

monopoly by a tariff law which prevents any one else from rendering it to our people, dictating the rates of duty in that law as a reward for the assistance of their wealth in electing the dominant party. And in all the uncertainty about other trusts, one thing is certain; pull the teeth of the Tariff Trusts by removing the duties which protect them, and those trusts, at least, will no longer bite hard enough to hurt.

HENRY W LAMB.

THE GOLD DEMOCRATS.

In view of the near approach of the democratic convention at Kansas City, and the probable nomination of Mr. Bryan, most of the sound money democrats are undergoing much searching of heart and much trouble of mind. What is to be their attitude in the coming campaign?

Coming back from the Indianapolis convention in September, 1896, I remember how much talk there was to the effect that the importance of the national democratic movement lay not alone in the immediate campaign, but that we were working for the future. It is well to recall that sentiment now.

There are some people so curiously constituted that no matter how often they are deceived, they are always ready to accept the name for the thing—the shadow for the substance. Just as there were so many democrats four years ago who were ready to accept the populist doctrines of the Chicago platform as democracy, so there are now some sound money democrats who are showing a tendency to accept the Chicago candidate provided the platform be altered.

If any one thing is certain in American politics, it is that candidates are of much more importance than platforms. Who, for instance, looking back upon the last four years, can claim that the republican platform was of any serious importance? It subordinated the issue that controlled the election; and about the momentous questions that have since arisen it was as silent as its candidate tried to be as to the word "gold." Horace Greeley's plan of accepting the candidate and "spitting upon the platform," theoretically immoral as it was, had, after all, considerable basis in common sense. The political platform is less a stationary structure than a garment fashioned of a substance which shall, like changeable silk, appear of various colors according to the position of the beholders when worn for the campaign; and which the candidate can afterwards put on or off as it suits his convenience or pleasure.

Such being the case, is it sensible to regard Mr. Bryan with equanimity this year when we rejected him four years ago? Can any one point to any change in Mr. Bryan that makes him less objectionable as a possible president,

except renewed comparison with Mr. McKinley?

To me the fact that Mr. Bryan did accept the Chicago platform has always seemed of far less importance than that he could accept it. Every man is liable to make mistakes, but Mr. Bryan in every word that he said in his campaign of 1896 showed himself a superficial demagogue. Are we to suppose that in the four years that have elapsed he has so changed as to be a suitable candidate for president? Had he done anything of value during that four years, made any effort to learn wisdom or acquire experience, we should be inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt, but his career has been that of the political agitator; and such a training is not what is necessary to remedy Mr. Bryan's faults. It is not only his adopting and clinging to the wrong side of a bad issue; it is his dropping the tariff issue just as it was about to reappear in its most selfish and subtle form as the new imperialism, his bringing about the ratification of the Spanish treaty which could easily have been amended, his absolute lack of training in any business, his ignorance of affairs—in short, his whole make-up as a brilliant but shifty rhetorician—that makes Mr. Bryan the undesirable candidate that the national democrats declined to support in 1896 and that they should decline to support in 1900.

What sense is there in agreeing to accept Mr. Bryan as a candidate providing only he will alter the cut of his coat, or the platform on which he stands? The man himself is the question. Mr. Bryan is his own platform.

But granted for a moment that this picture I have drawn is untrue, can Mr. Bryan unite the forces opposed to the administration? Obviously not. Whether the picture above presented is true or not, it is accepted by thousands of earnest men, including many of those whose presence in the democratic party in the past has carried it to victory. There could be no real union under Mr. Bryan, even if there were no third candidate in the field. The anti-imperial republican, the sound money democrat, the independent, could only be silent, trying vainly to decide which is the greater of two evils—in this case a hopeless task. The moral fervor of the campaign will be lost, and the issue will not be fairly met.

The only honest and manly part, as it seems to me, for the national democrats to play is this: endeavor, first of all, to persuade the democrats at Kansas City to place before the people a candidate who could not only unite all democrats, but will attract all independents, all waverers, all republicans who refuse to follow their party along the new path. Failing in that, to join forces with all those who refuse to choose between two evils, and place a third ticket in nomi-

nation. Thus, and only thus, can there be registered the full vote against the brutal and selfish policy of the McKinley administration.

There is a prejudice against third candidates, which I share in common with others; but there are times when the self-respecting voter cannot choose, and unless he wishes to disfranchise himself, he must vote a third ticket, and it is not by any means the impracticable thing it is often represented to be. Who were the practical voters of fifty years ago? The men who were clinging to the tottering ruins of their old parties, or the free soil democrats, the conscience whigs, and the Fremont republicans?

THOMAS M. OSBORNE.

Auburn, N. Y., June 23, 1900.

—In New York Evening Post.

THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

A friend, touring in Europe, writes the following interesting letter to THE CONSERVATIVE:

"I have so often thought of you in my wanderings, and wished you might have been with us. For three months we have seen the appleblossom. Leaving here and hurrying on to Rome, and thence to Naples and then I went to historic Pompeii. It is my fifth visit, and I was most fortunate while I was there, or rather the day before, they had discovered a wall garden, upon which was frescoed the picture of the chase; the greyhound was perfect in color, beautiful in action, and the deer was all that any artist of the last part of the eighteenth century could paint. There was not a crack upon the fresco on the wall. Just think; that had been slumbering for almost 3,000 years. From there I hurried on, and found the most beautiful spot in the old world, or even in the new, Aix-les-Bains. It is said that the ancient Romans used to make pilgrimages to that beautiful spot to renew their youth. The baths are something wonderful. I really felt ten years younger after taking them. It is situated upon the border of a beautiful lake, surrounded by snow-capped mountains. The scenery is bold and grand. Being on the border of Italy, the people's voices blend the softness of the Italian and the brightness of the French. From there I hurried on, much to my disgust afterwards, to gay Paris, to see the Exposition, which probably will be finished some time in August or first of September. Our building is a disgrace to our country, both in exterior and interior. Japan, China, and even Ceylon far exceed it in beauty of architecture. I never saw anything more disgraceful than our barren, cold building; huddled in between Italy and Germany. You would never discover it were it not for the flag that flies on the dome. Yet the exposition is exceedingly interesting; much more than I expected. The pictures and statuary are something