

The Commoner.

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A CALL TO ARMS!

Democrats who are democrats from principle should assert themselves. Not only is it their duty to do so, but they need to do so if they would save the party from disaster and demoralization. Reports from every section of the country make it certain that those who left the party in 1896 under the pretense of opposition to bimetallism are making a systematic effort to regain control of the party with a view to placing it in the position it occupied under Grover Cleveland's administration. In this they are being aided by the less extreme representatives of the corporation element that voted the ticket for regularity's sake without endorsing the platform. These elements do not work openly and honestly, but covertly and through agents who beg for "harmony."

It is time that loyal democrats were aroused to the danger confronting their party and its principles. It is time they were organizing to combat the insidious influences at work within the party to republicanize it and make it acceptable to the corporation interests for a democratic party that espouses principles acceptable to the trusts and the money power is democratic in name only. Only thorough organization will be effective against these undemocratic influences. This work of organization should begin now and be prosecuted with vigor. The best way to go about this work is the organization of clubs within the party in every voting precinct in the country. These clubs can arouse enthusiasm, perfect organization and see to it that delegates elected to nominating conventions are men whose opinions are known and who may be relied upon to carry out the wishes of the majority, and they should be instructed by the people at the primaries. These clubs will enable Kansas City platform democrats to know each other and to act together. They will also furnish a means of supporting democratic principles. By circulating democratic literature and debating public questions they may bring pending propositions and existing policies before the people. The work of organizing these clubs should begin without further loss of time. With a view to forwarding the work of organization The Commoner will furnish upon application a form of constitution and membership blanks to all who request them, and every reader of The Commoner should appoint himself a committee of one to perfect the organization of a club in his precinct without delay. A course of study will be outlined in The Commoner, and from week to week the editor will discuss the subjects suggested.

Secretaries are asked to report organizations, notice of which will be made in The Commoner for the information of other communities. DO NOT DELAY! ORGANIZE NOW!

A Reformer in Office

The readers of The Commoner had occasion to rejoice when a Kansas City platform democrat, Hon. Lucius F. G. Garvin, was elected governor of Rhode Island, for they knew that he was interested in doing something more than drawing his salary and enjoying the honors of the position. They will be glad, though not surprised, to know that Governor Garvin is justifying their hopes and expectations. He begins his message to the legislature by using language which the republicans may regard as sacrilegious. He points to the great productive capacity of the United States during the year 1902, but instead of attributing this prosperity to the republican administration he attributes it to our "vast natural resources and to the industry and enterprise of our people." He calls attention to the abuses of governmental functions of the state—first, the passage of laws by one general assembly which cannot be amended or repealed by subsequent assemblies; second, the establishment of a board of police commissioners which spent money raised by taxation, although not responsible to the people who pay the taxes; third, the post-election sessions of the general assembly which passed laws that they would not dare to pass before an election; fourth, the domination of a third house, causing legislation to be sold to the highest bidder. He also points out that the theory of representative government is constantly violated in Rhode Island, and that under the constitution of Rhode Island

one-twelfth of the inhabitants living in small towns possess as much influence as eleven-twelfths of the people living in large cities. He calls for a constitutional convention, and points out other needed reforms.

The eastern democrats are looking around for a presidential candidate. Why is it that they ignore such timber as that furnished by Rhode Island? Why is it that they pick up men who have never expressed themselves on public questions and have never given any evidence of sympathy with the people? Why? Because the reorganizing element of the party does not want a president who would be democratic in office and who would use the great prestige of the presidency to protect the people from the encroachment of organized wealth.

Governor Garvin lives in an eastern state, but he would be as obnoxious to the reorganizers as any western or southern believer in the Kansas City platform. If he were to announce his candidacy for the presidency he would be assailed as a small, insignificant, narrow-minded man, "an accident in politics," and as a person lacking the breadth and depth which the metropolitan papers are in the habit of conferring upon those who are under secret obligation and pledge to the corporations.

The democrats, however, who are interested in good government—and such democrats are quite numerous on election day—will rejoice that little Rhode Island is going to have a taste of democracy. Governor Garvin will have their best wishes as he tries to secure remedial legislation for his constituents.

Alexander Hamilton's Plan.

A Chicago reader of The Commoner takes the editor to task for saying that Hamilton's proposed plan of government provided for a president and senators for life. The reader referred to says that that statement "has no foundation in fact," and suggests that Hamilton's plan was to have them serve during "good behavior." What is the distinction? If a man holds office during good behavior and cannot be put out except by impeachment, wherein does his term differ from the term of one who holds office for life, but can also be put out of office by impeachment?

Hamilton's plan will be found in the appendix to the Madison papers, page 584. In a note it is stated that Colonel Hamilton placed in the hands of Mr. Madison for preservation a document outlining his idea of "the constitution which he would have wished to be proposed by the convention." A copy of this document was kept by Mr. Madison and published by him, the original having been returned to Mr. Hamilton and found among Hamilton's papers at his death. In future years Hamilton, forgetting the text of the paper, was under the impression that in his plan the president's term had been limited to three years. Section 9, article 4, of Mr. Hamilton's proposed constitution says of the president that "he shall hold his place during good behavior, removable only by conviction, on impeachment, for some crime or misdemeanor." Section 6, article 3, says of the senators that they "shall hold their places during good