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A Democrat on Democracy.

The following extracts from a letter
 written by Hon. David Overmyer of
 Kansas and published in the Kansas
 City World will interest the readers
 of The Commoner:

Edward L. Dimmitt, Secretary Jackson
 Club, Kansas City, Mo.—Dear Sir:
 Your letter of the 10th instant is at
 hand. In it you request me to write
 to you in answer to several questions
 which you propound. First allow me
 to say, with all due respect to your-
 self and those associated with you, I
 fear that no good will come of dis-
 cussing such matters at this time. It
 seems to me that such discussion is
 premature and that much of it is cal-
 culated only to stir up strife. Inquiry
 which invites direct and sweeping
 opinion and criticism of individuals is
 too liable to be understood by many
 as being made for the purpose of fix-
 ing the status of such individuals in
 the public estimation, rather than of
 ascertaining what it really is. Assum-
 ing, however, that your questions have
 no such purpose I will answer them
 briefly as best I can.

The first is: "What is the present
 outlook for democratic success in
 1904?"

Answer: Conditions make issues.
 The present chief executive of the na-
 tion, on the 2nd of September, 1901,
 at Minneapolis, Minn., stated the gen-
 eral domestic conditions, as follows:
 "The vast individual and corporate
 fortunes, the vast combinations of cap-
 ital that have marked the development
 of our industrial system create new
 conditions and necessitate a change
 from the old attitude of the state and
 the nation towards property." This is
 a sufficient answer to those who claim
 that there is nothing wrong in pres-
 ent conditions. Upon the testimony
 of a republican president, therefore,
 we are in the midst of conditions that
 "necessitate a change from the old at-
 titude of the state and nation towards
 property."

What the republican president ad-
 mits, all good democrats affirm, and
 this has been the key to the democratic
 contention for many years. The pres-
 ident not only admits that the new
 conditions necessitate a change from
 the old attitude of the state and na-
 tion towards property, but he says
 also "That in a constantly increasing
 number of cases we shall find it nec-
 essary in the future to shackle cum-
 ing, as in the past we have shackled
 force." The facts contained in this
 admission we also as democrats affirm.

This being true, it follows that the
 position of the democratic party in
 1904 respecting the condition of the
 country must be determined by a pur-
 pose to serve the wishes and satisfy
 the hopes of the mass of the people re-
 specting the attitude of the state and
 nation towards property," and also as
 regards the best method of "shackling
 cunning;" and likewise respond to the
 demands of the mass of the people re-
 specting the nation's foreign policy.
 In other words, the course of the party
 must be determined by the aspirations
 of the masses, and not by the ambition
 of politicians. The time has passed,
 if time ever was, when millions of
 voters who desire reform in affairs and
 justice in public administration can be
 exploited simply to serve the purposes
 of ambitious schemers upon the one
 hand or rapacious place-hunters upon
 the other. Principle and not patron-
 age must be the watchword of those
 who would show themselves loyal to
 the cause of the people and the best
 interests of the country.

The position, therefore, of the party
 respecting public affairs and condi-
 tions must determine its prospects of
 success. That there are great wrongs
 that should be righted even the repub-
 lican president admits. For these his
 party is responsible so far as politics
 can be responsible for conditions. The
 duty of the democratic party is to at-
 tempt to right wrongs. This much it

must do, though even in doing this it
 may not succeed, yet it can take no
 other course without perfect certainty
 of defeat, for the evils that afflict even
 this great, growing and powerful na-
 tion create a demand for a political
 party of the people; indeed, there is
 never a time in any nation when there
 is not such a demand. In the past the
 democratic party has been the people's
 party, especially in the last two politi-
 cal campaigns. If it shall abandon that
 high function it can rest assured of
 two things. First, that it will lose its
 following, and be an army made up of
 generals without privates; secondly,
 another party will spring up under
 some new name to serve the real
 cause of the people. Let no man be
 so blind as to suppose the people have
 not a cause, or so fatuous as to sup-
 pose that the people's cause will not
 find an organization somewhere to sup-
 port it.

Your third question is, as follows:
 "Will Grover Cleveland's gold-bugism
 ever allow him again to be a candidate
 of the democratic party, or is he politi-
 cally dead?"

Answer: Mr. Cleveland has passed
 into history. He has been three times
 a democratic candidate for president,
 and has filled that exalted office for
 two full terms. We who have not
 agreed with him can afford to do him
 justice. A man who has been twice
 elected to the presidency and three
 times a candidate is not in a position
 to be spoken of as politically dead
 simply because he has exhausted the
 possibilities of anyone's ambition in
 this country in the line of political
 preferment. Mr. Cleveland is a force-
 ful man. But he broke with his party
 and by many it was believed that he
 betrayed it. In justice to him and as-
 suming that he acted with sincerity,
 let it be said in his favor that he was
 president during a trying period when
 his party was at the parting of the
 ways; at the divergence of the roads of
 conventionalism and conscience. His
 last term was a disappointment politi-
 cally and it is safe to assume that he
 will never figure again in national pol-
 itics. This, however, would have been
 the case undoubtedly if he had passed
 from office in a blaze of glory. He is a
 historic character whose environment,
 natural make-up and responsibilities
 prevented him from seeing the light
 through which others have long clearly
 seen those "new conditions that
 necessitate a change from the old at-
 titude of the state and nation towards
 property," and that "we shall find it
 necessary in the future to shackle
 cunning as in the past we have shack-
 led force."

Mr. Cleveland's lifework is done so
 far as public affairs are concerned. He
 has made his record. By it he must be
 judged, but he should be judged by
 democrats in a spirit of justice and not
 of malice. That he can never again be
 a candidate for president is as cer-
 tain as anything human can be.

Eggs as Currency.

In some parts of Peru—for example,
 in the province of Jauja—hens' eggs
 are circulated as small coins, 48 or 50
 being counted for a dollar. In the
 market places and in the shops the
 Indians make most of their purchases
 with this brittle sort of money. One
 will give two or three eggs for brandy,
 another for indigo and a third for cig-
 ars. These eggs are packed in boxes
 by the shop-keepers and sent to Lima.
 From Jauja alone several thousand
 loads of eggs are annually forwarded
 to the capital.

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