

there may be directors to be elected, or to cumulate such votes upon such candidates as he pleases. Under this provision minorities have the right to be present at meetings of the directors, to examine books, to know what is being done in the company, and to be heard upon any measure proposed. It was argued in opposition to this plan, when pending before the legislature, that minorities in certain important corporations desired it for their own defense and for a means of obstruction. This, it is plain, is but a vital reason for the measure. Business as well as political minorities have rights that should be respected. For a minority to defend its rights in courts is costly, attended with delay, and inflicts exposure of corporate operations that often seriously effect business ends. In all parts of the country the abuse of corporate power has become a frightful of financial and industrial difficulties. The minority is a conservative element that often rightfully obstructs the perpetration of wrong. Therefore the right of minorities to be heard should be regarded and respected.

EVANSVILLE, Ind.

### Pie Hunters Fall Out.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" seems to be as true of parties as of men. The so-called populist convention in the Wieland building, the evening of Jan. 21, was one of those mysterious dispensations of providence sometimes permitted to afflict the just, and it should not therefore, be held against the party.

Every controversy has two sides; this one, however, has three. Two of them were championed with much sound and fury at the so-called convention; the third, gentle reader, we now lay before you. The writer is a member of the city committee, hence he has a right to criticise it, and has so done; he also voted for a convention, hence he has a right to criticise the Wieland building aggregation, and hereby so does.

The trouble originated not in the principles, the purposes, nor with the rank and file of the organization; it sprung from the cussedness of poor human nature, and found its opportunity in the oft-marked tendency of honesty and inexperience to dwell together under the same hat.

The difference between the leaders of the two factions is that both wanted the prestige of the or-

ganization to trade on. The pot is as black, but no blacker than the kettle. The suppression of party expression is a crime; but not less so is its misstatement. Is it denied that both sides equally are guilty? Herein is presumptive proof:

1. The committee was not called together until the last day, under the law, for calling a convention—so there could be no reconsideration of its action.

2. The alleged convention was called to meet within two days of the expiration of the time for filing nominations—so that there could not be an adjournment to get a fair expression and give the party voters a decent chance to be heard.

Were it desired to condemn the committee for its action there was only one possible method, if such condemnation were to have the force of party authority: To have called a meeting and given public notice in time for its thorough advertisement.

This was not done. The public announcement came within a few hours of the meeting time, so late that unless the reader's eyes happened on the obscure item first on his taking up the paper, he had by no possibility time to attend. The promoters claim they sent out 60 written notices. What was that for a mass meeting of a party membership of three or four thousand? Not received until the afternoon before the convention, what opportunity was given by these notices for the gentlemen thus favored to consult with fellow populists in their respective precincts? Stating no object for the meeting how were the so-called delegates to inform themselves upon the questions they were to decide?

Thus called, it is not surprising that the convention was packed, that the chairman was biased or incompetent, that parliamentary usages were trodden under foot, that no motion could be heard that came from beyond the inner circle of frothing partisans, and that, if the will of the majority prevailed, it was because of the interposition of some mysterious providence rather than because of fair discussion or an intelligent expression of opinion.

Who sent out the invitations? To what man or set of men, be they ever so competent and honest, would any party be justified in blindly delegating the choice of its representatives? And when the delegates to this convention were chosen by a committee unauthor-

ized and unknown, is it not clear that not only had it no authority to speak for Duluth populists, but that any action by it other than to adjourn, or to arrange for a truly representative gathering, was a most vicious and presumptuous usurpation?

This thing has gone far enough. We care not a penny whether Zeke Austin and J. H. Baker or F. L. Young and W. D. Gordon have the best of it in the clash of their personal ambitions. The principles of the party are *all* important, and it is time that the populists of Duluth emancipated themselves from a system of manipulation as arrogant and as unpatriotic as has ever dominated the councils of their republican opponents. Time and again in populist committee meetings we have heard so-called leaders declare against reposing confidence in the rank and file. It required years of fighting, with indifferent success until the primary election law came, to obtain open caucuses—not that the self-assumed bosses feared, as they claimed, that men not populists might come in and vote, but because they wanted an unfair opportunity to pack the primaries on their own account. The conventions of the last campaign were the first truly representative ones ever held by the party in Duluth. It is characteristic of the party boss to fear the people—to shrink from an exercise of power by the voters themselves. The committee had no right to "pass up" the campaign. That is a prerogative belonging only to party conventions.

But if the committee on the one side usurped power that only a convention had a moral right to exercise, on the other side, the gentlemen who essayed to call the committeemen down, concocted a packed convention when, if they had wanted it, they might have had one fully representative.

So, we say, both sides were wrong. And where lies the remedy? The schemers are not the responsible ones. It is as natural for some men to be crooked as for hogs to drink swill, or wild cats to eat chickens. Perhaps they are no more to be blamed either. The party voter is the culprit. He should exercise judgment, impartiality and vigilance. He should sit down as effectually on a schemer on one side, as on the other. Duluth populists in this respect have always failed in their duty, and to this cause, and this alone, has been due the slow growth of their principles and the weakness of their organization.

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