

Organization Prevents Bolting.

Some of the reorganizers, recognizing that their secret schemes are menaced by the organization of Kansas City platform clubs as proposed by The Commoner, are attempting to scare loyal but weak-kneed democrats by saying that the contemplated movement is a threatened bolt. This charge is both false and malicious and comes with bad grace from those who have themselves bolted a democratic presidential nomination.

The organization which it is desired to form at this time is similar in plan and purpose to the bimetallic league organized at Memphis in 1895 and without which it would have been impossible to have carried the Chicago convention. A minority supplied with plenty of money and working through the corporations can set up conventions against a majority when that majority is unorganized. Organization and an open fight are all that can protect the rank and file from the designs of those who desire to emasculate the democratic platform. When it is remembered that the more pronounced reorganizers voted the republican ticket and have not changed their views it becomes apparent that they cannot control the party without making the platform offensive to those who were loyal. It is a vital matter to real democrats and it behooves them to exert themselves to the end that they may save the party from degradation and demoralization. If those who believe in the principles of the Kansas City platform do their duty the question of bolting will never arise—that question will be left for the consideration of those who have bolted before.

Organize at once. No time should be lost.

Committee Assignments.

Dispatches from Washington announce that the democrats of the house of representatives will ask for the privilege of selecting the minority members of the committees. This move is a good one. The minority members ought to have the right to arrange minority representation—only by so doing can they secure a representation that reflects the opinion of the minority on questions considered. At present the speaker appoints and his appointments are often so made as to place the minority in a false position before the country. Even now some democratic bankers who were appointed on one of the house committees by the speaker are misrepresenting the party's position on the asset currency. It is to be hoped that the democrats will succeed in securing the change which they seek. In the senate the members of the minority make the committee assignments of their members and the same custom should prevail in the house.

The Value of Courage.

If there is demoralization apparent among some of the democratic leaders it is due to a lack of moral courage. Instead of standing up and fighting republican policies all along the line, many of them are afraid to be democratic for fear they will offend the men who left the party in 1896 and who now refuse to return unless the party avoids disputed questions. Aside from the moral depravity involved in the offer to sell the party's convictions for the votes of plutocrats or for campaign contributions, it is disastrous from even the low standpoint of expediency. Jefferson once said of a man that he had not yet learned the important truth that firm adherence to principle was the best handmaid even unto ambition. There is a crying need for a real, pure and fearless democracy. The republican party is delivered over into the hands of organized wealth, and a bold attack upon that party's policies—not one, but all of them—would win more votes than the party would lose among those who call themselves democrats merely because they

were born that way or joined the party before they became peculiarly identified with great corporate interests. A few brave exponents of democracy who cannot be terrorized by the financiers are worth a whole yard full of weak-kneed drawers of salary who divide their time between running from their shadows and flirting with purse-proud ex-democrats. The attitude of these timid democrats is illustrated by the remark of a colonel who was retreating with his regiment and who reproved some of his men for firing an occasional shot. He shouted: "Quit shooting! You just make them madder!" It is time that those who aspire to leadership should face toward the enemy and make an attack. In a political fight an ounce of moral courage is worth a pound of office-itch. Unless a man thinks more of principle than of office he is not deserving of official reward—and furthermore is not likely to hold office when the people awake to their duty.

An Answer Called For.

In the following editorial the New York Journal calls attention to a remarkable speech made by Mr. Kellogg, president of the Colonial club, in introducing Judge Parker:

That was a remarkable speech in which Mr. L. Laffin Kellogg, president of the Colonial club, introduced Judge Alton B. Parker to the guests assembled on Saturday evening last to do him honor both as a jurist and a presidential possibility.

Mr. Kellogg appeared to be laboring under the delusion that the gathering was one summoned to rebuke all those who think the trusts ought to be regulated by law, and also to express disapproval of labor's efforts to better its condition.

"There never," said Mr. Kellogg in his queer address, "was a time in the history of this government when there was a greater tendency toward high-handed and desperate treatment of public questions than at the present day. Freedom of contract is violently curtailed. Commerce is prohibited under the guise of being regulated."

By whom? Mr. Kellogg did not say. Certainly not by this republican congress, which has dared to do nothing that will really interfere with the privilege of the trusts to snap their fingers at the people while they go on plundering them as usual.

"The threats of discontented labor," continued Mr. Kellogg, turning from the objects of his solicitude, the persecuted trusts, to the workingmen, "can never be silenced by according labor protective or preferential rights as against their employers. Socialism can never be eradicated by compromise nor anarchy by pardon."

That is, labor is socialistic and anarchistic when it seeks the protection of the law for its interests, and Mr. Kellogg, president of the highly respectable Colonial club, would neither compromise with it nor pardon it. Presumably, like Brother Baer, of the coal trust, he would call for troops, and always more troops, as the only proper answer to labor's insolent demand for a living wage.

No laws to hamper the trusts and none to help labor—that seems to be the frank and enthusiastic Mr. Kellogg's platform.

If these are Judge Parker's sentiments they will not meet a response among democrats. If they are not his sentiments he ought to hasten to disown them. If the remarks of President Kellogg do not reflect Judge Parker's views it was not courteous to make them, and the judge would have been justified in entering a disclaimer then and there. Burchard was not more "untimely" in his speech to Blaine.

Protect Life and Limb.

Mr. H. R. Fuller, the legislative representative of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the Brotherhood of Conductors, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen and the Order of Railroad Telegraphers—an imposing array of labor organizations—is in Washington seeking to secure legislation for the

protection of the lives and limbs of trainmen. The various organizations of railroad employees have been endeavoring for ten years to secure safety appliances that will lessen the risk of those who operate the trains. During the period beginning July 1 and ending October 1, according to the interstate commerce commission's bulletin, 130 persons were either killed or injured while operating trains which used air-brakes upon but a portion of the cars. This would make nearly five hundred accidents a year, a number sufficient, it would seem, to arouse interest in the subject. The corporations have been fighting the measure from the beginning. First, they offered to consent to a bill requiring 75 per cent of the cars to be operated by air-brakes. Then they objected to more than 65 per cent; now they are opposing a law that compels them to use air-brakes on at least 50 per cent. The fact that they are now opposing a law requiring the use of air-brakes on only 50 per cent when a few years ago they agreed to a bill requiring the use of such brakes on 75 per cent shows the aggressiveness of the corporate interests and the increasing control which they exert over legislation. Both parties have declared in favor of such legislation and President Roosevelt recommended it in his recent message, and yet there is still a determined opposition to it. It is strange that representatives of the people can so far ignore public interests at the command of corporate greed.

The Treatment of Criminals.

A recent issue of the Philadelphia Enquirer contained an editorial giving intelligent consideration to the treatment of criminals after they have satisfied the requirements of the law. It speaks of the difficulty which the ex-convict has in finding employment, and says:

"What is the future of this man? This problem is constantly coming up and it is sad to see that there is little progress made towards solving it. No business man wants to employ an ex-convict; if he is a professional man no one cares for his services. There seems almost no avenue of employment for him. What can he do?"

This sums up the situation, and it deserves serious consideration. How would it do to try a system of probation, say a year or two, during which the ex-convict would have a chance to prove his worthiness? That is, after his term has expired let him have the privilege of working voluntarily under the direction of the state at the same occupation which he followed in the penitentiary, he to come and go at his pleasure as long as he reports himself properly.

Society feels an interest in restoring the ex-convict to his place in the industrial community, but no one is willing to risk employing him until his reformation is proven. If, after his release, he shows by his conduct that he desires to work and establish himself in the esteem of his fellows he will have no difficulty in finding employment. The parole is being used with increasing frequency where someone is willing to become responsible for the good conduct of the convict, and the probationary period would provide for those without friends to stand sponsor for them. The reclamation of those who have fallen before temptation and yet desire to be reinstated in the confidence of the public is certainly to be desired.

It is Curious.

The papers are beginning to report that investigation is going on as to the "views" of various persons mentioned for the democratic presidential nomination. This is eminently proper. It was a curious thing, to say the least, that a man should be seriously talked about before his views were known. It is also a little curious that any man should be talked about for such an office whose views are so uncertain as to require investigation.