylvania state officials they only pay \$40,000,000. When on a former occasion they were compelled to raise the wages 10 per cent they immediately raised the price of coal from three to five times as much as the increase in wages amounted to. The railroads own or control enough of the mines to give them absolute dominion over the trade, and by fixing the freights high and the price of the coal at the mine low, they can conceal the injustice done.

The coal miners' union is engaged in a life or death struggle with this great coal combination, and the sympathies of the people generally must be with the miners. President Mitchell has shown a great deal of ability in giving directions to the strikers and, realizing that the preservation of order is even more important to the miners than to the employes, he has exerted himself to prevent any outbreak.

Society, however, has as much at stake as either employer or employe, and is interested in providing a system of arbitration whereby differences can be settled without a resort to prolonged and expensive strikes. An impartial commission that would investigate the facts and make public its findings would be of immense service. There is a sense of justice in the human heart that can always be appealed to, and this sense of justice would assist materially in the settling of difficulties. It is not necessary that arbitration should be compulsory. The important thing is to inform the public of the merits of the controversy. Neither side can stand out long against an intelligent public opinion. Mr. Wellman is doing all that an individual can do to call the attention of the public to the situation, but no one individual

can speak with the authority of a board of arbitration.

It is to be regretted that the coal miners are so slow to realize that the ballot box furnishes a means of redress. If they would act as unitedly at the polls as they do in a strike, strikes would be unnecessary. So long as they can be induced to vote for the men nominated by the railroads and corporations they will find it difficult to secure any legislation that really advances their interests.

### The Indiana Convention.

The democrats of Indiana have adopted a good platform, but they have permitted the reorganizing element to win a victory which will alienate more democrats than it will draw back to the party. While the platform denounces the Fowler bill and the trusts, and takes a strong position on the question of imperialism, the failure of the party to reaffirm the Kansas City platform shows that the men who controlled the convention were either out of harmony with the majority of the party or too timid to give voice to the convictions of the voters.

The republican papers have seized upon the action of the convention as an evidence that the party has gone back to the Cleveland regime, and while this is not true there is enough evidence of it to excite suspicion among those who made heroic sacrifices in 1896 to save the party from destruction.

The *Chicago Times-Herald* says: "In respect to its personnel the convention differed radically from those of 1896 and 1900, for in those gatherings many of the most prominent democrats of the state took no part whatever, and it was generally understood that they would not support the tickets nominated. Today, however, every delegation showed up with men who were openly for the gold standard in 1896." These "prominent democrats" who have betrayed the party in the campaigns past and who demand a surrender of the party's position on the money question as a condition precedent to their return, are more anxious to control the party than to defeat the republicans. They were responsible for the defeat of the party in 1896 and in 1900, and having brought upon the country the evils that have followed a republican administration, they threaten the democratic party with a continuance of these evils unless they (the "prominent democrats") are allowed to run the party and write the platform. The more prominence they have in the party the more distrust will be aroused among those who really desire reforms.

What hope is there of defeating the Fowler bill with its branch banks, its asset currency and its redeemable silver dollar, if the democratic opposition must be entrusted to the men who took the side of the financiers in the great struggle between the money changers and the producers of wealth? The men who preferred a republican victory to the Chicago or Kansas City platform will never institute any reform or redress any grievance. They never fight an open battle; the victory which they have gained in Indiana (insofar as they have gained one) has been gained by stealth and because the rank and file were deceived.

They talk loudly about harmony, but they are willing to disrupt the party unless the party humiliates itself by a surrender of its position. The men who now boast of the increased production of gold as a reason for the abandonment of silver favored the abandonment of silver before new gold was discovered, and as they wanted a dear dollar then they will, if entrusted with power, find some way of depriving the people of the benefits of a larger gold supply.

The struggle between human rights and Mammon is as fierce today as it was in 1896 and 1900, and no victory can be won by compromise. The *Commoner* urges its Indiana readers to support the ticket nominated, but it also urges them to organize to prevent another evasion. If the gold standard is good, let it be indorsed; if it is bad, the party cannot afford to be silent about it. No half-way measures will do; either the financiers will be given control, not only of the financial system of the country, but of the entire government, or the government must be placed in the hands of those who will administer it in the interests of the masses.

It is a matter of regret that any of the delegates advocated the mention of Mr. Bryan's name in the platform. The fight should not be made for any man, but for the principles of the party. Mr. Bryan is not a candidate for anything; he is not seeking the indorsement of any convention, but like millions of other democrats he is interested in having the democratic party stand for something positive and definite. A fight for a principle will separate loyal democrats from time-servers; a fight over an individual leaves the principles still unsettled.