

THE HAYSEEDER.

Hew to the Line, Let the Chips Hit Who They May.

VOL. 4.

RALEIGH, N. C. THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 1898.

No. 24.

Bossism in the People's Party.

In an unlimited monarchy bossism may do very well, for where his kingship assumes to rule by divine law and sets up as one who, anointed by the Lord, can do no wrong, the role of boss is quite the proper one for him to play, for boss he assumes to be. But in a democracy, where all men are held to be equal before the Lord and all men created in His image, with equal rights and privileges, bossism is much out of place. And as bossism is out of place in a democracy, even so is it out of place in the People's party, which puts itself forward as a party democratic to the core.

In a democratic government those who are exalted to the office should regard themselves as the servants of the people and not assume the role of bossism. If they do assume this role they must be unhorsed, must be pulled down from the offices to which they have been exalted, or the democracy will become a mere farce, cease to exist. And so it must be with the People's party. Those who have been exalted to the head of the People's party organization should conduct themselves as servants, not as bosses. If they do assume the overbearing attitude of bosses they must be put to one side or the People's party will cease to exist. Bossism and democracy cannot exist together; neither can bossism and the People's party. If bossism cannot be eradicated from democracy, democracy must dry up, become non-existent in fact if not in name; if bossism is allowed to take root in the People's party, the People's party must disappear.

Of the bossism in the rule of the two old parties and of the nation we need not speak. Of bossism in the People's party, present or threatened, we must speak. The central organization in the People's party is the National Committee, on which every state and territory is entitled to be represented by three delegates, regardless of what may be the strength of the People's party in the different states and territories. Such division of representation was not made in the last National Convention of the People's party, where the states and territories were given representation on a basis of the voting strength of the party in such states and territories as indicated at previous elections. But in a small body, such as is the National Committee, division of representation on a basis such as that followed in the making up of the last National Convention is impracticable, for such division would, of necessity, leave the organizations in those states where the People's party is weak without any representation at all.

It is to be presumed that the members of the National Committee were chosen to do the bidding of the rank and file of the People's party, for the doctrine of kings has no acceptance in that party. The absolutist and monarchist may acknowledge the doctrine that the king can do no wrong, but Populists will not admit that their National Committee can do no wrong, make no mistakes, and any assertion of this kind they will resent. To do the bidding of the rank and file of the People's party the National Committee was then chosen. This we may assume. But in choosing this committee it was recognized that members might refuse to do the bidding, to act in accordance with the desires of the rank and file that they were chosen to represent. And so it was provided that the Populists of any state or territory could remove and replace any member or all three members of the National Committee chosen to represent them whenever such representatives ceased, in the estimation of the rank and file of the party, to truly represent them. This the Populists of the different states and territories were

empowered to do at any regular state or territorial convention.

The members of the present National Committee, from each state and territory were originally chosen at St. Louis, in 1896, by the delegations to the National Convention of the respective states and territories, each state and territorial delegation choosing three members of the National Committee, to which representation on the committee each state and territory and also the District of Columbia was entitled. Thus was the committee originally chosen. But it so happens that the Populists of several states have since felt called upon to change their representation on the National Committee. And this they have proceeded to do at regular state conventions, as they were empowered to do, removing National Committeemen who seemingly cared more for the success of the Democratic party than the People's party and substituting true Populists.

At this action the present chairman of the National Committee has been seemingly much displeased, though he lately has taken much pains to declare that he is as much opposed to fusion with the Democratic party as any Populist, that he only favors "fair and honorable co-operation," whatever that may mean. We believe it means fusion in which the Democrats do some of the fusing, some of the surrendering; fusion in which Democrats give as well as take, something which they quite refused to listen to with regard to the national ticket two years ago. In short, "fair and honorable co-operation" seems to be a new name by which fusion, that has become so distasteful to most Populists, is known.

To get a few Populists into office by helping many Democrats into office who do not believe in Populism, but think more of office and the spoils of office than they do of principle, Democrats who would quite tie the hands and render powerless the Populists who might be so selected, is not the aim of the rank and file of the People's party. Their aim is the recognition, the acceptance of the tenets of Populism, of equality and true democracy in the government of the United States, and unless they can advance this recognition by electing Populists to office they do not care much by electing Populists. They are Populists to help themselves, not to help a few men into office, and they do not want to make of themselves stepping-stones upon which a few self-seeking men may mount to office and partake of the emoluments of office while the masses of the people get nothing for their pains.

And this is what fusion with the Democratic party means, what so-called "fair and honorable co-operation" with the Democratic party means. It means a surrender of corrupt methods, the dropping of efforts to secure a pure ballot and fair count; it means toleration of such methods and co-operation with those who profit by such corruption; of many Democrats to office who proclaim their belief in free silver indeed, but who combat other cardinal tenets of Populism; who declare their undying enmity to the aggressions of money oligarchy on the one hand, but hold open the door to encroachments on the other; it means the election of many such men that a few Populists may partake of the emoluments of office, may benefit at the hands of the people but render nothing in return. This is what Mr. Butler's "fair and honorable co-operation" seems to be, this seems to be its end and such co-operation the rank and file of the People's party do not want.

The majority of the members of the People's Party National Committee as at present constituted are doubtless opposed to fusion. Mr. Butler declares that they are and asserts that he him-

self is foremost among the opponents of fusion. He has been especially insistent on this point since the People's party state committee of Minnesota refused to declare for fusion with the Democratic party despite his pressure, since the action of the late Indiana convention has more than ever shown fusion to be unpopular with the rank and file of the People's party. So he declares that he is an opponent to fusion, that he works not for fusion but for "fair and honorable co-operation" with the Democratic party. But with him "fair and honorable co-operation" seems to be another name for fusion, if so regarded by the rank and file of the People's party. That he is not the opponent but the abettor of fusion he evidences by his acts, unmistakably evidenced in the campaigns of last autumn when he openly worked against the Populist tickets in Ohio, in Iowa, Kentucky and elsewhere, and for Democratic success. In North Carolina, indeed, he opposes fusion with the Democratic party, opposes it vehemently at present, but that is because the Democratic party in North Carolina opposes him.

We repeat, the National Committee is opposed to fusion. Those members in favor of fusion, ready to aid the Democratic party in swallowing, absorbing the People's party, in the vain hope that the Democratic party will absorb some of the principles of Populism and thereby become a true party of equality and of the people are very few. But there are many members who believe that Mr. Butler's declarations of opposition to fusion are sincere, who are led astray by his lies, for a sacrifice of principle, of party aims for the emoluments of office, when put forward in the name of "fair and honorable co-operation." And so it is that those members of the National Committee who are opposed to fusion, who regard Mr. Butler as a fusionist, who have no faith in his denials, who see his fair words belied by his acts, and who would remove him from the chairmanship of the National Committee, are, it is believed, in a minority. But a change of eight in the membership of the committee would turn the minority into a majority, and upon this change the rank and file of the People's party who have no faith in Mr. Butler are bent. This we see in the unmistakable purpose shown in many states to remove those members of the National Committee who are either fusionists, or, putting faith in Mr. Butler's denials, are lending themselves unintentionally to fusion and the disorganization of the People's party and replace them with members who will represent the feeling of the rank and file of the People's party, carry out the wishes of such rank and file and unseat Mr. Butler, who is mistrusted.

Evidently alarmed, some of Mr. Butler's friends aim to prevent this by urging the National Committee to an act of usurpation, urging it to constitute itself as superior to the will of the people, to promulgate the doctrine that the National Committee can do no wrong, that its judgment is infallible and must be accepted by the rank and file of the People's party. Thus to cling to power it is proposed to overturn the very basic principle of Populism, to deny the doctrine that the people have the right to rule themselves, that those they exalt to office are the servants, not the bosses, of the people.

The purpose of those who would thus hold Mr. Butler in the chairmanship of the People's Party National Committee and hold that committee to the support of fusion despite the wishes of the rank and file of the party, is to prevent the removal by state and territorial conventions of the present members of the committee, except by and with the consent of that committee. This appears in a proposed change of the rules of the

National Committee recently submitted to the members of that committee by Mr. Butler. In submitting the proposition Mr. Butler himself is astutely non-committal, though he takes occasion to characterize the recent state conventions that have declared against his policy and his supremacy as snap conventions. The rules adopted by the late National Convention for the guidance of the National Committee the chair of that committee is required to submit by letter any proposition to the members of the National Committee for their approval or rejection upon the request of any three members of the National Committee. Such requests Mr. Butler has not always honored, contenting himself with the request to speak he promptly complied with. This request was made by two members of the National Committee from Massachusetts, Messrs. Brown and Gardner, and one member from New Hampshire, Mr. D. C. Courier. The proposition which they sent to Mr. Butler, with the request that he submit it to the members of the National Committee, was to amend the rule of the committee providing for the removal of National Committeemen, when such committeemen ceased to command the confidence of the rank and file of the party.

The rule as it now stands and as adopted by the St. Louis convention of 1896, is that "the National Committee shall elect each state and territory and the District of Columbia, to be elected by the delegations to this (the St. Louis) convention, and when so elected each member shall hold office until his successor is elected, which may be done by any regular state or territorial convention." This rule was so framed that the National Committee might be kept in touch with the rank and file of the party, and so that when it fell out of touch it might be brought back into touch by the removal of unrepresentative committeemen and the election in their places of men in full sympathy with the views and purposes of the rank and file. But now we have a proposition to amend this rule, take the control over the complexion of the National Committee out of the hands of the rank and file and virtually vest that control in the committee itself. The proposition is to amend by adding these words to the rule as it now stands and as quoted above:

But no member shall be recalled or suspended during the term for which he was elected without a cause being assigned, and a vote of two-thirds of the members of the committee shall be required to recall; (2) which shall appear in the call as a part of the business of the convention; (3) the member under trial shall have the right to be heard in his own defence; (4) and the right of appeal to the National Committee.

Here, then, we have a proposition that the National Committee relegate to itself the power to the rank and file of the People's party in any state or territory: "This man shall be your representative whether you like him or not; this man shall continue to represent you even though you demand his recall; of his fitness to represent you the National Committee, of which he himself is part, shall be final judge." This would the rule of the National Committee be made to supersede the rule of the people; this would the people be deprived of the right to judge of the fitness of their own representatives.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to prevent the rank and file of the People's party from supplanting members of the National Committee who cease to be representatives. And this is incidentally admitted by Mr. Butler in his letter to the National Committee accompanying this proposition, in which he writes that those proposing the amendment are no doubt prompted to

do so by the spirit manifested in certain quarters to hold early conventions, "the chief purpose of which is, no doubt, to try to supplant members of the National Committee." And to supplant members of the National Committee who are out of accord with the rank and file of the party is a grave offence in the eyes of Mr. Butler, whose friends now propose that this supplanting may be made illegal in order that the committee may be kept in accord with Mr. Butler, regardless of whether or no it is in accord with the rank and file of the party. Thus there would be established an oligarchy within the party that would be the death blow of the People's party.

The pith of this proposed amendment to the rules of the National Committee that would make the will of the National Committee superior to that of the people, make the committee greater than the people who created it, is contained in the fourth and last of the proposed qualifications to the right of state and territorial conventions to remove unsatisfactory National Committeemen. The first three qualifications would insure to National Committeemen who have lost the confidence of their people only that which they now have. It would insure the rank and file of the party expressing directly their dissatisfaction with unrepresentative National Committeemen in the choice of delegates to the state conventions; it would insure the causes of dissatisfaction being recorded in the resolutions; it would insure the right to be heard in their defence. But this right they have, there is no disposition to deny it to them, and they have shown no desire to see the causes of dissatisfaction with their conduct spread out in condemnatory resolutions or to have themselves portrayed as traitors to their party and principles.

But the fourth proposed qualification, that to confer upon the National Committee the right of revision and reversal of the acts of state and territorial conventions, taken at the behest of the rank and file of the party and supplanting members of the National Committee, would make great and material changes in the present rule. It would diminish the voice of the people in the control and direction of the People's party; it would make the National Committee paramount, dictator instead of servant; the rank and file would no longer rule the People's party and the success of that party would give no assurance of the rule of the people, of the observance of their wishes, the heeding of their voice in the conduct of the affairs of the nation. And in such event the People's party cannot hope to succeed, for there would be no gain to the people, no gain to the cause of democratic government, no overthrow of the rule of oligarchy if it did not succeed, and hence it would not succeed, for the incentive to success would be lacking.

The question raised by this proposition is simply: Shall the will of the National Committee or the will of the people be supreme in the councils of the People's party? Shall the wish of the National Committee be done, the wish of the people pass unheeded? Shall the will of the committee be law or shall the people rule? Such are the questions raised. The members of the National Committee can give, if they are true to the principles of Populism, but one answer. If they do not give such answer, if they vote to constitute themselves an oligarchy, they will declare themselves not Populists, their authority, that they may thus hope to give permanence to by usurpation, will cease to find acknowledgment by the rank and file of the party, the National Committee will be ignored as if non-existent and a new organization, fresh from the people, and acknowledging the right of the

people to rule, will be built up, for in no other way can the People's party be preserved from dissolution.

And the same will be the results if Mr. Butler acts in the spirit of such proposition, refusing to recognize the changes in the membership of the National Committee made by state conventions or to conduct the chairmanship and management of the organization of the People's party in accordance with the expressed and unmistakable wishes of the rank and file. The people ignored, their conventions ignored, a self-judging committee made the supreme power in the People's party and that party ceases to exist. So, if this role of ignoring the people and usurping power is assumed by Mr. Butler or the National Committee, there remain but two alternatives; Mr. Butler and his National Committee must be put to one side, their advice passed unheeded, their commands regarded as impotent and utterly disregarded as coming from men having abdicated their powers and left vacant their positions by their acts of usurpation, by their ignoring of the principles of Populism and by taking themselves outside of the People's party, or the Peoples party must perish from having ceased to be a people's party, perish just as Democracy must perish if it cannot rid itself of bossism.

And perish the People's party will not, for it stands for a great principle, a principle that cannot perish. With the supremacy of the People's party is bound up the supremacy of democracy over bossism, over oligarchy, and so if democratic government is to survive the overbearing bossism, survive the encroachments of oligarchy that sap its strength, the People's party must survive and grow, must grow until this bossism is overthrown, until moneyed oligarchy is put under foot. And, as surely as democracy will triumph over bossism, so will the People's party triumph over bossism, for no more has the doctrine that the National Committee can do no wrong place in the People's party than has the doctrine of kings, the doctrine that the king can do no wrong, place in our democracy; no more can bossism find final recognition in the People's party than it can in our democracy for its recognition in the People's party would mark the death of that party just as its final recognition in our government must mark the death of democracy, and this can never be—*The American.*

A Straight Fight.

The Democratic newspapers in the State as far as their opinions come to our knowledge are generally very decidedly opposed to fusion with any party on candidates in the next general election. It does seem to us, that a great party dating its existence almost from the foundation of the government, which, while it has suffered some disastrous defeats, has won so many great political victories, should depend upon its principles, its past record and its political action for the benefit of the people, for success in the ensuing campaign, in gaining the suffrages of a majority of the people of North Carolina. A party should stand upon its own merits before an intelligent and honest people whose votes it solicits. And while welcoming all who desire to co-operate with it, form no alliance with any other organization merely for a temporary success, and, probably fail even in attaining that.

Democratic politicians remind us of the Spaniards, they are just as treacherous.—*Sunny South.*

"I hope you asked the count to make himself perfectly at home with us while visiting in this country." "No." "Not Why not?" "It wasn't necessary."—*Chicago Evening Post.*