

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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WILLIAM J. STONE OF MISSOURI

In a recent issue The Commoner promised to present the names of several persons worthy to be considered as candidates for the democratic nomination for president in 1904. The Commoner does not indorse any one Kansas City platform democrat as against any other, but presents the claims of each as those claims are made by friends. This much is said so that no importance may be attached to the order in which the names are suggested. A political admirer of William J. Stone has this to say of his availability:

"The subject of this sketch was born on a farm in Madison county, Kentucky, May 7, 1848. He will therefore be 56 years old when the campaign of 1904 opens. He lived in Madison county until 1862 when he went to Columbia, Mo., to reside with a sister, Mrs. Turner. He attended both the public schools and the university located at Columbia. In 1895 the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by the University of Missouri.

"He selected law as his profession and after admission to the bar went to Bedford, Ind., where he began the practice. He resided there, however, only a year and a half, and returned to Missouri, locating at Nevada, Vernon county, where he held the office of prosecuting attorney during 1873-4. He took an early interest in politics, being an elector upon the Tilden and Hendricks ticket in 1876.

"In 1884 he was elected to congress and served three terms, retiring in 1891. In 1892 he was elected governor of the state of Missouri, and served for four years. He was one of the leading spirits in the Pertle Springs convention, and was closely associated with Mr. Bland in the successful effort to put Missouri in the front rank among the states that contributed to the writing of the Chicago platform. He was one of the delegates to the Chicago convention and made a strong fight for Mr. Bland's nomination, being entirely in sympathy with him in his views upon the money question. He was made the Missouri member of the national committee, and was by the committee chosen vice chairman and chairman of the executive committee.

"During the years that intervened between 1896 and 1900 he was one of the most loyal and untiring of the national leaders, and in the campaign of 1900 was put in charge of the eastern headquarters of the national committee.

"In 1902 he announced himself as a candidate for the senate and made his fight on a state platform indorsing the Kansas City platform, which he, as a member of the platform committee, had assisted in writing. He was successful in his campaign for the senate, although he had the active and bitter opposition of the Cleveland democrats of the state and of such representatives of the corporations as claim allegiance to the democratic party.

"While he has shown unusual ability as a lawyer, it will be seen that his service to his congressional district, to his state and afterwards to his party in the nation, has occupied a large portion of his time. Six years in congress and four years as chief executive of the state of Missouri have given him acquaintance with public duties both legislative and executive, while his

connection with the national organization of the party has brought him into close contact with the issues before the country and with the public men who have dealt with those issues.

"As a political orator he has few superiors and as an experienced, sagacious and courageous leader of men, few equals in the country. His appeals have always been directly to the people and his strength is among the masses. While he has been at all times a democrat he has the confidence of the other parties that have co-operated with the democratic party in recent campaigns.

"As a democratic candidate he would be strong with the rank and file of the party and as president he would be a fearless and incorruptible exponent of Jeffersonian democracy."

A Family Row.

The Argus, published at Albany, N. Y., feels hurt that the Brooklyn Eagle and the New York World should assume leadership of the reorganizing brigade. The Argus says: "In this state (New York) the Brooklyn Eagle and the New York World are regarded as virtually republican by democrats, and they can no longer deceive and mislead." So The Argus reads the Brooklyn Eagle and the World out of the reorganizer's fold! But isn't it a little hard on the reorganizers? If all of the large dailies which call themselves democratic, but which are "virtually republican" are to be read out of the ranks of the reorganizers they will have very few dailies to speak for them.

The trouble about the reorganizing element is that it is largely made up of newspapers and individuals "virtually republican," and the aim of the reorganizers is to make the democratic party such that it will be "virtually republican."

The Argus says that it is not time to select a candidate yet, and that when the time comes "if New York is to name the presidential candidate, then it is submitted that he should be selected by the democrats of this state, and not otherwise." This makes the matter plain. The democrats of the country are to keep still until the convention, then they are to leave the selection of the candidate to New York and then New York will retire for consultation and bring in the candidate and this candidate, whoever he may happen to be, is to be supported by the convention. This is The Argus plan! Well, a democrat with one eye can see through this plan. Of the two plans the plan of the Eagle and the World is more honest and more democratic.

Naming the Clubs.

Hon. Howard S. Taylor, prosecuting attorney of Chicago, suggests that the word "Jefferson" should be included in the name of clubs organized by the believers in the Kansas City platform, the word "Jefferson" distinguishing the clubs from those clubs that call themselves democratic and yet stand for Clevelandism and corporation rule. He says that a Jefferson democratic club in one part of the country would naturally affiliate with a Jefferson democratic club in another part of the country. The suggestion is presented for the consideration of the readers. The Commoner has not desired to designate the name; it has simply called attention to the necessity for co-operation among those who desire to keep the democratic party in democratic paths.

GETTING READY FOR THE BATTLE

The Louisville Courier-Journal in its issue of March 24 devoted one and a half pages of its space to the reproduction of editorials relating to the suggestion that Grover Cleveland become the democratic nominee in 1904. More than a year ago Mr. Watterson warned the democrats of the country that an organized movement was on foot having for its purpose the nomination of the man who, although repeatedly honored by the democratic party, had, during his second administration sacrificed its principles and who, during two subsequent presidential campaigns, refused to support the ticket and gave open aid and encouragement to the enemy.

An effort has been made by the Cleveland managers to hold some of their followers in check and yet it appears that many of them have grown restive and have prematurely agitated the Cleveland boom. It may be that the managers of this boom may not obtain the desired encouragement for this particular candidate and they may find it convenient to replace Mr. Cleveland by some one who, while being personally less objectionable, will yet stand for everything for which Mr. Cleveland stands.

But whatever the result may be as to the particular candidate, democrats have now received sufficient warning to place them on their guard.

To be sure, Mr. Cleveland would be the most representative candidate which the reorganizers could select, but whether they continue to push his candidacy or decide to substitute the candidacy of another who will be just as susceptible to the influences to which Mr. Cleveland yielded during his second administration, the result will be disastrous to the democratic party.

Democrats who are more anxious for the establishment of the principles in which they believe than they are in the temporary acquirement of office, owe it to themselves to organize immediately and prepare for the conflict that is at hand. It will be a contest between the rank and file of the democratic party and those men who would sacrifice democratic principles for the mere control of the democratic machine and for the nomination of a candidate who in the event of his election would be governed by the same influences that would govern the republican candidate.

The influences behind the reorganization movement are powerful. They are well equipped with money. Their leaders are unscrupulous; they will stop at nothing to accomplish their purpose. It will be the duty of democrats in every precinct throughout the United States to organize for the protection of their party and the defense of their principles.

Every mail brings reports of the preliminary work for the organization of democratic clubs; announcement of these organizations will be made in subsequent issues.

In its issue of April 2 the Omaha World-Herald makes the following report:

"The machinery for the formal organization of the new democratic central club was put into motion at a meeting of the men who have been foremost in its favor at the Jacksonian club Wednesday night. The constitution and by-laws were brought up and adopted.