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fidelity to the party cannot be made an issue in a campaign. These names will be presented without any effort on the part of The Commoner to urge the candidacy of any particular Kansas City platform democrat as against any other Kansas City platform democrat. The Commoner has no choice between those who stand for democratic principles; it simply draws the line between those who look to the rank and file of the party for their promotion and those who rely upon the corporations, first, to aid their candidacy; second, to secure their election, and, third, who will allow the corporations to dominate their administration.

Platform Building.

An Iowa paper, claiming to be democratic, says:

"The great trouble with Mr. Bryan is that, not being a democrat himself, he fails to appreciate the true principles, the true object, the true aim, the true scope of democracy. He fails to realize that the democratic party is a party of the people, a party which holds that the right to govern, in party councils or in matters of legislative enactment, emanates from the consent of the governed; he overlooks the fact that democratic doctrines and democratic principles have their inception in the minds of the common people of the country and of the party, and are not taken at second hand from self-constituted leaders and aspirants for honors at the hands of the mass of democratic voters."

It is not necessary to discuss the question raised by the statement of this paper that Mr. Bryan is "not a democrat." It is, however, worthy of note that this organ has outlined a rule which it pretends is followed by the reorganizers when in fact that rule is ignored by the reorganizers and is adhered to by Kansas City platform democrats.

A Kansas City platform democrat does appreciate the true principles, the true object, the true aim, the true scope of democracy. He does realize that the democratic party is the party of the people. He insists that in that party the right of government, in party councils, emanates from the consent of the governed. He insists that democratic platforms shall adhere to democratic doctrines and democratic principles and that the rank and file of the party, rather than "self-constituted leaders and aspirants for honors at the hands of the mass of democratic voters," shall say what the platform shall be.

For this reason The Commoner is appealing to democrats who believe in the Kansas City platform to organize and to co-operate in order that their opinions may be reflected in the national platform of their party.

On the other hand, the reorganizers whom this Iowa paper seems to represent, insist that democratic doctrines and democratic principles must be "taken at second hand from self-constituted leaders and aspirants for honors at the hands of the mass of democratic voters."

The Brooklyn Eagle, for instance, recognized as one of the great organs of these reorganizers, tells us, not that the platform should be framed to suit the rank and file of democracy, but that the platform should be framed so that it would be acceptable to Grover Cleveland and men who believe with him.

The platform adopted in 1896 at Chicago, the platform adopted in 1900 at Kansas City, were framed by the rank and file of the democratic party. Men who believe in the principles set forth in those platforms and who insist that the democratic party shall take no backward steps are demanding that the national platform of 1904, shall be framed, not by "the self-constituted leaders and aspirants for honors at the hands of the mass of democratic voters," but shall be framed in accordance with the sentiments of the rank and file of the party.

These reorganizers would not be willing to submit their platform and their candidates to the

rank and file of the party in order that the democrats of every precinct in the United States could pass upon that platform and that candidate. Upon the pretense of a desire for harmony they seek to obtain control of the national convention; and if the rank and file of the party should go to sleep, and these reorganizers could thereby obtain control of the party, a platform would be framed without regard to the interests of the mass of democratic voters; but it would be framed to suit Grover Cleveland, who, having been repeatedly honored by the democratic party, brought disaster upon it through his second administration and who deserted the party during the two presidential campaigns when the party's candidates were required to bear the sins of the Cleveland administration.

That Harmony Banquet.

The "harmony" banquet given by the Chicago Iroquois club on the 16th inst. has come and gone, and it was, as was expected, a demonstration in honor of Grover Cleveland. There were some persons at the table who are in the habit of voting the democratic ticket, but the general character of the crowd was shown by the fact that "the guests climbed on their chairs, waved their napkins and cheered" when Cleveland's name was mentioned. This illustrates the kind of "harmony" that is intended when those who believe in democratic principles are invited to meet at the banquet board the men who still boast of their contribution to republican victories and stand ready to repeat their offense unless they are allowed to republicanize the democratic party. Such harmony is a farce and a fraud, and those who talk of it are either grossly deceived themselves or intend to deceive others. Real democracy and the plutocracy of the Cleveland brand will no more mix than oil and water, and the Cleveland element insists upon being the oil—it insists on being on top if it is in the barrel at all. More water poured into such a combination may help to raise the oil, but the oil never helps to raise the water.

Now that the harmony dinner has arranged for a compromise that puts the Cleveland forces in charge of the party, why not have another harmony dinner and arrange for such a compromise between the republicans and Cleveland democrats as will keep the republicans in power, and thus save all the worry and expense of a campaign? If "harmony" is all that we need, let's have lots of it.

Altgeld's Plain Talk.

In 1895 the Iroquois club of Chicago gave a banquet. It was said that the banquet was for the purpose of commemorating the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, and yet it was understood that the real purpose was to extend a vote of confidence in the policies of Cleveland's administration, which policies at that time were being seriously criticised by democrats. The late John P. Altgeld was invited to attend this banquet and the invitation was sent to Mr. Altgeld by Mr. Ela of Chicago. Mr. Altgeld's reply may be particularly interesting at this time. It was as follows:

Chicago, March 27, 1895.

Dear Ela: I am in receipt of a letter purporting to be signed by you as chairman of a committee of the Iroquois club, stating that the annual banquet of this club, to commemorate the birth of Thomas Jefferson, will be given April 22, and requesting me to be present and deliver an address of welcome. I also learn that a program has been prepared which will make the entire exercises simply a laudation of the financial policy and of the general course of the present federal administration. In other words, that the program has been so arranged as to convert the whole proceeding into a kind of Cleveland love-feast. As this is simply a repetition what has been done several times, I take it that you did not prepare

this program, but that it was prepared by a few gentlemen who for a number of years have talked reform and then pursued office with the appetite of a wolf. In making this program they remembered the hand that had given the spoils and at the same time they cast a hopeful anchor toward the future.

Last summer one of the great newspapers gave an account of the greatest timber stealing and homestead robbing operations ever carried on in the northwest, involving even the prostitution of high office. Recently the country was alarmed at seeing in Washington the most powerful and the most corrupt lobby ever known engaged in trying to force the railroad pooling bill through congress. I notice that two of the men whose names were prominent in connection with one or the other of these scandals have been selected to point out the beauties of Clevelandism, and I will admit that they are the right men for the purpose. Coupled with these is at least one other whose fame in the east is co-extensive only with his ability to injure his party. These three are to discuss the great questions now before the country. All three stand for Clevelandism, but not for the democracy of the country. They stand in practice for the theory that government is a convenience for the strong, and were it Hamilton's birthday you wished to celebrate this would all be in accordance with the eternal fitness of things. But not even a resolution of congress, supported by a speech from a senator and an opinion of the attorney general and backed by the federal army, can keep Thomas Jefferson's bones still while you attempt to dump this program into his cradle. These men represent a class which in his day called Jefferson a demagogue, derided his statesmanship and sneered at his patriotism.

Jeffersonism was the first-born of the new age of liberty and human progress, while Clevelandism is the slimy off-spring of that unhallowed marriage between Standard Oil and Wall Street. Jeffersonism brought liberty, prosperity and greatness to our country because it gave its benediction to the great toiling and producing masses, while Clevelandism has put its heel upon the neck of our people, has increased the burdens and the sorrows of the men who toil, and has fattened a horde of vultures that are eating the vitals of the nation.

To make a dollar out of paper by a fiat of government may not be wisdom, but to double the purchasing power of a gold dollar by the fiat of a number of governments in striking down the competitor of gold is ruin. To paralyze the energies of a nation by doubling the burden of the debtor is statesmanship under Clevelandism, but a crime under Jeffersonism. The republican papers praise Clevelandism, but they honor Jefferson by abusing him.

Jefferson's eye took in the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Cleveland is today ignorant of the fact that there is a country west of the Alleghenies. Jefferson belonged to the American people; Cleveland to the men who devour widows' houses. Jeffersonism is an illumination in the American firmament; Clevelandism merely a swamp-light floating around in the Standard Oil marsh. To laud Clevelandism on Jefferson's birthday is to sing a Te Deum in honor of Judas Iscariot on a Christmas morning.

You will excuse me, Ela, if I decline to have anything to do with it, and you will also allow me to say that, as I am not conscious of having done you a wrong, I do not understand why you should have asked me to come and bid a welcome after the program had been practically "packed," as to important issues, so as to stand for hostility to all that is Jeffersonian or democratic, and to favor those measures and acts which tend toward the choking of liberty, the impoverishment of our people and the ultimate destruction of our institutions.

Respectfully,

JOHN P. ALTGELD.