

The Commoner.

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Forward March—Guide Right!

In the campaigns of 1896 and 1900 the democratic party made an honest fight for honest principles and polled more votes than the party ever polled before.

What if it has suffered defeat? Coercion and corruption, coupled with the desertion of gold democrats, were responsible for the defeat of 1896, while the defeat of 1900 was due to war enthusiasm and improved industrial conditions. The party has suffered defeat before, but it has not faltered in its purpose or abandoned its principles. Did it not suffer defeat in 1864 and again in 1868? Did it not suffer defeat in 1872 and also in 1880? Did it not make its tariff reform plank more emphatic rather than less so in 1892 after being defeated on that issue in 1888?

It stands for positive, aggressive democracy and its principles as formulated in its last national creed—the Kansas City platform—are sound and clearly defined. That platform declared imperialism to be the paramount issue, and the republican party has done nothing to settle that issue or remove it from the arena of politics. That platform declared private monopolies to be indefensible and intolerable, and the republican party has done nothing to settle that issue or to lessen its importance. Neither has anything been done to settle the money question. No one would dare commit the democratic party to the gold standard, and if bimetalism is desirable there is no better statement of it than that found in the platform. Besides the plank on free silver, the platform covers other phases of the money question and commits the party to a financial system made by the people for themselves. The fight coming on in congress over the currency legislation proposed by the banks in their own interests cannot help giving prominence to this question, and the party could not avoid the issue if it would.

On the questions affecting labor, too, the platform is explicit and the party's position well stated. Neither does the tariff plank of the Kansas City platform need revision—in fact there is nothing in that platform that requires apology or explanation. As no issue in that platform has been settled and as no new and overshadowing issue has arisen since 1900, nothing remains but to continue the fight along lines already laid down until the people realize the dangerous tendency of republican policies and turn to our party for relief.

In spite of the obvious necessity of maintaining the party's integrity the reorganizers are actively engaged in an effort to emasculate the platform. They want to keep up a sham battle on the tariff while they secretly advance the interests of the financiers and protect the trusts from any effective legislation. The duty of those democrats who believe in the Kansas City platform is clear. They must march forward and meet the enemy as they have in the campaigns of the past. They must fight for the reaffirmation of the Kansas City platform and for the application of the same principles to new questions as they arise. There must be no surrender and there can be no compromise of principle that is not equivalent to a surrender. If the reorganizers refer to the defeats of 1896 and 1900, remind them of the defeat of 1894 and tell them that the party would have been annihilated had the Cleveland leadership continued. If they doubt our ability to win a victory in 1904 on an honest platform like that adopted in 1900, tell them that it offers better promise of success than any dishonest platform, and that if defeat does come it will not only be less sweeping than a defeat on different lines, but that there would be no dishonor with it. Honor and expediency unite in demanding fidelity

to the last national platform and to the interests of the people on all questions.

Forward, march! And let no one call a halt until a complete victory is won.

Another Wall Street Demand.

Wall street has been demanding an elastic currency for some time, but now comes the demand from the Wall Street Journal for an elastic anti-trust law. It says that the decision of the court in the merger case "calls loudly for remedial legislation." It says: "The law must be made, if possible, more elastic so as to permit of such combinations as are beneficial even though technically in restraint of trade." Elasticity seems to be popular in Wall street—elasticity of conscience, elasticity of law, elasticity of currency, and elasticity even of the Declaration of Independence. It would seem that we need less elasticity instead of more.

Why Not Senator Cockrell?

Why not Francis Marion Cockrell of Missouri for president? His Christian character, his long experience, his great ability, and his unquestioned integrity make him worthy to be considered among those eligible to a democratic nomination. As one who has been in harmony with his party on every question he would be acceptable to the Kansas City platform democrats, and yet what reorganizer could find a personal objection to him? His long service would disarm criticism and his popularity would spread as he became better known.

He is 69 years of age, but young enough for service yet. His service in the confederate army would not weaken him, first, because the war is over, and, second, because his record has been such as to commend him to those who wore the blue as well as to those who wore the gray.

The Commoner has already mentioned several available men and has others in reserve, but it takes pleasure in proposing Senator Cockrell.

The Gorman Interview.

The Cincinnati Enquirer, a champion of Senator Gorman, says of its candidate that he evaded the question as to his willingness to accept a presidential nomination, but declared that there are three issues before the country—"tariff reform, economy in public affairs, and honesty in office."

As the republicans will insist that they, too, favor economy and honesty, that would leave tariff reform as the only issue, and as Senator Gorman was chief among the group of senators that emasculated the Wilson bill and brought ridicule upon the party in 1894, his candidacy would eliminate the tariff issue. But there is another issue that should not be overlooked by the reorganizers, namely, that the democrats should hold the offices. This issue presents something definite and tangible. A platform demanding the offices and omitting all references to other questions ought to be sufficiently general to please the men who have been in the habit of bolting, and, according to their logic, it is not necessary to consider at all the men who have been loyal to the party.

The Gorman interview is an excellent illustration of the aimless wandering of the corporation element of the party. No policy on the question of imperialism; no policy on the trust question; no policy on the money question; no fight against an asset currency or other schemes of the financiers, and no contest worthy of mention on the tariff question. It is impossible to believe that any large number of democrats can endorse so lifeless and inanimate a policy. The Kansas City platform democrats are the only democrats who are making an aggressive fight for democratic principles and policies.

Misinterpreting Providence.

A reader of The Commoner has sent in a pamphlet printed by the Missionary Society of one of the protestant churches which sets forth a doctrine that is as un-Christian as it is un-American.

The pamphlet describes the conversion of a Filipino some sixteen years ago and the evangelistic work of his son, and concludes as follows:

Is this not one evidence that God was preparing a man to preach the truth as soon as political and religious liberty was given to the Philippine islands, and a new evidence that God is using the wars of our times for the evangelization of the nations?

The person who forwarded the pamphlet takes exception to The Commoner's position on imperialism and declares his belief in the doctrine that God uses the thirteen-inch gun to spread his Gospel, and no one can read the pamphlet without feeling that the writer of it is a believer in the doctrine that wars can be justified as a means of extending the Christian religion. Not only that, but the pamphlet shows that the main work of this protestant preacher is to convert Filipinos from Catholicism to Protestantism. Americans being believers in religious liberty recognize and defend the right of a Catholic to convert a protestant to his faith and the right of a protestant to convert a Catholic to his faith, but to justify a war on the ground that it is a divinely appointed means which enables one part of the Christian church, or to enable any part of the Christian church, to proselyte among unbelievers, is totally at variance with our theory of government and our ideas of religion. Some have vaguely hinted that our Philippine policy can be defended as a missionary policy, but so far as the editor of The Commoner knows this is the first written argument prepared for circulation which attempts to justify imperialism on the ground that it is a divinely appointed system.

It certainly does injustice to the members of the great protestant denomination responsible for the pamphlet for the members of its church have given as conclusive proof, as the members of any other church, that they believe in the power of the Christian religion to propagate itself by appeals to the heart. The very fact that one of the Filipino missionaries described in the pamphlet was converted sixteen years ago is evidence that even under Spanish rule it was possible for the protestant religion to make a convert. The fact that the convert was banished not only did not injure his cause, but really gave it prominence. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," is an old saying and its truth has been shown many and many a time. Persecution never destroys an idea. The very fact that a man is willing, if necessary, to die for an idea is the most potent argument that can be made in defense of that idea.

The pamphlet assumes that American rule in the Philippine islands is necessary to religious liberty. For it says: "During the year of 1898 in the provision of God for the religious liberty of the Philippine people three events occurred, (1) Paulino Zamora returned to Manila; (2) Nicholas Zamora, his son, graduated with honors for the priesthood from a Roman Catholic college, and, (3) the American flag floated over Manila."

It is a gratuitous assumption to say that American rule in the Philippines is necessary to religious liberty. If any reader of The Commoner doubts that religious liberty is possible under a Philippine republic, let him visit Mexico, a Catholic country, and he will find that the Mexicans, without the aid of any outside influence, have secured and are enjoying absolute religious freedom. Protestant churches can be found in Mex-