

THE KENTUCKY SITUATION

The situation in Kentucky is simply this: A few democratic members refuse to abide by the decision of the majority rendered at a primary, that majority being respected by nine-tenths of the democratic members. Governor Beckham and Senator McCreary were candidates before the primary, and Governor Beckham won by a decisive majority. Some complained that the primary was called too soon, but as Senator McCreary entered the contest and would have had the party support if he had won his friends can not make that objection now. Charges of fraud have been made against the primary, but those charges were not prosecuted and Senator McCreary spoke for the ticket during the campaign. All or nearly all of the members who now refuse to vote for Governor Beckham acquiesced in the result and allowed the voters to assume that they would vote for Beckham.

The Louisville Courier-Journal criticises Mr. Bryan for going to Frankfort and urging all democrats to vote for Beckham, but the principle involved is not local, it is national. Democracy requires acquiescence in the will of the majority and that democratic principle is just as binding on the democrats of Kentucky as on democrats elsewhere. Either the majority or the minority must rule.

The contest may result in any one of five ways:

First—Beckham may be elected—in this case the will of a majority of the democratic voters and the will of a majority of the democratic members of the legislature will be carried out.

Second—The bolting democrats may force the nomination of another democrat. In that case one-tenth of the members will dictate to nine-tenths.

Third—The bolting democrats may join the republicans in electing some democrat—but what democrat would want to hold the place at the hands of republican politicians, and thus obligate himself to them?

Fourth—They may join the republicans in the election of a republican—but this is unthinkable, for it would be a base betrayal of their constituents.

Fifth—The deadlock may continue until the end of the session and thus leave the state with but one senator and compel another contest two years hence.

Every plan except the first means the inauguration of another feud. Governor Beckham stands for democratic principles, and his election would leave less of bitterness than the election of any one else, for his election executes the will of the majority of the democrats—the election of any one else defeats the democratic will.

Acquiescence in the will of the majority is the most fundamental of democratic principles and The Commoner urges the democrats of Kentucky to give their endorsement to this democratic doctrine.

MR. BRYAN'S POSITION

Several newspapers recently printed a statement that Mr. Bryan had written to a friend in the east that he would decline the democratic nomination for the presidency should it develop that a certain portion of the delegates to the Denver convention were opposed to him. Mr. Bryan made no such statement. His position was clearly described in a statement printed in The Commoner of November 15. That position is well told by this extract from the November 15 statement:

"Mr. Bryan will not ask for or seek a nomination; and he will not assume to decide the question of his availability. He has been so amply recompensed by his party for what he has done and for what he has endeavored to do that he cannot claim a nomination as a reward; neither should his ambition be considered, for he has had honors enough from his party to satisfy any reasonable ambition. The only question that ought to weigh with the party is whether the party can be strengthened and aided more by his nomination than by the nomination of someone else. If he can serve the party by being its candidate, he will accept the commission, and make the best fight he can. If, however, the choice falls upon another, he will not be disappointed or disgruntled. His availability is a question to be decided not by him, not by a few leaders, not even by the leading newspapers that call themselves democratic, but by the voters of the party, and to them he intrusts the decision of the question—they are the supreme court in all matters concerning candidates,

as they are in all matters concerning the platform."

It may be added that Mr. Bryan does not regard the plutocratic newspapers that have habitually misrepresented him as being qualified to speak even for a minority of democrats. Those newspapers speak for "the system." The rank and file of the democratic party will shape the party's course at Denver. It is not to be expected that the program adopted in the interests of the general public will meet with the approval of those from whose impositions the public is even now seeking relief.

THE WORLD EDITOR'S NEW HAT

Commoner readers who are also readers of the New York World may be interested just now in an editorial that appeared in the November 16, 1906, issue of The Commoner. That editorial follows:

After exerting itself in behalf of the republican ticket, the New York World, in an editorial printed on the day following the election said: "Let nobody mistake the meaning of the narrow victory that Charles E. Hughes has won over William R. Hearst. Mr. Hughes' election by 36,000 plurality is morally a republican defeat, a popular repudiation of the corrupt republican machine and its alliances with corrupt corporations. The Hearst vote is a striking illustration of the popular temper in regard to the abuses of corporations and the demand for effective regulation."

Eminently characteristic of the World! For years between elections, it has preached against "the corrupt republican machine and its alliances with corrupt corporations" only to be found, when the campaign opened, waging battle upon the side espoused by that same "corrupt republican machine" and those same "corrupt corporations."

This reminds us of a letter written by C. V. Thorne, Rosebud Agency, South Dakota, and printed in the World during the month of April, 1906. Addressing the editor of the World, Mr. Thorne said: "I am a constant reader of the New York World. You are sending out some good democratic literature at present. I wish I might enjoy it, but I read it now with a feeling of sorrow, for we all know that when the next national campaign comes around you will be found supporting the Wall Street ridden republican party just as you have in the past—by fighting for democratic principles between campaigns while in the heat of the campaign you indirectly support the trust party by opposing first the nomination of a 'real' democrat and then his election. Will you not kindly chronicle this prophecy of a humble citizen in some conspicuous way? If it does not prove true I'll buy the editor of the World a new hat."

Judging from the part the World played in the recent campaign in New York City, one might be pardoned for concluding that Mr. Thorne will not find it necessary to buy that hat for the editor of the New York World.

LET THE PEOPLE RULE.

From the editorials that are going the rounds of the plutocratic element of the metropolitan press one would suppose that we were in Russia instead of America. These papers talk of the democratic convention as if the voters of the party would not be allowed to express themselves on platform or candidate. We are told that the leaders will insist on this and insist on that, as if a man could be a leader without followers. A man is a leader only when he is going in the same direction that the people are. When he opposes what the people want, he ceases to be a leader. The men who have made a business asset of government and who control newspapers merely for the purpose of sandbagging every exponent of popular government and for the purpose of flattering every official who betrays his trust, these men will not control the democratic convention. They will neither be present themselves nor will they be represented by proxy. They will be found where they have always been found, assassinating democracy and all who stand for democracy, but the investigations of the last few years have robbed these papers of their fangs. They strike as madly as of yore, but their influence for harm is very much weakened. We are not living under a despotism; we are living in free Amer-

OREGON READY FOR THE FRAY

Judge William Smith, circuit judge of the Eighth judicial district of Oregon, writes from Baker City as follows: "Since the second day of last November it has been my fortune and pleasure to have sent to you eighty-nine new subscribers, and it would occur to anyone that that is not a good place to stop; wherefore I enclose herewith draft in the sum of \$6.60 in payment of the eleven additional subscribers, making the total since November 2, one hundred. Do you think that is a good place to stop? It is better than eighty-nine, but we will try to keep moving nevertheless. We held a Jackson day meeting last night and organized a live Baker County Democracy club, electing officers, adopting a constitution, and we propose to demonstrate in the coming campaign that there are a few people in this splendid country besides the little coterie in Washington who appear to be oblivious of that fact. The question as to whether or not a system of primogeniture shall exist as to the presidency of our country in the administration's political family must now be settled for all time. Baker county will be in the fight for the people and their great champion, and its democracy wish to be kept in touch with all issues. That is why The Commoner has so many friends hereabouts."

ica, and in free America the will of the voters is supreme. When the voters are sleeping, these stolid guardians of the public weal may secure control and exercise a little brief authority, but when the people awake, they retire like the shadows of the night.

"Let the people rule" is the slogan that won a great victory in Oklahoma; "let the people rule" was the maxim of Oklahoma's constitutional convention; "let the people rule" is the doctrine of Oklahoma's legislature, which is proving to the public what real democracy can do for the people when the government is in the hands of real democrats. Now let the people rule in the nation and in order that the people may rule in the nation, let the voters rule in the democratic party. If the leaders don't like the platform or the candidates nominated, the people can select new leaders, for it is much easier for an army of voters to select leaders than it is for a few leaders to gather an army of voters.

ASSET CURRENCY AGAIN

The bankers' committee has again decided to rush the asset currency bill. Let the democrats beware. There is no need for this, the "emergency" can be provided for without resorting to a scheme so obviously one-sided in the interest of the bankers. They are willing to have their notes guaranteed by the government but they are not willing to protect depositors. How long will it take the voters to see through the utter selfishness of the high financiers? They demand a high price for their patriotism and ask to have the country turned over to them more completely. Kill the asset currency bill.

ANOTHER "BRYANISM"

Referring to Comptroller Ridgeley's objections to the guaranteed deposit plan the Pittsburg Dispatch says: "Thus another Bryanism falls." Everything which does not meet the approval of the interests for which newspapers like the Pittsburg Dispatch speak appears to be "Bryanism." But the guaranteed deposit plan is not to be disposed of by the mere dictum of a comptroller of the currency.

SECRETARY TAFT, TAKE NOTICE!

When Secretary Taft went all the way to Oklahoma to oppose the ratification of the constitution, one of his objections was that the legislative districts were so unfair that the republicans might carry the state and yet not be able to elect a senator. The census taken soon afterwards completely answered the secretary's arguments and showed the districts unusually fair, but assuming that his interest in fairness was genuine why does he not rebuke Rhode Island? There is a democratic state with a democratic governor but by unfair apportionment the republicans are able to elect