

# The Commoner.

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## WHY NOT NOW?

The New York World, which seems to claim a lien on the Parker boom (subject only to the Hill and Belmont mortgages), says: "Judge Parker himself has determined to resign his judgeship as soon as he is nominated, and he will then, of course, give his views on all public questions."

But why wait until after he is nominated? Have not the democrats a right to know his views before he is nominated? Is the convention to bargain for "a pig in a poke," and with Hill the custodian of the poke? If it is not important that the democrats know the judge's views before he is nominated, why is it necessary to resign before the election? If it is right to surprise the democrats after the nomination, why deny to the people at large the pleasure of being surprised after the inauguration? If it is a delight to democrats to speculate about the views of their candidate before they select him, why rob republicans of the delight they would find in speculating about the views of the democratic candidate during the campaign? As, according to the World, Judge Parker's views are to be divulged after the convention, why does it not offer to sell pools on the judge's views and turn the profits into the campaign fund?

If professional ethics prevent Judge Parker from expressing his views upon public questions he should either secure freedom of speech by resigning now or cease to be a candidate. The democrats are certainly not so blind as to think it wise to nominate "a veiled prophet," especially when the nomination is urged by men who are more concerned about "profits" than about "prophets."

## Not Harmony but Surrender.

Mr. Cleveland, Mr. Belmont and the financiers and politicians back of the Parker boom are the men who have in two campaigns contributed to the defeat of the democratic party, and they threaten to defeat it again if they are not allowed to control its policy. If the members of the democratic party desire to revolutionize the policy of the party and make it the tool of Wall street, they have a right to do so, but the reorganizers have no thought of submitting this question to the voters. They will not go before primaries and county conventions with a platform of principles. They rely upon "bosses" and "leaders" to hoodwink the people and secure delegates without any open avowal of the principles for which they stand.

This shows that the reorganizers are not only afraid to present their political views to the people, but it shows also that in trying to republicanize the doctrines of the party they expect to imitate republican methods as well. Under the pretense of desiring harmony they are demanding complete surrender, but will the democratic party surrender? It behooves the friends of the Kansas City platform to organize immediately in every precinct and make their voices effective at the primaries.

Every primary and convention should indorse the Kansas City platform, and select delegates who can be trusted to carry out its principles.

No time is to be lost. The St. Louis platform should be written by the men who supported the platforms of 1896 and 1900. The candidates should be nominated by men loyal to democratic principles, and no candidate should be considered who is not in sympathy with those principles as laid down in recent platforms.

The Commoner has pointed out for more than a year the purpose of the reorganizers; it has urged organization and action, and in many places the democrats are on the alert. They must be so everywhere if the party is to be made an effective instrument for the securing of reform.

## As to Patents.

Some years ago the editor of The Commoner suggested an amendment to the patent laws fixing a value limit as well as a time limit on patents. As the purpose of a patent is to offer a stimulus to invention, why should the patent protect after a reasonable compensation has been secured? Suppose, for illustration, the amount was fixed arbitrarily at \$200,000; would that not be sufficient to bring forth all the inventive genius that we have? As a general rule the inventor dies poor, while the person to whom he applies for assistance sometimes reaps an enormous profit without really having contributed anything himself.

The law might permit the inventor to collect an additional sum himself in case he has, without collusion, parted with the patent for a sum unreasonably small compared with its value. This would give him a protection beyond what he receives today.

A resident of Michigan—S. G. Howe of Detroit—has recently proposed an amendment to the patent law which aims to prevent a monopoly. His plan is to establish a royalty department in the patent office, and provide by law that any one desiring to use the patent can do so by paying into the department a reasonable royalty, said royalty to be paid over to the person entitled thereto. This would prevent any company from monopolizing the patent, and would also prevent a patent being bought up merely to prevent its use by others. Mr. Howe's suggestion is worthy of consideration.

## THE IMPLEMENT TRUST.

If the republican farmers will ask the implement agents to show them the instructions sent out by the International Harvester company of America—the harvester trust, which includes the Champion, Deering, McCormick, Milwaukee and Plano companies—they will find that all the local agents are required to sell at a certain price, and the letters say to the local agents: "You can sell just as many machines during the summer at the prices we name in this list as you can at a lower price."

Thus does the trust tie up the local dealers and hold the entire purchasing public at its mercy, and yet a great many republican farmers are so partisan that they will go along and vote the republican ticket just the same. But here and there will be found some (may their tribe increase!) who will protest not only against the harvester trust, but against the republican administration that allows it and other trusts to exist.

## THE SOLID SOUTH.

The reorganizers seem to be quite satisfied that the south need not be consulted in regard to platform or nominees. It is a common boast among the plutocratic element that the south will vote the ticket no matter who is nominated or what the platform contains. A very timely article written by James M. Head of Tennessee, was recently published in a New York paper, entitled "Democracy."

Mr. Head is one of the ablest as well as one of the best democrats of the south. He has been a member of the national committee for eight years, and is a student both of economics and politics. What he says in regard to the south deserves attention. The suffrage qualifications which have removed the fear of negro domination have left the democrats more free than they formerly were to vote their sentiments. But even before these qualifications were adopted there was enough independence to menace democratic success. We lost the state of North Carolina, and the vote was so close in Alabama that it required large democratic majorities in the black counties to defeat the fusion formed between the republicans and the populists.

It was Clevelandism which shook the foundation of the democratic party in the south, and a return to Clevelandism will rekindle the fire of indignation that once burned so strongly in many of the southern states. The "solid south" can only be counted upon as for "solid democracy" when solid democracy is built upon the courageous defense of human rights. It will not be solid if the party panders to plutocracy or begs for contributions from Wall street.

## Story of a Labor Agitator.

Mr. Joseph R. Buchanan, now of New York, has issued through The Outlook company, of that city, a very interesting narrative entitled "The Story of a Labor Agitator." The volume is not only entertaining, but highly instructive. In a very plain and yet forcible style Mr. Buchanan relates his experiences in the labor world as an editor, agitator, and arbiter between capital and labor. Being on the inside he has been in a position to learn much that the public generally does not know.

After eight years of sacrifice which brought a large return to the men for whom he labored, he found that his paper was not sufficiently supported to enable him to continue publication, and there is a pathos in the manner in which he describes his final surrender of the paper that he had made the representative of the interests of the wage-earners.

"And this is the end of it all. After eight years of hard work and sacrificing, of battles fought, of victories and defeats, with tens of thousands of toilers in the land reaping the rewards of those years of striving, I sit alone, surrounded by the wreckage of my last redoubt, broken, ruined, deserted. Here, in this forum where it has been my proud boast that every slave could clank his chains, every free-man voice his will, I bow my head beneath the tyranny of bigotry, intolerance, and jealousy. But, cruel as they are, they have not crushed me. Against these I could fight to my