

## AVOID THE TRAP.

The "trap" that has proved fatal in one presidential campaign, and is more than likely to do so again this year, is the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1. The worst of it is that democrats set the trap. But because they have committed supreme folly once offers no reason why they should do so again in the same way.

The one thing above all others that the party managed by Senator Hanna wants the democrats at Kansas City to do, is to set a trap for themselves. Having put themselves in the "hole," Hanna and his friends will see to it that they are kept there. With the Chicago platform reaffirmed this year by the democratic national committee, the so-called "paramount issue" will be fixed. It will be the policy of the party of trusts, tariff and imperialism to subordinate every other question to the currency standard. This is what they are longing to do and some democrats are so shortsighted as to be willing assistants.

With the campaign fought on the lines already made by President McKinley's administration; with the dangers and the blunders kept constantly before the people, the end is in sight, and it will be victory for democratic traditions.

But with the money standard forced to the front and kept there; with business demoralized as it always is during a presidential campaign; with all the arguments of 1896 ready to be arrayed again, it will be impossible to fix the mind of the voting masses on other questions to the extent they deserve.

Mr. Russell presents the case calmly and with force. He knows what he is talking about. He is a democrat, and one in close touch with the leading democrats of New York. A few years ago he was a resident of Muscatine, a representative from that county in the Iowa assembly, and President Cleveland's postmaster in that city. Now Mr. Russell is a successful lawyer and an active politician in New York. He says in a private letter that there will be no reaffirmation of the Chicago platform by the New York Democratic state convention. There ought to have been none at the Iowa Democratic state convention.

## Appeal of a Democrat.

To the Editor of the Democrat: Through the columns of an exchange I noticed your very timely and wise comments on the action of the Iowa democrats at the state convention in the platform by them promulgated. In the editorial referred to you said:

"With the reaffirmation of the Chicago platform of 1896 the Democrat does not agree. It has never accepted the demand of that platform for unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, and it does not now accept it."

I am thoroughly in accord with your

views and I am sure that any democrat who wants his party to win in the coming contest should also take the same position. It is not yet too late to save the party from defeat and humiliation, but it may be after July 4, 1900. All depends upon what is done at Kansas City by our national convention.

The New York papers announce that Chairman Jones in his conference with Mr. Coler, of this city, has practically agreed that the silver men will be content with a simple declaration in the Kansas City platform reaffirming the Chicago platform of 1896.

This will not do. We can not afford to go to the country on the silver 16 to 1 issue. We can not successfully defend it and with a reaffirmation of the Chicago platform it will be the paramount, and, I might safely say, the only live issue in the campaign. Many democrats will think me strangely in error by making this statement. Nevertheless, I am sure that if we affirm our former demand for free coinage at 16 to 1, what I now say will prove, to our sorrow, to be only too true. And why should it be otherwise? Is it not fair to presume that if one is about to fight a duel with an intelligent antagonist and he deliberately delivers to him, in advance, the only weapon the enemy can successfully wield, that he will make good use of it?

We must all admit that the republican party is not wholly lacking in brains, that it can command an abundant supply of money for campaign purposes. About a week ago a very prominent democratic stump speaker, whom I had met while on the stump during the last mayoralty campaign in this city, said to me: "Won't we have a lot of good issues to talk on from the platform this fall?" I said: "No, we shall have nothing but free coinage at 16 to 1, if our party foolishly reaffirms the Chicago platform." To this he replied: "Why will we have but the silver issue?" "Because," said I, "the republicans won't let us have any other. They will force us to try the case upon the issues made

by our pleadings or they will take judgment against us by default."

A few days after the above conversation I saw in the action taken by the republicans of Iowa at their state convention a fulfillment of my prophecy. The first two paragraphs in their platform are as follows:

"In the light of today it is apparent that the attempt to debase the currency as a remedy for the hard times then prevailing was a monstrous blunder, which, if successful, would have involved the country in lasting humiliation and shame, and proved disastrous to its industrial interests.

"We insist that no issue can be paramount to the maintenance of the public credit and the stability of the money for which all labor and products are sold. So long as a political party stands committed to the overthrow of the existing monetary system we call upon all conservative men to act with us in keeping that party from power."

## Must the Party Surrender to Populism.

Can any thinking democrat fail to see the issue we will have to defend in the face of the above platform? Can any one doubt that the republican national platform will be on any other than the above lines? Then why should we drop into their trap? Why not fool them by exhibiting a modicum of common sense? We hold the winning cards if we but play them intelligently.

To have eyes and see not on the part of a political leader is unpardonable, because those who do see are made to suffer the consequences of the leader's optical illusions. It requires very little vision to see Mr. Bryan's finish, and also the final disastrous plunge of the democratic party toward disintegration unless something be done, and done quickly to avert the catastrophe.

On the subject of the ratio of coinage, Jefferson said: "The proportion between the various gold and silver is a mercantile problem altogether. Just principles will lead us to disregard legal proportions altogether; to inquire into the market price."

The populist party has now declared

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