

ment granted. The creditors who assented to this arrangement were generous creatures, truly, and the debtor who availed himself of it cannot be lacking in the saving sense of humor. To a bankrupt debtor without a very strong sense of humor, a European pleasure trip under those circumstances might be quite funereal.

Gen. Miles's address to the American army upon retiring from its command is worthy to be a classic in our military history. Its keynote is the sovereignty of citizenship within the army. The soldier who leaves his country the legacy of such a letter, backed by such a record of high ideals and both moral and physical courage as this man's record of two score years in its military service, can well afford to ignore the pettiness of his accidental superiors. What if President Roosevelt has put another officer through the bare formality of a six-day term in Miles's place, for the purpose of depriving Miles of the empty honor of being last in a discarded line of service where in Washington was the first? What if the Secretary of War did celebrate the end of this general's service with nothing but a cold record of the fact? These acts do not reflect upon Miles. They represent the actors, and no one else. As to the latter act, nothing else could have been done in decent good faith. The administration could not praise Gen. Miles upon his retirement when it had insulted, obstructed, and abused him during his service. The one commendable thing about the administration, in all its official intercourse with Gen. Miles, is its refusal to play the hypocrite when he retired. How could President Roosevelt and Secretary Root praise Miles without condemning themselves. He stands for high ideals of patriotism, they for the low ideals of a selfish national life; he for honor in the army, they for honoring the army's dishonor.

Our suspicions of last week

based on the non-action of the grand jury (p. 275) that the reports of labor violence in Chicago had been greatly exaggerated and the spectacular injunction proceedings a good deal of a sham, has received further confirmation. So long as the cases came only before Judge Holdom, whose action in the matter has been fairly open in several respects to severe criticism, it was made to appear that the strikers were behaving most lawlessly. Some of them were fined by this judge; one of them, an invalid, he threw mercilessly into jail; and others he condemned to imprisonment without appeal,—a right he had no legal authority to deny them. What with legislation by injunction order and trial upon affidavits, the proceedings in his court were of a "hop-skip-and-jump" kind which could hardly fail to bring the court into contempt even if the men had deserved the penalties it imposed. But there is now grave doubt even of the good faith of the proceedings. Not only has the grand jury refused to act, serious as were the charges against the strikers, but injunction cases of the same general kind have come before another judge, Kavanagh, who has exposed the flimsiness of the affidavits upon the strength of which he was invited to imitate Judge Holdom. Since then the exciting reports of lawlessness have died down. Such trifling with the courts is inexcusable. Riotous conditions have existed or they have not. If they have, the grand jury ought to act. If they have not, it is an outrage upon the administration of justice to apply the expedient of government by injunction in order to manufacture law for one party to strikes and against the other.

In commenting last week upon the action of the Denver conference of reformers (p. 257) we expressed regret that it had "recommended the organization of a new national party immediately," and gave our reasons, indicating among other objections that such

a party would be only a "paper organization," and suggesting that while little could be gained through it much might be lost. This comment, an entirely fair and considerate criticism of a policy to which we are firmly opposed, has elicited the following letter from Mr. J. A. Edgerton, the chairman of the conference in question and of the organizing committee it has appointed:

Your criticism of the Denver conference would not be noticed if it were in an opposition paper, but in a reform paper it is liable to breed misunderstandings.

In the first place the conference formed no new party, either paper or otherwise. It had no such power. That can only be done by a national convention composed of properly accredited delegates. This conference simply reunited the People's party, an organization that has been in existence since 1892. In addition to this it appointed a national organization committee whose duty it is to bring about a union of reform forces.

The object of those participating in the conference is exactly the opposite of that which you ascribe to us. We desire to amalgamate all those who favor a people's government, not divide them. It strikes me that the only possible effect of criticisms written in the spirit of that in *The Public*—if they have any effect at all—must be divisional rather than unifying.

It is all very well to talk about forming a party by a bolt at the time of the national convention. Those who have had any experience in managing campaigns know that it is necessary to have some sort of a preliminary organization. You cannot organize a national campaign in a few months. You must move in time or be caught unprepared.

No political party of any moment was ever formed by a bolt after the manner outlined by you. A little reading of history is all that is needed to make this point clear.

The sincere desire of those who made up the Denver conference is that there may be a real union of all those who favor the people's rule. We do not seek to dictate in what manner that union shall come. We simply are preparing for the inevitable. It becomes more and more apparent each day that the Democratic national convention will be controlled by the reactionary element of that party. We are determined that the reform cause shall not die because of that fact.

We beg the editor of *The Public* not to jump at conclusions and not to be too ready to condemn his co-workers. Most of those who made up the Denver conference have been sincere followers of Mr. Bryan. All of them, I think I am

safe in saying, desire a genuine reform party in America that will stand for the things for which Mr. Bryan stands—together with such other reforms as the time may demand. We have no disposition to force matters, no intention to quibble over the name or other details. We are ready to meet all reformers in the spirit of brotherhood and conciliation. We simply serve notice to the country that the people's cause is not to die, whatever the action of any party may be.

We must expect misrepresentation in the opposition papers, but we have a right to ask fair treatment at the hands of reform papers such as *The Public*.

Truth is more valuable than any party whatsoever, and this letter is written in the interests of Truth.

Had Mr. Edgerton read our criticism with the care and reflected upon it with the calmness that ought to characterize the chairman of a committee which undertakes, in a time as critical as the present, to serve notice upon the country that the people's cause is not to die, he would have escaped the error of charging us with misrepresentation. A re-perusal of our criticism will satisfy any impartial reader that it not only does not misrepresent the Denver conference, but that it is eminently fair in its treatment of that body and its action—unless, indeed, to differ is to be regarded as unfair. The reader will find in our criticism nothing whatever to justify Mr. Edgerton's remark that the object of himself and his associates was the opposite of what we ascribed to them. We ascribed no purpose of dividing those who favor a people's government. What we did was to predict the probable outcome of such a movement, wholly irrespective of the sincerity of its original promoters. The sincerity of their desire to effect "a real union of all those who favor the people's rule" is cordially conceded. But the probability of such a union through the third party method, at this time and in existing circumstances—these are different matters. And as to these matters we must beg the liberty of disagreeing with the Denver conference, notwithstanding our respect for the sincerity of its promoters, and even

at the expense of being charged with misrepresenting them and with obstructing their cherished programme.

It is not to be presumed, of course, that Mr. Edgerton intends to lay stress upon the fact that in our criticism we described the conference as having "recommended the organization of a new national party," as the dispatches seemed to indicate, whereas it "simply reunited the People's party, an organization that has been in existence since 1892," as Mr. Edgerton describes it. This discrepancy does not in the slightest degree affect the merits of our criticism, which was addressed not to the point of the literal newness of the side party, but to the policy of trying to drain away democratic elements from the Democratic party into any side party at all, at a time when the democracy of the Democratic party is in the thick of a fight for control of that organization. In this connection it is to be observed that Mr. Edgerton does not regard the struggle within the Democratic party as important. He thinks "it becomes more and more apparent each day that the Democratic national convention will be controlled by the reactionary element of that party." Such is the opinion, true enough, as it is also the desire, of the Democratic reactionaries themselves, of the Wall street combines which are to furnish the reactionary campaign funds, and of the "goldbug" organs of both parties. But there is ample reason to believe that with them the thought is fathered by the desire. At any rate it is by no means apparent that they will win. But be this as it may, the Denver side party movement is certainly not calculated to discourage them.

Whether Mr. Edgerton is right or not in indicating that a bolt from the Democratic convention would be impracticable, if the reactionary elements regain control, need not be considered.

For all the purposes of our criticism it might be conceded that "you cannot organize a national campaign in a few months," and that "it is necessary to have some sort of a preliminary organization." But what is the use, for such a purpose, of the kind of preliminary organization the Denver conference seeks to effect? None whatever. If preliminary organization be needed for making a Democratic bolt effective, it must be an organization within and not outside of the Democratic party.

Is it so certain, however, that preliminary national organization is necessary? Mr. Edgerton fortifies his belief with a sweeping reference to political history. "No political party of any moment," he says, "was ever formed by a bolt after the manner outlined by you." Just what reservation may be concealed in the final clause, "after the manner outlined by you," is not clear. It may be that Mr. Edgerton intends by this clause to hold us to strict similarity in every detail. If so, of course he is right. No party ever was formed by a bolt exactly like the one which in our criticism of the Denver conference we have outlined as possible. But, for that matter, history never repeats in anything—exactly. Consequently no one who insists upon ruling out historical parallels that are not mathematically parallel, has any right to quote history against prophecy. In simple fairness to Mr. Edgerton it must be assumed that by his reservation clause he means "after the manner" of our article in general, and not "after the manner" of it in exact detail. But if that is what he does mean he has read his American history to little purpose; for there are two notable instances of such a bolt. One was the Breckenridge bolt of 1860. Some delegations bolted the Democratic convention at Charleston in April. Others bolted the adjourned convention at Baltimore in June. The bolters subsequently nominated John C. Breckenridge. At the election they

polled for their candidate 18 per cent of the popular vote and 23 per cent of the electoral vote, in a quadrilateral contest. This result testifies strongly enough to the fact that their party was one of some moment. The second notable bolt was that of 1848, out of which the Free Soil party sprang. Two factions of the Democratic party had come to the national convention from New York, each claiming to represent the Democracy of that State. Both were admitted, with half a vote. But the democratic faction, strongly anti-slavery, refused the compromise and bolted. In June the bolters held a State convention which called a national convention. The latter met in August and nominated Martin Van Buren. At the election following this party polled 10.14 per cent of the total vote in a tri-lateral contest, which is about 1.5 per cent more than Gen. Weaver polled in the phenomenal Populist year of '92. That fact should entitle the Free Soil party to be regarded as a party of some moment. Bolts are of moment when there is a strong popular sentiment back of them. Without that, no independent political movement is of any moment, as a political movement, whether it originates in a spontaneous bolt or in a premature organization.

In closing this discussion let us assure Mr. Edgerton and his sympathizing associates in the Denver movement, that we have no more idea of getting in the way of their efforts to bring about "a union of reform forces" than of obstructing the latest inventor of a perpetual motion machine. Their task is hopeless enough in itself. But this movement—insignificant of popular endorsement as the size of its conference showed it to be, and hopeless as its purpose of uniting the irreconcilable "reform forces" in a side party is—is nevertheless a subject for fair comment. We have made and shall make no other kind. It is also an object for con-

demnation. This may seem unfair to its supporters. But condemnation is both the right and a duty of those who from observation and experience have learned that under our present political system side parties fritter away energy in "futile banding," even at the best, while at the worst they fall a prey to petty "grafters" from within and plutocratic politicians from without. As we have on other occasions definitely and circumstantially pointed out (vol. iv., p. 3), no third party is ever likely to be anything but a futile or otherwise objectionable side party, unless it rises spontaneously out of a great popular demand and quickly becomes either the first party or the second. Real political parties are born, not made.

The Grover Cleveland organ of Chicago represents the shameless mendacity and malignant hatred of the whole tribe toward Bryan. "During the last eight years," says this organ in its issue of the 10th, "Mr. Bryan has had no visible means of support. He has traveled extensively. He has not done a day's work in any honest occupation. He has had no business. He has not even pretended to be a lawyer. Yet in that time he has grown rich." To readers who know the facts, the foregoing statement is so transparent a lie, that it must defeat its own purpose. A man whose extensive traveling is for the most part as a lecturer commanding and everywhere conceded to be deserving of high pay, and whose daily work consists in editing a weekly paper of exceptional popularity and influence, which has a circulation of 150,000 copies and is his own property through no one's favor, is not to be regarded by candid men, however hostile their feelings, as an idler who has grown rich without visible means of support. But if the misrepresentations of the Chicago Chronicle are made so blunderingly as to be self-destructive, that is not the case with the equally mendacious criticisms with which Eastern

papers of the Cleveland cult stuff their gullible readers. Yet it all has its funny side. The gullers pretend and the gulled believe that Bryan, whose popularity throws them both into spasms of fear, is an innocuous "has-been"! By the way, speaking of getting rich without visible means of support, why are the friends of Mr. Cleveland so reluctant to explain that enigma in his behalf?

#### PSYCHOLOGY OF NEGRO LYNCHING.

In his complimentary letter of last week to Gov. Durbin, of Indiana, President Roosevelt very properly condemns the Negro lynchings that have become so ominously prevalent.

Less ambiguity might have been desired in some respects. When, for instance, the President writes that "The nation, like the individual, cannot commit a crime with impunity," the reader is encouraged to hope for a revival of genuine national morality in an unexpected place. And his satisfaction grows as, reading on, he finds the President sounding this true note of warning: "If we are guilty of lawlessness and brutal violence, whether our guilt consists in actual participation therein or in mere connivance and encouragement, we shall assuredly suffer later on because of what we have done." But there is a natural reaction of feeling when the President indicates that by "crime" and "lawlessness" he alludes not at all to defiance of the moral law but only to infractions of statutory regulations. "The corner stone of this republic," he goes on to say, "as of all free governments, is respect for and obedience to the law." That seems, at least, to refer only to municipal law and not to moral principle. And in another part of the letter the reference is confirmed; for there the President writes about penal statutes as if their proper object were vengeance—not reform of the criminal nor protection for the community, but ven-