

## The Commoner.

upon some which have not been discussed or considered by a majority of the people.

It is the duty of a political party to meet conditions, and to put into practical form the issues upon which the people are ready to act. The people are considering militarism and imperialism, but the new party apparently regards these questions as of no importance, as no mention is made of them. Why this silence? Even the trust question escapes attention, while matters that but a small proportion of the people have considered receive prominence and emphasis.

The reforms demanded in the first, fifth and seventh planks are substantially recognized in the Kansas City platform, while the Democrats in the various cities have given quite unanimous support to the doctrine of municipal ownership of municipal franchises, referred to in plank two, and the Democrats of the nation have endorsed a part of plank six. The populist party goes still further and endorses some other planks. What necessity, therefore, is there for a new party?

It takes time to bring about a great reform, and remedial legislation is often delayed by divisions and subdivisions among the reform forces. For instance, this new party favors among other things the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people. Here is a reform of great importance, and it has been a matter of discussion for a generation. More than thirty years ago President Johnson recommended an amendment to the constitution providing for the direct election of senators. Twenty years ago General Weaver introduced a resolution in line with President Johnson's recommendation, and nearly ten years ago a Democratic Congress adopted such a resolution. Two subsequent congresses, the Fifty-third and the Fifty-sixth, have done likewise, but the senate opposes the change. Last year a plank in the Democratic national platform committed the party to this reform. The time is ripe for action, and yet just as this reform comes within reach a movement is started which, if it has any influence at all, will delay, if not defeat, this effort to bring the government nearer to the people. Reforms are secured through representatives, and representatives must be elected before they can act officially. A united and compact minority may, as it often has, defeat a divided majority. The Kansas City platform placed a large body of men and a national organization behind a number of important reforms. While the party stands true to its position it affords the best hope that the masses have of obtaining relief, and new parties, however well-intended will retard rather than accelerate progress. Several parties composed of honest and earnest men who hold some principles in common, but differ about other questions, may by co-operation secure the things upon which they agree. But when they war among themselves, they prevent the securing of those things which they all want, without advancing the reforms about the merits of which they differ. The third party, in so far as it draws from the Democratic party, will encourage the reorganizers by lessening the number of reformers in the party; the reorganizers, on the other hand, are

encouraging the third party movement by boasting of their purpose to republicanize the Democratic party. The Democrats who believe in Democratic principles, standing between these two extremes, must make the Democratic party effective in applying Democratic principles to conditions as they arise.

### The Assassin Sentenced.

Leon F. Czolgosz, the President's Assassin, has been sentenced to death and will be electrocuted at the Auburn State Prison during the week beginning October 28, 1901.

The only statement he made at the trial was made just before his sentence and was: "There was no one else but me, no one else told me to do it. I was not told anything about the crime and I never thought anything about that until a couple of days before I committed the crime."

He had excellent counsel but as there was no defense to be offered and nothing that could be said in palliation of his act the trial was brief. He will now have a month's time to reflect upon the terrible deed, which even he now describes as a crime, and it will be strange, indeed, if mediation does not awaken his dormant conscience.

### A Voice From the South.

Hon. John M. Reagan, the only surviving member of the cabinet of the Confederacy, made a notable speech at the Memorial exercises held at Austin, September 19th. The following extract is an eloquent tribute from one of the great men of the south:

"We are assembled together to participate in the expression of the nation's grief. The President of the great republic has been stricken down by the hands of a wicked assassin and eighty million people are caused by the act of a vile and God defying anarchist, to mourn the death of a great and good man. That he was no ordinary man is shown by the fact that in addition to some minor offices filled by him, he was eight times elected to the Congress of the United States; he was twice elected governor of the great State of Ohio, and twice elected President of the United States, the greatest honor which could be conferred on any man by the voice of a whole people.

"When I say he was a good man I am sure I speak the general judgment of those who knew him best. I do not rely wholly on the opinions of others as to his character. He and I served together in the responsible positions of members of Congress for ten years, and while we belonged to different political parties, we were always personal friends. I always regarded him as an able, honest man, and entertained for him very sincere respect, and I had assurance that this feeling was reciprocated.

"When he was elected President the first time, in writing to him on another subject, I said to him that as we had to have a Republican President, I was glad it was William McKinley.

"His good temper and amiable character were illustrated in his public life, and conspicuously so in his tender and respectful consideration of his affectionate wife. He was a good and true man in private life, and in his official life he was honest, diligent and faithful. He feared God and loved his fellow men.

"There is something that governs the conduct of generous natures which causes personal associations and friendships, as to the individuals, to rise above party divisions and honest differences of opinion, and which tends to ennoble and beautify human nature, and to bless the human family."

### An Example of Partisanship

Many of the republican papers have been denouncing those who criticized the administration, and some have gone so far as to charge that the murder was inspired by the abuse directed against the President. As a matter of fact, very little has been said against the per-

sonal character of Mr. McKinley, and it is evident from the statement made by the assassin that he was not actuated by any hatred of the man or even by lack of respect for him. The blow was aimed at the government and could not have resulted from anything that was ever said or written about the President. However, while the republicans are finding fault with the language employed by Democrats or Populists who have criticized officials and candidates, it may be worth while to recall the fact that the republicans have gone far beyond the Democrats in personal abuse. For the present, one illustration will suffice. The New York Tribune, once edited by Horace Greeley and now owned by a man who came near being Vice-President of the United States, contained the following editorial just after the election of 1896:

"The thing was conceived in iniquity and was brought forth in sin. It had its origin in a malicious conspiracy against the honor and integrity of the nation. It gained such monstrous growth as it enjoyed from an assiduous culture of the basest passions of the least worthy members of the community. It has been defeated and destroyed because right is right and God is God. Its nominal head was worthy of the cause. Nominal, because the wretched, rattle-pated boy, posing in vapid vanity and mouth-opening resounding rottenness, was not the real leader of the league of hell. He was only a puppet in the blood-imbued hands of—the anarchist and—the revolutionist and other desperadoes of that stripe. But he was a willing puppet, Bryan was, willing and eager. Not one of his masters was more apt than he at lies, forgeries and blasphemies and all the nameless iniquities of that campaign against the Ten Commandments. He goes down with the cause, and must abide with it in the history of infamy."

This is one of the utterances of the republican press that objects to the criticism of republican officials or republican candidates.

### Facts are Stubborn Things.

Under the above caption the New York World attempts to disprove a statement made in a recent issue of THE COMMONER. It says:

"Mr. Bryan would be a greater success as a controversial writer if he were to cultivate a larger respect for facts—especially facts of record. In his Commoner he says that "Mr. Cleveland used the patronage of his high office to force through a republican measure—the unconditional repeal bill."

It was the Sherman silver purchase law which was a "republican measure." It was passed exclusively by republican votes, not a single democrat voting for it. The repeal act was a democratic measure, though passed by the help of republican votes. The national democratic platform adopted at Chicago in 1892 thus characterized it:

"We denounce the republican legislation known as the Sherman act of 1890 as a cowardly makeshift, fraught with possibilities of danger in the future, which should make all of its supporters, as well as its author, anxious for its speedy repeal."

The "possibilities of danger" were realized in the summer of 1893, when the enforced inflation of the currency with steadily depreciating dollars contributed to, if it did not wholly cause, the disastrous panic of that year. President Cleveland simply fulfilled the promise of the national platform in calling congress together to repeal this disaster-breeding law, and its unconditional repeal was largely due to the inflexible determination and the parliamentary skill of the senior democratic senator from this state—David B. Hill. Mr. Cleveland's only mistake was in not calling congress together at once—in March—to secure the "speedy repeal" promised, instead of waiting