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The action of the Ohio Democrats at Columbus, under the leadership of Tom L. Johnson (pp. 320-24-26), has thrown the Republican and the reactionary Democratic press of the country into a comical complication of hysterical spasms.

They denounce Johnson as a boss. But what could be more absurd, from such a source? Bossism in politics supplies the very breath of their journalistic nostrils. Hypocrites! It is not because Johnson is a boss that they denounce him, but because he has knocked over bosses of the kind that feed them; and they twitter as ravenously and discordantly as a nest of hungry young robins.

In fact, Johnson is not a boss—not in their sense. He uses no boodle, he depends upon no official patronage, he coddles no newspapers with public advertising, he makes no dark-room bargains, he neither adopts nor submits to underhand methods, he does none of the things in politics which bosses like Coxe and Bernard, of Cincinnati, and Hanna and Farley, of Cleveland, resort to. His political bargains are open-and-above board and with the people themselves. Their confidence in him and his fidelity to them constitute his strength in politics. To the extent that Johnson is a boss, he is a boss of the people's own choice—a public servant, not a public parasite.

In a way it is true that he is a

boss. When an appointive office holder discloses incompetency or neglect, Johnson bosses him out of the office. When an elected office holder proves corrupt, Johnson bosses him out of a reelection. When a Democratic boss sells out his party to the Republican boss, Johnson bosses the Democratic boss out of his boss-ship. But how does he do this bossing? It is simple enough. No cooking up of primaries or packing of conventions is either adopted or necessary. Johnson merely says to the rascals who seek his support before the people: "I shall not support you, and if you do any wire pulling I will take your case before the people." What honest man would have him do otherwise?

Usually this is enough. In only one instance recently has Johnson's notification to recalcitrant office holders that he will appeal to the people been defied (p. 113); and in that instance—the case of a Democratic legislator who joined the corporation gang at Columbus in violation of his pledges to the people who elected him—Johnson went before the people of the legislative district at the Democratic primaries and secured a popular vote against the candidate for renomination. This is Johnson's way of bossing politics, and it is a way most excellent. Such bosses are badly needed in American politics. They are not bosses in any objectionable sense, but leaders—leaders in thought, leaders in speech, leaders in action, leaders of the common people against the privileged financial interests that are served by corrupt bosses and buttressed by a corrupt press. Johnson is leading the people of Ohio, as he has already led those of Cleveland, out of a boss-ridden

Democracy and away from a boss-ridden Republican machine.

It has been telegraphed all over the country that he gained control of the Democratic machinery of Ohio by unseating opposing delegations to the State convention. That is very like pleading the baby act, when it is considered that the accusation emanates from the bosses who have habitually manipulated Democratic politics in Ohio by precisely such methods. But what are the plain facts? They are reported in the news columns of the very papers that weep and wail over Johnson's wickedness in having "stolen" the Democratic machine of Cincinnati from the political firm of Coxe and Bernard—one a Republican boss and the other his Democraticheeler,—and deprived the reactionary Mr. Zimmerman of the gubernatorial nomination which Democratic "reorganizers" and Republican bosses were so exceedingly anxious he should get. According to these reports, and the fact is the same, Johnson would have had a majority of the convention if every contest had been decided against him.

One of the contests, that from Cuyahoga, was a confessed "fake," paid for by Senator Hanna's political managers (pp. 324-25), for the purpose of helping Zimmerman, by making an appearance of opposition to Johnson in his own county. Throwing out that "fake" contest, Johnson would have had a majority of more than 81. How much more it is impossible to say, for the only test vote taken in the convention was on a question regarding which the Zimmerman delegates were united and the Johnson delegates were divided. The only other contests involved

in the aggregate no more than 72 delegates all told, and of these 42 were from the Cincinnati county—Hamilton. In that county Zimmerman was defeated at the primaries by 35 to 7. But Bernard, the Cincinnati boss, managed to get a "dark horse" into the chair as presiding officer of the county convention. This chairman falsely declared carried a motion to appoint a committee of five to select delegates, and refused to allow either a reconsideration of the vote or an appeal from his decision. Thereupon a majority of the delegates to the convention withdrew to another hall and ratified the vote of the primaries, while Bernard's committee of five selected State delegates without regard to the vote of the primaries. Upon these facts the Bernard delegates were denied seats and the other delegation was seated. The other contests were similar. And this is what the reactionary papers and their Republican allies refer to when they charge Johnson with "stealing" the State convention. The truth is that Mr. Zimmerman and every man interested in his campaign knew that the convention was overwhelmingly for Johnson without reference to the contests. Zimmerman's own workers were heard to confess, two days before the contests were presented, that Zimmerman was hopelessly in the minority and had no other object than "to muddy up the waters." The returns from the primaries as published on the 24th, showed, with every contest counted in Zimmerman's favor, not more than 230 delegates for Zimmerman and not less than 460 for Johnson.

But the fabrications on the part of the plutocratic press are not the most interesting evidence of plutocratic discomfiture over Johnson's crusade against the interests they are retained to defend. Bewilderment and futile anger are the only words that fairly describe the state of mind of the editors behind the pen. Johnson has ruined his chances by throwing over the silver question, and he has ruined them by clinging to the silver question. He has courted defeat by tying up to Bryan, while Bryan has insured his defeat by refus-

ing to speak for him, and insured it over again by not refusing to speak for him. He has lost the silver vote by nominating Clarke, who voted against Bryan in 1896, and the gold vote by nominating Clarke, who voted for Bryan in 1900. And so the discordant chorus runs. To read the hysterical special correspondence and editorials of the plutocratic press is to get a strong impression that the plutocrats of both parties are badly scared by Tom L. Johnson. Instead of calmly smiling at him, with a confidence born of the 90,000 adverse plurality he must overcome, and of which they boast, they are most significantly hysterical. Why? They make no such to do over Iowa. Yet the Democrats of Iowa are confronted with an adverse plurality of only 79,000. Why, we repeat, why are the plutocrats so stirred up over Ohio with its 90,000 Republican plurality, and so self-satisfied over Iowa with its 79,000 Republican plurality? On the face of things this is very queer.

There is something remarkable about the obtuseness that is displayed with reference to Bryan's hostility to Democratic "reorganizers." Because John H. Clarke, who voted against Bryan in 1896 and is not a silver man now, was nominated by the Democrats of Ohio for United States Senator, the obtuse fellow citizen infers that this nomination must be objectionable to Bryan. In many instances, no doubt, the wish is father to the thought. Yet there is nothing to warrant it in anything Bryan has ever said, written or done. Hostile newspapers have proclaimed that Bryan narrowly objects to political affiliation with Democrats who bolted the party in 1896 and with Democrats who are not bimetallicists. He neither does nor has done anything of the kind. What he has objected to, and does object to, and ought to object to, is the movement to restore to power in the Democratic party the bolters who went out in 1896, who refuse to come back except as bosses, and who demand that the party return to the service of plutocracy. Tom L. Johnson is not a silver man, but Bryan has had no political quarrel with him. They

differ on an economic question, and that is all. Shepard is not a silver man, and he voted against Bryan in 1896; yet Bryan has no political quarrel with him, though he may distrust the influence of his business environment. Similar instances are abundant to show that Bryan has not made the silver question the test of orthodox Democracy, that he has demanded no punishment for past party disloyalty, and that the only hard and fast line he has drawn is between assistant Republicans wearing the Democratic label and democratic Democrats. By this test there was no reason why Mr. Bryan should have objected to Clarke's nomination in Ohio, when Clarke's political record since 1896 is considered. That Bryan should have been suspected of any inclination to object, argues a very misty conception of his position and a low estimate of his judgment. Plutocracy and democracy—that is the fundamental issue,—the privileged classes against the common people; and Mr. Bryan has never proposed any other test of democracy. His speech at Versailles and his statement from Columbus (see News department) are in perfect harmony with his record, both as to political tactics and political principle.

In view of the virtually uniform success the Liberals have had in recent bye-elections in England, together with the success of third party labor candidates at two such elections, militarism would seem to have run its course among our British friends. Chamberlain, with his protection issue, seems to have strengthened the current of opposition to toryism instead of stemming the tide. This is encouraging in the United States. Our own toryism having risen along with that of Great Britain, may possibly recede as that does.

In Rhode Island a man now lies in jail at Pawtucket, his offense being neglect to pay a poll tax. Unless he pays the tax, plus the costs and plus his board while in jail, his imprisonment will continue and his debt grow bigger. The probabilities of life imprisonment are supposed to be before him. This is civilization. At