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In ostentatiously ignoring the national platform adopted at Kansas City, the Democratic convention of Illinois has assured the defeat of the party in the state. If there were no other way of proving this in advance, the delight of the Republican press and politicians would be proof enough.

It is to be regretted that this concession to the enemy, this political blunder, should have been made in connection with what is on the whole one of the best and most democratic platforms that any Democratic state convention of Illinois has ever adopted. And for the sake of what the platform does say, it is to be hoped that the radical democrats of the state, of all parties, will overlook what it does not say, and give it their support.

We are aware of the objection to John P. Hopkins, now the leader of the party in the state, that he is a mere politician with plutocratic associations, to whom the principles of a platform are only what cast-off clothing is to an old clo' man. But with Ben T. Cable on the state committee, the home rule and municipal ownership clauses of the platform are not likely to be treated as dead letters in the campaign, whatever Mr. Hopkins may do. Notwithstanding Mr. Cable's financial interests, and in spite even of the stronger influences of personal associations, there are few Democrats more genuinely democratic than he.

There is nothing to be said for the head of the ticket except that he

wouldn't be there if the dispensers of nominations had expected to win at the election. And it is safe to assume that the legislative candidates likely to be elected will bear close watching. But there are times when candidates are of secondary importance, and this is one of them. Taking the city of Chicago and the state together, the Democratic party represents in this campaign no less important reforms than local self-government in matters of taxation and public utilities, as well as the initiative and referendum, and the public ownership of public monopolies. Sadly handicapped though it is by the inexcusable blunder of ignoring the Kansas City platform, yet a vote for its candidates is a vote for those reforms. If the candidates prove false, a time of reckoning will come. But this is the hour for the people to give instructions, not to question whether they will be obeyed.

Not the least satisfactory outcome of the week's flurry in Democratic politics is the "turning down" of Mayor Harrison. His overthrow is complete. He never did count for much more than the power of the patronage he commands; he can hardly come even up to that measure any more. His disastrous contest with Hopkins for state leadership, in which he carried only a bare majority of the Cook county delegates after he was supposed to have routed Hopkins at the primaries, and got hardly a third of the convention, takes away from him as a politician all the glamour he ever had among politicians—his only place of strength. Mr. Hopkins may be no better than Harrison. But one thing at a time. With such Democratic platforms as those of Cook county and the state to stand upon and work

for, or betray, Mr. Hopkins may do much in the next nine months either to expose his unworthiness as a Democrat or to revive public confidence in his democracy and fidelity.

An opportunity came to the better element of the Democratic party of Chicago this summer, to give a new stamp and a better character to their party. The politicians had for some occult reason called upon them to form an advisory committee, and this they did. In some respects they availed themselves of their opportunity. Their platform recommendations were excellent, and their list of recommended candidates contained unexceptionable names. But in adopting the ordinary political methods of choosing candidates with reference to political "pull," they lost their opportunity, so far as the personnel of the ticket was concerned. It was right that they should select several names for the same office; they ought not to have assumed the role of dictators. But in their suggestions they should have considered only two things—party affiliations and fitness. Instead of doing that, they consulted this interest and that, this race or nationality and the other, this organization and those organizations, including even the Democratic machine, with a view to learning not about the fitness of candidates but about their acceptability. The natural result was that in their list of recommendations there appeared a machine man for almost every place. The machine was able therefore to nominate its own favorites upon the advice of this advisory committee.

Did you ever see a ledgerdeman performer "force" a card from the pack upon an unsophisticated spectator? Then you understand how the Democratic machine of Chicago made its own nominations upon the

"advice" of the voluntary committee. The committee wholly neglected its true function in regard to recommending candidates. It should have named them without regard to personal preferences, but solely upon the basis of personal merit with reference to capacity and political merit with reference to Democratic principles, and left the conventions to accept its advice or substitute machine favorites at their own peril. By the "sandwich" process, which the committee seems to have adopted somewhat extensively—one preordained machine candidate bunched in with two or more advisory committee candidates—it has done not a little to bring the advisory committee plan into contempt. It might have raised it to a high place of dignity and influence.

The platform of the Democratic party of Cook county, adopted on the 14th, and which is to be credited in its more important particulars to the advisory committee, is an excellent one. Besides the declarations of only formal and local concern, the following of general interest appear:

The notorious accumulation of vast corruption funds in the hands of trusts and corporations and the use thereof in debauching our legislatures and city councils render it imperatively necessary that the work of these legislative bodies be further safeguarded by bringing legislation closer to the source of all governmental authority—the people. We therefore declare in favor of: (1) Municipal ownership of all public utilities. (2) The initiative and referendum; and, (3) The direct nomination of all candidates for public office by direct ballot at the primaries; and we demand that the legislature of Illinois shall, at the earliest possible day, enact laws to inaugurate these reforms.

We further declare in favor of the election of United States Senators by direct vote of the people.

We declare that local self-government is a basic principle in our civilization and vital to the safety and perpetuity of the republic. We therefore demand in all such matters as assessments for and collection of taxes, the appointment and control of municipal police, and the granting of municipal franchises, the strict application of the principle of home rule.

On the subject of Democratic platforms, that of the Liberal Democracy, which held its convention at New York on the 7th (p. 152), has the true democratic ring. Following is its statement of general principles:

We are fundamentally opposed to the present unjust distribution of wealth that creates a system of society in which the few get without working, while the many work without getting; a system which must result in either anarchy or despotism and the total destruction of our republic. This condition is due to the monopoly of natural opportunities and the creation of special privileges by law. We maintain that this government, which was dedicated by the fathers of the republic to freedom and equality of opportunity, shall fulfill its true mission. We demand the opening to all of the opportunities of nature and the abolition of all special privileges. In both of the great political parties of the nation are to be found two irreconcilable factions, one in favor of governmental usurpation, tending to the establishment of a new feudalism, and the other standing for industrial and political liberty. In the Democratic party of the nation lies the only hope of the perpetuation of Democratic institutions. Yet under the leadership of such traitors to Democracy as David B. Hill an attempt is being made under the guise of reorganization to dominate the party and to degrade it to the position of a mere tool of monopoly.

The platform then proceeds to ratify and reaffirm the Kansas City platform of the national Democratic party. Specifically it applies the principles of the Declaration of Independence to the Philippines; demands the "public ownership and operation of those public utilities which are in their nature natural monopolies, such as the railroad, telegraph, telephone, gas and electric lighting;" insists that "the right to issue and coin money is solely a function of the government;" and as to the "trusts and monopolies which are not public utilities or natural monopolies," demands that "those special privileges which they now enjoy, and which alone enable them to exist, should be immediately withdrawn." On the latter subject it holds that "corporations, being the creatures of government, should be subjected to such governmental regulation and control as will adequately

protect the public." This democratic-Democratic platform then goes on to declare that "the land belongs to the people;" and, as a means of recognizing this right, to "demand that land values only be taxed." It favors "the initiative and referendum, the former to the end that the people may compel the enactment of good laws, the latter to the end that the people may veto legislative measures;" and it urges "the direct nomination of candidates for elective public office by the people at the primaries, and the election of United States senators and Federal judges by the people," while in municipal affairs it favors "local self-government and nonpartisanship," and "the administration of municipal government upon the principle of 'equal rights to all and special privileges to none.'" The regular Democratic party is as yet hardly democratic enough to go to the people upon a platform like this of the Liberal Democracy of New York; but it is encouraging to find so important an element of the party determined upon pressing these fundamental issues within the body of the party itself. Such a platform, with nominations of a character to amount to guarantees of good faith, would unify the real democrats of both parties and compel the plutocrats of both to huddle by themselves.

The reference in the foregoing platform to the taxation of land values recalls the recent adoption of this reform by the Johannesburg (Transvaal colony) city council, briefly mentioned on page 27 as an item of news, of which full reports are now at hand. The reports come in the Johannesburg Star, which opposed the reform. In adopting it the city council appears to have acted with the deliberate understanding that it was establishing the Henry George system of taxation. The measure came before the council on the 26th of March, being part of the "rating bill," or as we should call it in this country if we had home rule in taxation, of the "local tax ordi-