

tain of democracy sending forth pure and refreshing streams, became a stagnant pool from whose waters foul vapors arose—poisonous to those who lingered near.

Having debauched his party he was offended by its effort to reform and gave comfort to the enemy. Virginius killed his daughter to save her chastity; Cleveland stabbed his party to prevent its return to the paths of virtue.

And now, still gloating over his political crimes, he invites the party to return to him and apologize for the contempt which it has expressed for him! Will it? Not until the principles of Jefferson are forgotten and the works of Jackson cease to inspire.

If we are to have reorganization, Cleveland himself should accept the presidential nomination. It would be due him; his reinstatement would be poetic justice to him and retribution to those whose democratic conscience revolted against his undemocratic conduct. Of course he would get no democratic votes, but being closer to plutocracy than any republican likely to be nominated he might divide the enemy, and even democrats would have what little consolation would come from receiving their disappointment in advance.

A merchant, about to fail, invited his creditors to a dinner and after stating his condition secured a year's extension from all present. One of the number, a relative, waited until after the others had retired and then accosted the debtor: "Of course I promised with the rest to extend the time, but you are going to make me a preferred creditor, are you not?" "Yes," replied the debtor, "I'll make you a preferred creditor. I'll tell you now that you are not going to get anything; the rest won't find it out for a year."

Mr. Cleveland's nomination would have this advantage over the nomination of any other reorganizer, he would make the democrats preferred creditors and tell them that they would not be benefitted by his administration.

Mr. Cleveland's speech should be read in full. It answers a useful purpose; it outlines the plan of campaign decided upon by the plutocratic elements for which the reorganizers stand. Tariff reform is to be made the chief issue, and the men who voted for Mr. McKinley, the high-priest of protection, are to carry on a sham battle with their companions of 1896, while the financiers make the dollar redeemable in gold and fasten upon the country an asset currency and a branch bank system. Trusts are to be denounced in sonorous terms while the campaign managers mortgage the party to the trust magnates in return for campaign funds. Sometimes imperialism will be denounced, as in Mr. Hopkins' Illinois convention; sometimes ignored, as in Mr. Cleveland's speech; but whether denounced or ignored, the secret and silent power that can compel submission to the demands of the financiers and to the demands of the trust magnates can compel submission to the demands of the exploiters and the representatives of militarism.

The fight is on between a democracy that means democracy and a Clevelandism which means plutocracy. Every speech made by Mr. Cleveland shows more clearly the odiousness of the policies for which he stands. We have more to fear from those who, like Mr. Hill, indorse Mr. Cleveland's views, but conceal their real purpose in ambiguous language.

A Kentucky Orator.

Ollie James, the democratic candidate for congress in the Paducah, Kentucky, district, is a splendid illustration of what a young man with ability, integrity, and moral courage can accomplish. Although but thirty years old, Mr. James has become a conspicuous figure in the politics of his state and he is now entering the arena of national politics, his nomination in that strongly democratic district being equivalent to an election.

Mr. James' rise began in the great inter-party

contest which preceded the convention of 1896. When some of the older leaders allowed the bankers and corporations to draw them away from the masses Mr. James stepped to the front and espoused the cause of the people; and so unswerving has been his devotion to public interests and so vallant has been his service that he has now been selected to champion the people's rights in the federal legislature.

The fact of Mr. James receiving and accepting an invitation to speak at the Nebraska state convention held at Grand Island June 24, indicates that this Kentucky orator is already in demand outside of his home state. Mr. James' style of speaking is impressive and persuasive. He acquaints himself with public questions and speaks from his own deep convictions, reaching the hearts of those who listen.

We refer in this manner to Mr. James because his career illustrates the possibilities which open before the young men of this country.

The Commoner will encourage the development of such men in every county and precinct. The young man who struggles while others are idle, who preserves his strength by good habits while others waste their energies by dissipation; who tries to see how much he can contribute to the common welfare rather than how much he can absorb from society—such a young man will find himself growing in public esteem and at last will become the chosen representative of his fellows to give voice to their sentiments and desires.

Knowledge, earnestness, character, and a steadfast adherence to a high purpose will suffice to assure political success in any land where the people are free to recognize and reward merit.

The Effective Weapons.

The Chicago Tribune has volunteered an interesting explanation as to why Mr. Roosevelt has failed to commence criminal proceedings against the beef trust. The Tribune says:

The legitimate presumption is that if the government does not present the case of the packers to a grand jury it is because it lacks the evidence which would be satisfactory to an impartial petit jury. It would not be creditable to the government to have the packers indicted when it was conscious they could not be convicted. Such a performance manifestly would be a paltry bid for momentary popular applause. Mr. Bryan cannot have forgotten so much law as to be unaware of the fact that it takes stronger evidence to induce a jury to send a man to the penitentiary than it does to return a verdict against him in a civil case. The law officers of the government presumably are confident of success in their civil suit, but are not confident of success in a criminal action. Others besides Mr. Bryan have asked why the packers have not been proceeded against criminally. It was natural they should ask the question, for they do not understand so well as Mr. Bryan does—or ought to—the probable reasons why the government has confined itself thus far to the suit commenced in Chicago. Mr. Bryan can easily answer his own question.

Does the Tribune mean to say that more evidence would be required to sustain an indictment before a petit jury than would be required to persuade a federal judge to make perpetual an injunction against the members of a trust?

The attorney general in his bill against the beef trust declared that the packers had entered into a conspiracy, and it is well known to the readers of the Chicago Tribune that that charge is sustained by the evidence which the Tribune itself has presented.

If it would be discreditable to the government to have the packers indicted under existing circumstances, then it was discreditable for the government to ask for an injunction against the packers in civil proceedings. If there was not enough evidence to justify the charge preferred in the civil proceedings, then an injustice was done the packers when the government asked for an injunction against them.

But inasmuch as the newspapers of the coun-

try have printed abundant testimony to sustain that charge, all of which testimony is in the hands of the government's attorneys, many intelligent men have asked themselves, and have also inquired of others, how it happens that these "conspirators" are not proceeded against in the criminal courts exactly as other offenders against the law are proceeded against.

The packers are either guilty or not guilty of a conspiracy. If there was no good reason to believe them guilty, then they should not have been proceeded against in the civil courts. If there is good reason to believe that they are guilty, then they should be proceeded against in the criminal courts.

Inasmuch as the government has undertaken to provide sufficient testimony to sustain civil proceedings, the government might also undertake to obtain sufficient testimony with which to sustain criminal proceedings.

If the administration is sincere in its desire to crush the trusts, it will take advantage of the most effective weapon at hand. The most effective weapon in dealing with law-breakers of any class is the criminal indictment; and so long as the administration fails to use that weapon just so long will a very large number of people doubt its sincerity in its professed desire to give the people relief from trust exactions.

The Fowler Bill Explained.

Several readers of The Commoner have asked for an explanation of the Fowler bill. It has already been published in full in these columns and its purpose explained. It has three main features: First, it provides for a redeemable silver dollar; second, it provides for an asset currency, and, third, it provides for a branch bank. The object of the provision to make the silver dollar redeemable is to establish the gold standard more firmly, and the ultimate aim is to retire the silver dollars either by recoinage into subsidiary silver or by the substitution of bonds. The redeemable feature is only a step toward the other, for as soon as the silver dollar is made redeemable it will form an endless chain and can be used for an indefinite drain upon the treasury; and the fact that it can be used to drain the treasury will be the excuse given for its retirement. When the gold standard is complete only gold will be standard money and bank paper will be the only paper money.

The Fowler bill converts about \$500,000,000 of real money into a promise to pay real money, and to this extent narrows the base of our currency and increases the strain upon gold. This necessarily weakens our financial system, instead of strengthening it.

The provision for an asset currency enables banks to issue money upon their assets; that is, upon the deposits which have been received and loaned out, and the system would increase the liability of the bank, it being liable, first, to the depositors, and, second, to the note holders. Without increasing its assets it would very much exaggerate the severity of any panic. In times of industrial depression the uncertainty of the money would be added to other uncertainties; in fact, it would be greater than all other uncertainties combined. In good times the banks would reap larger profits and in bad times the people would suffer greater loss.

The branch bank feature is the one that is just now exciting alarm among the small banks, for they are beginning to see that the Fowler bill is the death warrant of the small banker. A banker who supports trusts and is willing that small dealers should be driven out of business cannot consistently oppose a bank trust merely because the bank trust will drive the small banker out of business, but a democrat who is opposed to the principle of private monopoly can oppose the branch bank and the money trust as well as other trusts.

The republicans do not dare to pass this bill