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When William Jennings Bryan, democratic Democrat, fraternally advised the Kansas City convention four years ago that he would not accept its nomination on any platform inconsistent with his convictions upon living political issues, doing so before his nomination, before the adoption of a platform, and after advising the country fully as to his convictions regarding what he held to be living issues, the Republicans and their pluto-Democratic allies denounced him as a dictator and warned him that "no man is big enough to be bigger than his party." But when Alton Brooks Parker, plutocratic Democrat, imperiously demands of the St. Louis convention this year, that it violate the terms of a harmony-platform compromise made in his behalf by his own political managers, with reference not to what he holds to be a living political issue but what he declares to be a dead one, doing so after the adoption of the platform, after his nomination, and as the climax to a sphinx-like silence regarding his convictions on all political issues, living and dead, a silence maintained throughout his long canvass for the nomination, the same Republicans and their same pluto-Democratic allies laud him as an honorable man and praise him for being "bigger than his party." What does this contrast mean?

Judge Parker asserts that the gold standard is permanently established. That is not true, for no policy can be permanently established so long as popular opinions alter and political power

shifts. But if Judge Parker believes it to be permanently established, why has he insisted upon resurrecting the issue? Until the convention met, Bryan was held up to public odium in the party upon charges of endeavoring to prevent harmony by injecting the "by-gone silver issue" into the campaign. The charges were untrue, and were frequently so denounced by Mr. Bryan; but that does not affect the present question. When Bryan came to the convention he came as a harmonizer. Appreciating the overshadowing dangers to the country of advancing militarism, he declared his willingness to subordinate all differences for the purpose of uniting the party on this and other issues over which its counsels are undisturbed. And he made his declaration good. He agreed with Judge Parker's managers to treat the money question as not an issue in this campaign. He agreed to omit all reference to income taxation, to asset banking, and to contraction of the currency by melting down the silver dollars and retiring the greenbacks. Everything was conceded by him to secure that harmony which the plutocratic Democrats insisted could not be secured so far as their faction was concerned, if the money question were allowed to enter into the campaign. But after all these concessions had been made and harmony thereby secured, Judge Parker himself injected the "by-gone silver question" into the campaign and disrupted the party harmony for which his friends and the plutocratic Democrats generally have pretended to be solicitous and which Mr. Bryan secured. Why did he do it?

Another question arises. Judge Parker selected his own "running mate." There were at the convention numerous candidates for Vice

President, but Senator Davis was not one of them. Neither had he been thought of in connection with the Presidency. Beckwith of Kentucky, Williams of Mississippi, Williams of Illinois, Hearst of New York, Bailey of Texas, Olney of Massachusetts, Pattison of Pennsylvania, Kern of Indiana, Wall of Wisconsin, Cockrell of Missouri, Gray of Delaware, Nelson A. Miles were all Vice Presidential "possibilities" in the party sense. In that sense Davis was not a "possibility." But when the convention in effect referred this nomination to its candidate for President by referring it to his instructed delegation in the convention, his delegation, speaking for him, selected Davis. Why? Davis is a "free-silver" man. Did Judge Parker and his friends select him in order to restore the harmony he had disturbed, or to intensify the disturbance?

While a "free-silver" man, as is Bryan, Davis is not a democratic Democrat, as Bryan is. He is a plutocratic-Democrat, with all that implies—possessor of a vast fortune in monopolized lands, in his case coal-mining lands; close affiliations and responsive sympathies with the votaries of "frenied finance;" and a predisposition to the timidity, so characteristic of capitalists and sheep, which makes the fears of one the fears of all and thereby lends plausibility to the socialist concept of "class consciousness." Mr. Davis, moreover, has a son-in-law, Stephen B. Elkins, who is the plutocratic boss of the State in which both of them live. Added to all this, Mr. Davis is 81 years of age. In choosing him other reasons may have prevailed than Davis's willingness to swell the campaign fund and his ability to reach the plutocratic corruption funds that have for the past two campaigns gone to the party of his masterful son-in-

law; but no other reasons are apparent. Why was Davis chosen?

In the very improbable event of the election of Parker and Davis, interesting contingencies are possible. Mr. Davis may live through the term, retaining all his intellectual faculties; men of 80 do live on, not infrequently, for four years. In that case, his election will prove to have been unimportant. Judge Parker may very probably survive the full term, for he is young and robust; in that case nothing serious may occur out of the ordinary or the expected. But suppose President Parker—presuming, not without violence but merely for the sake of this speculation, that Judge Parker becomes President Parker—suppose President Parker should die in office. What then?

If Vice President Davis—another violent presumption—were to retain the full possession of his faculties he might, in case of Parker's death, administer the Presidential office fairly well, even at his great age, except of course, that he, a "free-silver" man, would not follow the example of his predecessor in regarding the gold standard as unalterably fixed. But suppose him to have lost his mental poise through senility—not sufficiently to incapacitate yet enough to make him open to influences from stronger minds—a presumption by no means violent, who then would in all probability administer the Presidential office in his name?

The obvious inference regarding a man in that condition is that he would yield confidingly to the most dominant member of his own family, if that member were tactful; and in these circumstances the Democratic party might enjoy the exquisite thrill of seeing the highest official authority within their power to confer, cynically exercised by a deputy no less distinguished than the Republican Senator from West Virginia, Stephen B. Elkins.

Or suppose that both President

Parker and Vice President Davis were to die in office. This may be improbable, but the improbability is diminished almost 50 per cent. by the fact of Mr. Davis's great age. At any rate let us face the possibility. What would probably occur in that event? The answer may be evoked by the inquiry: Whom would President Parker probably have called into his cabinet as Secretary of State? Without gross ingratitude he could have called no other than David Bennett Hill. In that event, supplemented by the death of Parker and Davis, David Bennett Hill would be President of the United States.

It is not a pleasant outlook for self-respecting Democrats even if they win at the elections. Few of them can contemplate with satisfaction the fact that if they win there will be but one life—robust it is true, but uncertain nevertheless—and an octogenarian's mental poise, in the way of Stephen B. Elkins's acting as the political guardian of their administration; and only two lives, one of them exceedingly precarious, in the way of a back-stairs ascent by the notorious David B. Hill into the Presidential chair.

But all this is remote speculation. Not so much because it involves Parker's dying in office, nor because it contemplates Davis's falling under the influence of his Republican son-in-law, nor of his dying to give place to Hill. It is remote because there is no reasonable probability of the election of Parker and Davis.

In the first place, they do not appear to stand for anything vital in opposition to the Republicans; and, irrational as it may seem to some of us, the masses of the people almost always prefer an "in" to an "out" when it is only a question of "ins" or "outs." In the next place, Parker has already alienated every independent voter whose convictions are not in substantial agreement with his. For another thing, the Parryistic tone

which envelopes the whole Democratic situation at present with reference to labor, not to mention Davis's antagonism to labor unions, is well calculated to repel Republican workingmen of the organized labor class and to drive out Democratic workingmen of that class. Another serious consideration is the Negro vote of the Northern States.

There has been a strong tendency among thoughtful Negroes of the North, since the Republicans have dropped Lincoln's principles and the Democrats have taken them up, to come over to the Democratic party and join in the new anti-slavery fight of democracy against plutocracy. In a little time this tendency would have become a landslide, and those Northern States, where the Negro vote holds the balance of power, of which there are several, would have swung out of the Republican column and into the Democratic. But under the influences which now dominate in the national Democratic party, it must be conceded that no thoughtful and self-respecting Negro can vote for the Democratic Presidential ticket this year without stultifying his citizenship and insulting his race.

It is to be hoped, however, that none of these repulsions and alienations will prejudicially affect local and Congressional Democratic candidates who are at heart out of sympathy with the anti-labor, anti-Negro, and plutocratic influences that envelop the Presidential ticket. This is the time of all times when independent Democratic voters should distinguish intelligently between the plutocratic and the democratic leaders in their party. Let all be discriminating and let all be patient, remembering Mr. Bryan's suggestion this week in favor of organizing not a futile party outside the Democratic party, but a virile division inside the Democratic party. This is the true policy for the democratic-Democracy.