

The Commoner.

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G. O. P. DICTATION.

The Pittsburg Post, which used to be quite a reliable democratic paper, has fallen so far as to quote with approval the platform suggestions made by the Nashville Banner, a republican sheet. The two suggestions quoted are that the democratic platform should "demand the greatest freedom of the inhabitants of our new possessions," and "urge the enactment of laws to suppress those combinations of capital which bear heavily upon the people, without endangering the stability of other combinations which are proving beneficial."

The Post says that the Banner "has clear ideas of what the democrats should do," and it adds: "They embody the common sense of the party." If the reader will examine these suggestions covering the two issues most discussed in 1900 (and they have nothing to do with the money question) he will find that a republican convention could adopt both planks with consistency and enthusiasm. On the question of imperialism the Banner and Post would accept a colonial system as a permanent policy and promise to treat the Filipinos well. On the trust question the Banner and Post plank is as indefinite as any republican convention could ask. Any trust magnate would be willing to advocate such a plank if he was allowed to name the president who would construe it. The Post refers to "dead and gone issues." Is imperialism, the paramount issue of 1900, dead and gone? And is the trust fight merely a sham battle? Of course, the Banner wants a republican platform, but why does the Post accept it as a guide and indorse its suggestions? Whenever a democratic paper shies at the Kansas City platform it is sure to get over onto republican ground. The more these papers indulge in platform suggestions the more sure they are to display their leanings toward republican policies and the more inclined they are to accept republican dictation. It is useless for the Post to rail at Roosevelt and fear its hair over the trusts if it is satisfied with a platform that Morgan and Rockefeller could stand on.

Cotton King Sully Fails.

The failure of "Cotton King" Daniel J. Sully furnishes another illustration of the uncertainty that hedges about a speculative career. Mr. Sully was more than usually successful, phenomenally so, in fact. He became the most conspicuous cotton operator in the world and was supposed to have made a large amount of money—but all at once he suspends. If he, with his wide knowledge of the subject and his power to influence the markets, could not succeed, how can the curbstone brokers and penny speculators hope to win? The story of Sully's spectacular career has lured thousands and tens of thousands into gambling in cotton futures—will his failure be a warning to as many?

It is a sad commentary on American morals that it is necessary to make against gambling the argument that it does not pay. That it is not right should be a sufficient reason and will be when young men learn that character and manhood are of more value than money and that real success

is measured by one's contribution to the welfare of the world rather than by the amount of the world's wealth that he absorbs.

Would it not be well to prohibit gambling in stocks and farm products?

Why this deliberate pressing out of view the rights of men and the authority of the people? This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union, it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of man; to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuits to all; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life.—Abraham Lincoln.

CLEVELANDITIS.

Recently the Brooklyn Eagle said: "Twelve years ago Grover Cleveland carried the commonwealth of Illinois. The state then spoke for democracy with no uncertain sound, backing the credentials of the victor in that year with a majority of more than 25,000. Four years later it went the other way, after the fashion of an avalanche, giving to McKinley more than five times the majority placed to the credit of his immediate predecessor as president of the United States. Bryanism operated either as an opiate or an irritant. Whether it chloroformed or incensed, it had one ultimate, one net result—it demoralized."

The Public, Louis F. Post's paper, commenting upon this statement, says: "'Twelve years ago'—1892; 'four years later'—1896. Observe the symptomatic omission of 1894. A truth suppressed. What is that truth? Turn to your political almanacs and see. In 1894, before Bryanism was heard of, the democratic delegation in congress from Illinois was reduced from 11 to 0, and the popular plurality of the state was changed from 26,993 democratic to 123,427 republican. This truth is concealed by the Brooklyn Eagle for the purpose of suggesting that democratic demoralization occurred in 1896 under Bryan's leadership and not in 1894 under Cleveland's. A clear and somewhat aggravated case of groverclevelanditis."

A Characteristic Reorganizer.

The spirit that animates the reorganizers is well illustrated by an editorial item in the Chicago Chronicle. It says: "There is a vigorous brand of democracy in Nebraska. Mr. Bryan managed to suppress it for a time, but if it shall appear at the St. Louis convention with regular credentials or as a protesting and bolting delegation it should be welcomed with open arms." The Chronicle is owned by a republican banker, John R. Walsh by name, and it is constantly advising the democratic party as to the course to be pursued. It has now constituted itself a committee on credentials and announces its readiness to admit bolting delegations favorable to its views.

FORWARD, MARCH!

How will the democratic party meet the present issues? Or, rather, how will the democratic party meet the present issue, for there is in reality but one issue, and that issue runs through all questions? The great and overshadowing question presented by all the issues discussed is, Shall the corporations or the people control the government of the United States? Today the corporations are in absolute control. Even when the supreme court decides that the government has power to destroy the trusts, the attorney general rushes forward and assures the combinations that the administration has no intention of disturbing them. The rule of these corporations is unlimited and complete. The president refuses to enforce the law as it stands, and the republican congress refuses to enact new legislation. The government is being used for the enrichment of the few at the expense of the many, officials are making money by the sale of their influence, and corruption is rampant in city, state and nation. The public conscience has been stupified by commercialism until the grossest offenses against liberty and good government do not awaken the protest that ought to be made against even trivial departures from the path of rectitude. The government is used as a business asset by those who can control it and enormous campaign funds are contributed by the financiers of class legislation and distributed as bribes to the people. Republicans as well as democrats recognize the menace of such a condition, but when confronted with the acts of their own party, make but one reply: "But will the democratic party, if entrusted with power, do any better?" And to give force and reasonableness to their inquiry, they point to the administration of Grover Cleveland. Whenever an attack is made upon republican wrong-doing, there is always a response from some republican, and that response is always the same: "You had your chance under Cleveland and you did the same." It is vain to point out the inconsistency of such an answer, vain to point out that the republicans rather than the democrats ought to shoulder the responsibility for Mr. Cleveland's administration. To the ordinary republican Cleveland stands for democracy because he is the only democratic president we have had. They overlook the fact that his assistance gave the country a republican administration that followed in his footsteps as he followed in the footsteps of his republican predecessors.

Secretary Shaw, in a recent speech, emphasized the fact that Mr. Cleveland did nothing on the trust question. That is no justification of the inaction of the present administration, but it is a taking reply and imposes upon the democratic party the necessity of making democracy mean something entirely different from either Clevelandism or republicanism. The fact that the great dailies which bolted in 1896, but which still claim to be democratic, present Cleveland and Clevelandism as representing democratic principles and democratic aspirations, is a great embarrassment. It remains for the convention to show, as it has twice before, that these papers controlled by the influence that controls the republican party, do not speak for the democratic masses.

Just now the republicans are making merry