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Several months have now elapsed since Thomas W. Lawson made a widely published and very significant offer to the Democratic national committee. He offered to put \$100,000 into its campaign treasury if Patrick McCarren, the chairman of its executive committee, would publicly and explicitly deny that he is regularly employed, as a trusted political agent, by the Standard Oil or Rockefeller "crowd." No denial of this accusation has yet been published.

More recently, Mr. Lawson has circumstantially charged that Judge Parker's nomination was secured by the Rockefeller "crowd," and that this "crowd" is now devoting its associated energies, etc., to securing Parker's election. That accusation, which should have been explicitly denied if false, has evoked no denial from the managers of Parker's campaign. The Standard Oil company has denied, but indefinitely, and with the inclusion of so much which is generally known to be true as to discredit the rest of its unctious disclaimer. Judge Parker himself may be shrewdly guessed to have intended a denial in a speech he made at Esopus on the 24th. But this speech was not of the kind the public had a right to expect from Judge Parker if he did intend a denial of Lawson's accusation. It did not deny. The best that can be made of it in that respect is that it recognized the kind of corruption Lawson charges and pointed to Roosevelt as the predestined beneficiary. Judge Parker's condemnation of the Republicans for foster-

ing trusts in return for huge campaign funds, is no reply to Lawson's charge that the Standard Oil "crowd" is behind the Democratic party as now organized. Lawson reflects as strongly upon the Republican trust connections as Judge Parker does, and with more definiteness. His charge as to the Democratic-Rockefeller partnership does not imply that Roosevelt has no such partnership. On the contrary, he distinctly associates Roosevelt with the Morgan interests.

So there you have it. According to Lawson's undenied accusations, this quiet Presidential campaign is being slyly managed by Morgan on one side and the Standard Oil "crowd" on the other, Morgan's dummy being Roosevelt and the Standard Oil Company's Parker. "You pays your money and you takes your choice." If you vote for Roosevelt you are voting for J. Pierpont Morgan; if you vote for Parker you are voting for John D. Rockefeller. And that picture of the political situation is not much out of focus. The corrupt and vicious fight to wrest control of the Democratic party from "Bryanism," made under cover of gold standard sentiment, was at bottom a fight not for the gold standard, but for the purpose of making both parties subservient to plutocratic interests. Lawson has really revealed nothing but a detail. He distinguishes the plutocratic brands, and that is all; plutocratic dominance has long been evident.

In these circumstances what is a democratic Democrat to do with his vote? Many there are who are asking themselves that question. The variety of answer is limited only by the variety of

possibilities. Mr. Bryan, with all his great power of persuasion, multiplied in force by his deserved reputation for good sense and sincerity, is a democratic Democrat who urges the support of Parker. This, presumably, is not because he doubts the essential truth which Lawson's accusations embody, nor because he has changed his views of plutocracy. He is neither short-sighted for his cause nor treacherous to his fellows. It must be, as he himself has repeatedly said, because he believes that Parke's election would clear the political air of imperialism and militarism and give democracy an open and unclouded field for its battle with plutocracy. Tom L. Johnson, of Ohio, evidently adopts a similar view, as do Gov. Garvin, of Rhode Island, Judge Maguire, of California, John J. Lentz, of Ohio, and other national leaders among the democratic Democrats. All are endeavoring, for the sake of the future of their cause, to hold the democratic elements of the party together in the confusing currents of this campaign.

We would not have these men do otherwise than they are doing. This is not the time, if such a time there may ever be, for radical leaders in the Democratic party to jump out into independent politics. The approaching election will go either for the Morgan-Roosevelt or the Rockefeller-Parker combination, and no secession of radical leaders from the Democratic party could prevent it. Moreover, what Bryan says of getting rid of imperialism and militarism is true. Judge Parker's election would doubtless tend to exorcise the military spirit. We have no sympathy, therefore, with those who attack Bryan for his present policy. But we see no possibility of Parker's election except through the political po-

tency of the Standard Oil "crowd." Should that succeed, the Democratic party would be the Standard Oil "crowd's" political tool, and par excellence the plutocratic party of the country. Parker couldn't prevent it if he tried, and all hope of making the Democratic party democratic would be gone. The Republican party, thrust from power, might become democratic, or a new party of opposition to plutocracy might arise; but the Democratic party of Jefferson and Jackson would fall as hopelessly under subjection to the plutocracy of our time as in the days of Buchanan it had fallen under the dominion of the chattel-slave oligarchy.

Nor do we look with satisfaction upon the possibility of Parker's being almost elected. That would be worse than his election. His election would exorcise the imperialistic and military spirit at Washington, for whatever this might prove to be worth; but his bare defeat, while failing in that regard, would leave the Democratic party in the hands of the Standard Oil "crowd" as one of its most valuable assets. Well worth owning then, its democratic elements would be as helplessly bound and gagged at the next national convention as they were at St. Louis. From present appearances it seems evident to us that no better fortune could befall the Democratic party nationally this year than to be defeated so badly, to be routed so utterly, as to demonstrate to the plutocracy that they do not secure its votes when they take possession of its machinery. This would be good fortune for the country, too. So long as one party is controlled by Morgan and the other by Rockefeller, the country will suffer. One plutocratic party is natural whenever the issue is between plutocracy and democracy, but only one. Two plutocratic parties are one too many. Yet this is what we shall have unless the national Democratic party, under its present plutocratic control, scores a signal failure at the coming Presidential election.

We are familiar with the plea that only one of two candidates can be elected and that if both are bad a Democratic voter ought to choose the less of the two evils. It must be a good plea, or it could not have survived so much hard usage in so many campaigns. In fact it is a good plea. We yield to it in naming Parker's defeat overwhelmingly as the best thing which at the present crisis and under all the probabilities can happen to the country. If Parker could win, there would be a fair reason for preferring him to Roosevelt. But as Parker's defeat is assured, the choice of evils which presents itself is not Parker or Roosevelt; it is the Democratic party under Standard Oil control almost triumphant, or the Democratic party under Standard Oil control utterly routed. Of these two evils we regard the latter as the lesser one. It would clear the way, better than any other possibility, for a successful battle with plutocracy.

But granting all that, the problem of the democratic Democrat is still unsolved. What shall he do with his vote? For one thing he may refrain from voting for any Presidential candidate. This would be the most effective protest if it were general. Or, he may vote for Roosevelt, as we learn that many will. This would accomplish nothing. Not only would it stultify the voter and add apparently to Roosevelt's popularity, but it could serve very little purpose in making Parker's defeat emphatic. True, it tends best to widen the chasm between Parker's vote and Roosevelt's; but Parker's vote will be compared with Bryan's of 1896 and 1900, rather than with Roosevelt's of 1904, for the purpose of measuring the popular effect of plutocratic control of the Democratic party. Some democratic Democrats tell us they intend to protest by voting for Debs. But this will not be accounted a Democratic protest; it will be regarded as an indication of the growth of socialism. A similar remark applies

to a Democratic vote for Swallow. Votes for Watson are the only ones that will be distinctively estimated as protests. They and they alone, will stand out in the election returns distinctly as the minimum aggregate of the Democratic revolt against plutocratic control of the Democratic party. Of course no thoughtful Democrat, intending to protest, will vote the People's party ticket. Regarding himself as a member of the Democratic party, and the national machinery of that party as having been turned over to the Standard Oil "crowd," he will serve his intent better by "scratching" than by "bolting." This he can do by making his voting cross in the circle at the top of the Democratic column on his ballot, and then marking a cross opposite each name in the list of People's party electors. His vote will then stand as a Democratic vote "scratched" in favor of some of the candidates of another party. Being a "scratcher" and not a "bolter" he will only have exercised a commonly recognized and generally approved right of party men.

On the Chicago charter question (p. 457), which is to come before the voters of Illinois next month, an important consideration, perhaps the most important, is the fact that the charter amendment is a device to avoid the pressing necessity for a constitutional convention. Certain changes in the government of Chicago are necessary. They are so necessary that the pressure of a constitutional convention will be irresistible if the charter amendment is voted down. But other constitutional changes are quite as necessary. They do not happen, however, to be so much desired by the corporation interests of Chicago as some of the municipal changes which the proposed amendment would permit. On the contrary these corporations would strenuously object to many of the useful changes that a constitutional convention would make. For that reason, among others, it is proposed to adopt