

with strange contradictoriness to a gentle disposition made savage by the atmosphere of "military honor" which he has breathed. Listen to this message of his to that heartbroken mother of his murdered school mate:

It is in the deepest distress and sorrow that I address myself to you, to give you proof of my heartfelt sympathy for the loss you have sustained through my action. Be assured that I did not act out of hatred or ill will against your son. It was my hard duty as a soldier. I was obliged to enforce obedience; and to my bitter regret, fate directed my steel in this unfortunate manner. A word of forgiveness from you, honored madam, would be incomparable consolation, for if the mother forgives no honorably minded person can continue to bear a grudge.

There you have militarism in the germ. It has turned a boy of generous instincts into what is worse than savagery—a remorseless human mechanism of death. This is what it is to develop the strenuous military life. This is what it means to American children, if we go on gathering them a legacy of "military honor" to displace the simple code of morality that was our own inheritance. Is it not a pretty picture! If there is anything divine about it, what could you suggest as an example of the satanic?

Mr. Bryan has again notified the "reorganizers" of the Democratic party that their room is preferable to their company. His notification makes good reading for at least two reasons. First, because it is true in its summary of facts; second, because it is wise in political policy. It was embodied in his speech at Kansas City on the 20th, and as telegraphed was in these words:

We have had enough of Clevelandism in the Democratic party. We had four years of Cleveland, and after his administration was over we found ourselves weaker than we had ever been before, because we had been betrayed. These so-called harmonizers, Cleveland and his followers, showed their nearness to Republicanism by deserting us in our hour of greatest need and supporting the Republican party. The Democratic party won a great victory in 1892, which gave our party a great opportunity; but Grover Cleveland betrayed the Democratic party, and as

the Democratic candidate to succeed him I carried the burden of his administration through two national campaigns. There was not a plank in either platform that was such a detriment to me in those campaigns as that burden was. Cleveland had the best opportunity to redeem the Democratic party ever offered to any man since the time of Andrew Jackson, but instead of being true to his party he disgraced himself.

We may now expect to see many editorials in the Republican and the brevet-Republican papers, snarling at Bryan as an "irreconcilable." But the expanding and improving democratic sentiment of the country will find in Bryan's words an assurance that the most effective individual force in the Democratic party to-day is not to be bought out, nor wheedled over, nor scolded into the plutocratic camp. Even the deluded followers of such leaders as Cleveland and Hill will begin to realize that the Democratic label is not enough to make a Democrat. Democracy means something more and something different from what it meant half a century ago. The fact that a man was a Democrat when the Democratic party was a pro-slavery party is no test of his democracy now. A new era began with the campaign of 1896. And regardless of one's economic opinions on the money question, or his political attitude at that time, unless he is in accord with the spirit of the revolt then begun against plutocratic influences and power, he is no democrat now, even though he call himself a Democrat. If he is not a democratic-Democrat he is not wanted either to lead the party or to vote with it. His affiliation with it frightens off democratic-Republicans whose faces are turning toward it from the cave of bones in which leaders like Hanna have buried the democratic principles of Lincoln.

If Chauncey F. Black, a son of the old Democratic leader in Pennsylvania, Jeremiah Black, and formerly lieutenant governor of that State, had written a letter bemoaning the "blight of Bryanism" and approving "reorganization" of the Democratic

party, the Associated Press would have exploited it, and every Republican-Democratic paper in the land would have found room for it. But as Gov. Black's letter to the Crescent Democratic club of Philadelphia at the celebration of Jefferson's birthday this week had a different story to tell, it was not "newsy" enough for extended publication. Yet the letter was important, for Gov. Black is a democratic-Democrat; and interesting, for he is a clear thinker and forcible writer. This is his word to the "reorganizers":

We read a good deal in Republican newspapers about a variety of schemes for the "reorganization" of the Democratic party. We never see in connection with these remarkable projects the names of any regular and reliable Democrats. The engineers are all well-known Republicans, who helped, directly or indirectly, to beat down the Democracy and put the trusts in power in 1896, and to keep them in in 1900. They are insignificant in numbers. They describe themselves as "leaders," but point to no followers. Now it strikes me that where a hundred Democrats disagree in sentiment, and 99 are found on one side and one only on the other side, the 99 ought to have their way. But if besides it appears that the one obstinate fellow is not a Democrat at all, but an interloping Republican, who has come back simply to boss matters, on the ground that at some remote period he pretended to be a Democrat, but deserted at the pinch, the claim of the 99 just Democrats to run their own party, as against this self-sufficient agent of the enemy, detailed to regulate Democratic affairs for the time being, would seem to be pretty clear.

Venturing upon political prophecy Gov. Black has this to say regarding the action of the next Democratic convention and its effect upon the voters of the country:

The Democratic party on the national field is at present very well and satisfactorily organized. The masses who voted its tickets in 1896 and 1900, are more than content with it, and have no desire to have it Republicanized or reorganized in the interest of the trusts. And the plans with that object in view are pure wind. They have no substance. There will be no reorganization. The Democratic national convention will be Democratic; it will nominate a Democrat on a Democratic platform. He will poll the Democratic vote, with its natural in-

crease, possibly more, according to circumstances then existing, and he may be elected. But with any other kind of platform or candidate, it is hard to conceive how, with the most efficient organization imaginable, and any amount of money contributed by special interests concerned, one-third of the honest Democrats of the country could be brought to the polls. Such an experiment would make a wreck only, less complete and contemptible than that of the shameless Republican side show—the Indianapolis sham gold “Democratic” affair of 1896. And that is precisely the result the “reorganizers” propose to themselves and are expected by the Republican managers to accomplish.

A row in Republican politics in New York State, between “Boss” Platt and Gov. Odell, gives occasion for the announcement of the Democratic candidacy of David B. Hill. It is argued that he could carry New York and would therefore win. But what if he did win? So long as he sits comfortably in the hands of the trusts, a Democratic victory would be a plutocratic triumph if he were the candidate.

The Supreme Court of Indiana has nullified an act of the legislature intended for the protection of workingmen with reference to their wages. What makes this decision especially noteworthy is its incompatibility with court decisions common everywhere which sustain other statutes that are as plainly open to the same objections.

The Indiana statute requires employers to pay wages weekly, and the Indiana court decides that this requirement is destructive of the laborer’s freedom of contract. In the course of the opinion the court says:

The statute places the wage-earners of the State under quasi guardianship. It classes them with minors and other persons under legal disability by making their contracts void at the pleasure of a public officer. It tends to degrade them as citizens by impeaching their ability to take care of themselves. It is paternalism, pure and simple, and in violent conflict with the liberty and equality theory of our

institutions. Labor is property; it is exchangeable for food and raiment and some comforts, and may be bought and sold, and contracts made in relation thereto, the same as concerning any other property. The contract prohibited affects employer and employe alike. If the master can employ only upon terms of weekly payment, the workingman can find employment on no other terms.

All that has a fine sound, and would be perfectly just if laborers were left really free by our laws and institutions to contract upon equal terms. But when all necessary opportunities for the laborer are monopolized by law, it is the veriest pretense and twaddle to nullify statutes intended for his protection, on the ground that they interfere with his freedom of contract. Especially is this so when the same courts uphold usury laws, which are as clearly obnoxious to the objection of paternalism. Don’t they place borrowers “under quasi-guardianship?” Don’t they class borrowers with “minors and other persons under legal disability by making their contracts void at the pleasure of a public officer?” Don’t they tend to degrade borrowers as citizens “by impeaching their ability to take care of themselves?” Yet usury statutes are held valid; while statutes to protect workingmen (whom the laws first cripple in their contracting power) from having their pitiful wages withheld for two weeks and even a month, are invalidated. What makes these labor-statute decisions peculiarly contemptible is the hypocritical complacency judges assume—and Indiana judges are not alone in this guilt—that the statutes are prejudicial to the laborer, when the obvious purpose and effect of the decision is to protect the freedom not of the helpless laborer to contract but of greedy employers to oppress.

Flossie—Mamma, didn’t the preacher say something last Sunday about not caring what we eat or drink, or what kind of clothes we wear?

Mamma—Did he? Perhaps I wasn’t paying attention to him.

Flossie—Well, I don’t suppose anybody’d pay much attention to him when he says things like that!—Puck.

THE NEGRO PROBLEM IN THE SOUTH.

In a previous editorial bearing upon this subject (p. 21) we led up to the conclusion that the American Negro problem can be permanently solved (except by the extinction of one race or the other) in but one way: by effective recognition of equal legal rights, regardless of race and irrespective of color. It is only in this democratic fashion that the race war which now threatens can be made to give way to race peace, the race antagonism to race friendship, the race hostility to mutuality of interests between the races.

Not alone is this the only way in which the problem can be solved, but it is the just way of solving it. Let one call his favorite philosophy utilitarian or idealistic, let it be empirical or transcendental, yet is he forced all the same to this conclusion. With reference to the Negro problem, all philosophic roads lead to this Rome.

But we are not insensible of the difficulties which individuals in the Southern states would encounter in insisting upon so radical a solution. We have a keen appreciation of the tremendous obstacles that stand in their way. Nor do we refer to obstacles affecting their pecuniary interests and personal comfort merely. Brave men never allow such considerations to control them. What we refer to is the fact that a public opinion holds sway over the whites of the South, which individual Southerners cannot instantly overcome. Like public opinion everywhere, upon any subject, and at all times, it cannot be altered by fiat. It cannot be altered by the peremptory demand of anyone. It cannot be altered by argument. It is proof even against superior intelligence. Nothing can alter it but a change of heart in the social consciousness of the white inhabitants.

Those Southerners, therefore, who believe in the democratic solution of the Negro problem are at a great disadvantage. Living in a community where public opinion is extremely hostile to it, they are democrats where democracy suffers from blight. We have much sympathy