

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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Republicans Aid The Reorganizers.

The republican papers are just now very busy helping the reorganizers. They are spending more time at present denouncing the regular democrats and eulogizing the Wall street crowd than they are in discussing republican policies. The Pittsburg Gazette recently had an editorial criticizing the Nebraska platform, asserting that it is "a profession of faith rather than a statement of political issues." The Gazette adds:

"It is the duty of every party to confine itself to objects which are practical and obtainable, for it is the business of party to carry on the government. It is not right to bring forward issues in which the people are not interested whatever their abstract merit may be. The people of the country have shown in every way open to them that they are opposed to the extensive program of financial, judicial and social reconstruction to which Mr. Bryan invites them with unflinching persistence. It is a misnomer to call an organization the democratic party when it absolutely disregards popular sentiment and takes the position that the question is not what the people want, but what they ought to have. Public leaders undoubtedly have educational duties to perform toward their adherents. There are times when public leadership is justified in taking ground considerably in advance of the movement of public opinion, but nevertheless, the basis of public action must always be public opinion, and any sound and sensible party organization will bow to the verdict of the people."

Did the republicans drop the tariff when they were defeated in 1890 and 1892? Did the gold bugs stop working for the gold standard when all parties declared for bimetallism in 1892? The Nebraska platform does not deal with obsolete questions. It deals with subjects now before congress and the country. The platform reaffirmed the Kansas City platform, just as republican platforms are in the habit of reaffirming the platforms of the party, but all of the questions specifically mentioned are live questions.

Imperialism is costing the country something like a hundred millions a year, or we count the increased expenditure on the army and navy as due to the administration's imperial policy. The trust question is acute and of growing importance. The tariff needs revision. The question of government by injunction is very much alive. The question of arbitration is vitally important, and the eight-hour day was up before the committee of congress, and the consideration of it was postponed until after the election. The various phases of the money question referred to are phases now before congress. Not long ago the secretary of the treasury announced that it was time to consider a basis for the bank notes, and it is known that the administration favors an asset currency. The bill for the deposit of government money in the various banks was recommended by a committee of the lower house. The effort to melt up the silver dollars is still persisted in, and the issue between the greenbacks and national bank note is one that must be settled.

The Gazette does not attempt to defend the republican position on these questions, but like the other corporation papers, it assails the democrats who believe in an honest fight for honest principles. There is concerted action among the leading corporation papers,—some of them calling themselves democratic and some of them calling themselves republican, but all the servants of organized wealth,—and these papers are persistently and constantly at work trying to secure the nomination of a Wall street democrat. With such a candidate nominated they can force President Roosevelt to promise anything that he has not already promised, and they can then rest, each assured that whatever party wins the exploitation of the people can go on. It is astonishing that in view of this situation any democrats can be found

who would fall into the trap now being laid by the corporations.

Cleveland's Financial Advisers.

Mr. Cleveland, in his recent "bond issue" article, says:

"I think it may here be frankly confessed that it never occurred to any of us to consult in this emergency farmers, doctors, lawyers, shoemakers, or even statesmen. We would not escape the belief that the prospect of obtaining what we needed might be somewhat improved by making application to those whose business and surroundings qualified them intelligently to respond."

Therefore, he says he held an interview with J. Pierpont Morgan at the White house. He need not have gone to the trouble of explaining that he did not consult the public generally in regard to the course to be pursued. He never consulted the public or the interests of the public. The very fact that he attempts to explain why he consulted Mr. Morgan instead of "farmers, doctors, lawyers," etc., shows that he is conscious of the weight of the criticism directed against him. A little farther along in the article he says:

"After a little further discussion of the situation he (Morgan) suddenly asked me why we did not buy one hundred millions in gold at a fixed price, and pay for it in bonds under section 3700 of the Revised Statutes. This was a proposition entirely new to me and I turned to the statutes and read the section which he mentioned."

Here is proof that Mr. Cleveland did not know what the statutes contained on the subject, and received this entirely new proposition from Mr. Morgan. It has been often charged that Mr. Cleveland received his financial views from Mr. Morgan—here he admits that Mr. Morgan even instructed him as to the statutes governing the issue of bonds. After this let no one doubt that Mr. Morgan was the trusted adviser of the administration. The difference between his advice and the advice of Mr. Cleveland's official family was that Mr. Morgan advised in his own interests and made an enormous profit out of the advice.

No wonder Mr. Cleveland got into trouble when he relied upon the advice of the very man who was to profit by the policy suggested! In court Mr. Cleveland would closely scrutinize the interest that a witness had in the testimony given, but of course it never occurred to him that Mr. Morgan could have anything but a patriotic interest in the advice that he gave. Even if Mr. Cleveland's defense is accepted as sufficient to exonerate him from intentional wrong-doing, it would unfit him for any responsible position. An official who thinks that he can safely leave the decisions of questions involving millions of dollars to the very men who are to profit by the advice given, cannot safely be trusted in any position of importance.

Church Sets Example.

According to the press dispatches, the Southern Methodist church of Hobart, Okla., has set a good example in returning an excess of fire insurance. The insurance company allowed the church \$1,300 for repairs, but the church found that the repairs cost only \$1,000, and returned the remaining \$300. And why not? That the incident should excite attention shows the low state of the public conscience. "The principles of right and wrong are easily discerned," says Jefferson, "and require not the aid of many counsellors." That is true. It is not lack of intelligence, but lack of conscience that causes the most alarm today. Cheating in business, cheating in politics, and corruption of government—all spring from the same source, namely: indifference to moral obligations. The Hobart church has done well, but as "darkness brings out the stars," so this incident is made conspicuous only by the fact that scrupulous integrity is not as common as it ought to be.

Shall The People be Allowed to Rule?

The action of the Illinois democratic convention, recently held at Springfield, raised a question which dwarfs into insignificance the issues which have during recent years caused dissensions in the democratic party. The question raised by the arbitrary, unfair and unprincipled action of Hopkins and his satellites is: Shall the people rule? Mr. Hopkins as chairman of the state committee and with a majority of the committee to support him selected a temporary chairman who would do his bidding and, refusing to allow a minority report to be submitted to the convention, declared his man temporary chairman. He then had a subcommittee of his central committee throw out the regular delegations and seat some two hundred delegates who had no semblance of right to sit in the convention. His chairman refused to allow a minority report to be considered, saying that it was merely advisory and would be filed for record. The chairman refused to allow a roll call on the motion to adopt the report of the credential committee. But notwithstanding the illegal seating of delegates not entitled to seats the convention was still about three to one against Hopkins as shown by the only roll call, namely, the one on the Hearst instructions, and the chairman continued to run the convention surrounded by a lot of policemen and a body guard imported from Chicago for the purpose. In the various districts enough delegates were thrown out or ignored to give Hopkins a majority of the state committee and a majority of the delegates to the national convention and on the endorsement of these delegates and committeemen by the state convention no roll call was permitted. So unjust, so bold and so outrageous was the conduct of Hopkins and his chairman that Judge Prentiss of Chicago and Mayor Crollins of Joliet declined to be candidates before the convention. It was not a convention, it was a usurpation of power by a conscienceless gang of political pirates. If the democrats of Illinois after making a successful fight at the primaries can thus be robbed of their victory what incentive is there to Illinois democrats to study public question and work for reform? The Hopkins crowd has destroyed all hope of success in Illinois, this fall but there is still a chance of appeal to the national convention and this appeal should be taken. A contest should be prepared and the voice of the democracy of Illinois should be given a chance for its life. Democracy is a mockery with a man like Hopkins in control. If he can stifle the voice of the people this year he can do so indefinitely, and the sooner he is repudiated the sooner the party will be put on sound ground. The national convention is an appellate court to which the democrats of Illinois ought to be able to look for justice. It is alleged that the same tactics were resorted to in Indiana; if so there ought to be contests from that state also. The right of the democratic voters to control their organization is one that can not be disturbed without the demoralization and ultimate destruction of the party. That the people shall rule is fundamental.

Predatory Politics.

On another page will be found an interesting editorial which recently appeared in the Chicago Tribune. The editorial is entitled "John R. Walsh," and more than a column in the Tribune is devoted to an expose of Mr. Walsh's prominence in predatory politics. It calls attention to the alliance between Walsh and the Chronicle on one side, and the worst elements of the republican party on the other, and shows how these mercenary democrats and mercenary republicans use both parties to increase their financial gains.

The readers of The Commoner know something of the Chronicle, and the Tribune editorial will enable them to better understand its purposes in making its attacks upon a man that is democratic. A democracy that interferes with the plans