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POLITICS OF ALABAMA

BY J. C. MANNING

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

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DEDICATION.

To the patriotic people of Alabama who demand "a free ballot and a fair count," and believe in honest government, this little book is fraternally dedicated by the author.



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CHAPTER I.

THE FAMOUS KOLB-JONES GUBERNATORIAL CONTEST.

Until recently, embracing the past several months, almost national attention has been centered upon the politics of Alabama.

Notice was first attracted by the famous Kolb-Jones gubernatorial contest. This campaign was something novel in the South, for until then, there had not been, for years, any probability of defeat to the organized Democracy in Alabama.

However, during the Kolb-Jones political fight, astute "organized" Democratic leaders soon expressed such grave apprehensions of the success of their ticket that, only a few weeks before the time had come for the state election (Aug. 1, 1892), Alabama was in the throes of such political excitement as had probably never before been known in the history of that commonwealth. This fervor increased up to the day of election, when, as is known to the entire country, Capt. R. F. Kolb swept the state with cyclonic victory, notwithstanding the fact that he was defrauded by the manipulations of the ballot-box stuffers, unscrupulous returning-officers and unprincipled members of canvassing-boards. Another man is to-day occupying the seat to which Captain Kolb is entitled, with the absolute acquaintance of the certainty of this statement, and with the perfect knowledge that a vast majority of the people of Alabama are fully aware that, inasmuch as he has assumed it wrongfully, he is unworthy of the trust. What a shameful and revolting spectacle!

President Hayes was never more despised by the people of Alabama, than is Governor Jones by the common people of his own state.

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No better or more interesting recital could be given of the rightful claims of Captain Kolb, than is made in his open letter, written December 15, 1892, and addressed to the General Assembly and people of Alabama. In this letter Captain Kolb makes a demand for justice, gives well-known facts that are susceptible of proof, makes statements of particular frauds, and asks why an investigation of the matter is not permitted and the people allowed to choose their own public servants. The letter is as follows:

"TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ALABAMA, AND THE PEOPLE OF ALABAMA:

"As I have so far been denied the official rights conferred upon me by a sovereign people, I deem it my duty to address this open letter to the members of the Legislature and people of Alabama, and respectfully ask for an impartial hearing. 'Let justice be done, though the heavens fall.' On the 1st of December, 1892, a conscienceless and corrupt oligarchy overturned the republican form of government in Alabama, and installed as the *de facto* governor, a man who was not elected to the office. I feel that I am airing no mere private or personal grievance in thus protesting against and denouncing this great crime against law, order and civil liberty. I would be an unfaithful steward and unworthy of the sacred trust confided to me by the people of Alabama at the polls in August last, if I remained silent under the circumstances. Two years ago the Democratic party, in convention assembled, refused to nominate for governor the acknowledged choice of a majority of the party. For the sake of harmony, I bided my time for another two years, believing that the people would then rise in their majesty and throw off the tyrannous yoke of party bosses. On the 8th of June last, the Democratic party again assembled in state convention, to nominate candidates for governor and other state officers, and for a second time, the rights and wishes of the people were over-ridden by fraud and the unfair use of party machinery in the election of delegates thereto. My friends did everything in their power to bring about a fair and honorable settlement of all differences existing between the two factions of the Democratic party in the state. All overtures in this direction were treated with scorn and derision by the so-called 'organized' Democracy, and we were forced to organize our own state convention, which was composed exclusively of life-long Democrats. This convention nominated a full state ticket and appealed to the justice-loving hearts of the true, sovereign people of Alabama, for their verdict on the first Monday in August. The issues between the two factions of the party were fully presented by both sides of the controversy, in the most memorable campaign ever known in the political history of the state. On the first Monday in August, the people spoke at the

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ballot-box in thunder tones and declared that the ticket headed by myself for governor, received a majority of over 45,000 of the votes cast, fully 25,000 of that majority being white voters. By frauds and manipulations on the part of election managers and county returning-boards in many counties of the state, this true majority of 45,000 for myself for governor, was changed into a fictitious majority of about 11,000 for Thomas G. Jones. This state of facts was admitted to be true for weeks after the election by prominent supporters of Governor Jones throughout the state, who did not hesitate to say that the Legislature, when it convened, would provide for a prompt and impartial investigation of the frauds alleged to have been committed, and would declare who was rightfully entitled to the office of governor. Governor Jones himself is on record as having used the following language on the subject, in an interview with Mr. Chappel Cory, editor of the Birmingham *Age-Herald*, on August 21, 1892:

“If I am not fairly elected I do not want the office. I intend to renew my recommendation, made in February, 1891, to the ensuing General Assembly, to pass laws to provide for contests before the General Assembly, for governor and the other state offices. There can be no doubt that such a law will be passed. You may say further that if the limited session allowed by the constitution will not give sufficient time to hear and decide such contests as may be brought, that I will not hesitate to convene the General Assembly in extraordinary session for the purpose. I have neither reason nor motive to use the power of the office of governor to hinder or embarrass investigation; but, were it otherwise, consecration to this great trust would leave me no room for doubt as to the pathway of duty and honor, when the happiness and contentment of the people lay in the balance against partisan success or personal triumph.’ Commenting on this interview with Governor Jones, the *Age-Herald* said editorially: ‘There is now no reason why every honest man should not adjourn the discussion of the gubernatorial issue until the meeting of the General Assembly. Certainly no honest-minded Democrat, however bitterly he may have fought for Captain Kolb, can find an excuse for keeping alive the fires of factional strife. The statement by Governor Jones, which we publish this morning, leaves nothing more to be said until the trial shall come up according to the law and the constitution. No settlement of a contest is possible except by the General Assembly, and the Governor says in plain terms it shall be settled and rightly settled. He goes so far as to say that if the constitutional limit of fifty days shall not give time for the determination of all contests, he will convene the General Assembly in extraordinary session for that purpose.’ Thus, it is plainly apparent, that Governor Jones and his friends are pledged to provide for and abide by a legislative investigation and adjudication of the contest. Can Governor Jones and his friends afford not to keep their pledges? Will Governor Jones follow ‘the pathway of duty and honor,’ or will he sacrifice both upon the altar of ‘partisan success and personal triumph?’ On the occasion of his inauguration as the *de facto* Governor of Alabama, December 1, 1892, in making an urgent appeal to the Legislature to largely increase the present rate of taxation, Governor Jones declared that ‘the Democratic party can dare to do right.’ If he deemed it the duty of a Democratic legislature to increase the burdens of an already taxridden people, surely he can afford to recommend to this same Legislature the necessity of investigating alleged election frauds, which impugn the integrity of his title to the office of governor, and especially, when these frauds are not denied by his supporters or the press friendly to him. In other words, will Governor Jones ‘dare to do right,’ in this grave matter, affecting, as it does, the rights of the majority of the sovereign people of this commonwealth and the perpetuity of a republican form of government in Alabama. Will the Legislature, now assembled on Capitol Hill, knowing as they do, that all honest and fair-minded men among their constituents demand an investigation, ‘dare to do right,’ and enact a law which will insure that justice shall be done and a stigma removed, which will otherwise be a stain upon Alabama’s fair escutcheon forever? I believe the Legislature will rise above paltry partisan feeling, and that after becoming convinced of the wishes of their people during the Christmas recess, will return to the Capitol and effect a just and speedy settlement of this vital question. It has been charged that I have deserted the Democratic party. I repudiate the base calumny with the scorn of conscious innocence. The Democratic party has always been and always will be the party of the people, and the so-called ‘organized’ Democratic party of Alabama has simply deserted and outraged the people. I am now, as I have ever been, true and faithful to the principles of Jeffersonian Democracy. I believe in and shall ever contend for ‘a government of the people, for the people and by the people.’ There are men high in the councils of the so-called ‘organized’ Democracy, who while admitting my election, declare that because I supported the electoral ticket nominated by the Lakeview convention, I should be denied even an opportunity to contest before the Legislature for the office to which I have been elected; and some go so far as to say that, had I not given

such support, I would have been legally seated in the gubernatorial chair of Alabama, on the 1st of December, 1892. No sensible, or honest person will contend that my support of the Lakeview electoral ticket can affect the merits of my cause of contest or change the facts of the previous August election. For that support, I have no apologies to make; for I followed the dictates of right and conscience. And besides, I could not consistently support the electoral ticket nominated by the convention of party bosses at the State-house, because such support would have been on my part an indirect indorsement of the frauds which I honestly believe were committed against me by these same party bosses and their henchmen, in the August election. For taking the position I did, it is proclaimed by my enemies that I am 'politically dead in Alabama.' In reply to this, I would say that, when they undertake to lay me away in my political coffin, they will find that no amount of abuse and vilification will prevent my speedy and triumphant resurrection through the sovereign might of an outraged people. The political bosses are hereby notified that in the future, as in the past, I will ever be found battling for true Jeffersonian Democracy and the rights of the masses. In the meantime, thanks to a merciful Providence, being in fine health and feeling confident of the continued sympathy and support of my fellow citizens, I propose to fight now and fight ever until the banner of right and reform is planted on the dismantled fortress of fraud and usurpation.

"For the information of the members of the General Assembly, I desire to give some of the facts in detail, showing the truth of the charge that the state ticket headed by myself for governor was fraudulently counted out, in August last. My information in regard to these frauds is of the most authentic character, and I will be able to sustain, by convincing proof, every charge alleged. These election frauds, to which I call attention, will be startling intelligence to the people in the 'white' counties of the state, who at present have no adequate conception of their extent and enormity. Let us first examine Governor Jones' own home county of Montgomery. Every well-informed person in Montgomery county knows and admits that the majority of 6,250 returned for Governor Jones, was a sham and a fraud. The same old methods were resorted to, that have been practised for years. The boast, openly made before the election, that our ticket would be 'counted out,' was carried out to the letter. It is a known fact and publicly stated, that not over 4,000 votes, all told, were actually cast in the August election in Montgomery county, and that an honest count of this vote would give me not less than 1,500 majority. The return of 3,561 votes, claimed to have been cast in the two beats of the city of Montgomery, every honest citizen knows to be untrue. I charge that there were not 1,000 votes actually cast in the two city beats, and all over that number counted were uncast ballots. The same is true as to the returns from nearly, if not all, the 'black' beats of the county. Tickets for the Jones faction were substituted for those cast for the Kolb faction, and a large number of uncast ballots were counted for Governor Jones and his faction that were never voted at all. Uncast ballots were placed in the ballot-boxes and counted for Governor Jones purporting to have been cast by men, both white and colored, long since dead, and others by men who have not lived in the county for years. The poll lists on file in the office of the judge of probate, were either destroyed or stolen, to prevent copies being furnished, which would show these facts to exist. The vote of Montgomery county alone, honestly counted and returned as the votes were cast, would show a difference in my favor of not less than 7,700 votes. In other words, I carried the county by about 1,500 majority, instead of Governor Jones by over 6,200 as the fraudulent returns show. The same state of facts exists as to Lowndes county—over 1,600 majority was returned for Governor Jones when, in fact, I carried the county by over 2,000 majority. In many of the 'black' beats hundreds of ballots cast for the Kolb faction were changed for those of the Jones faction, and hundreds more of uncast ballots placed in the ballot-boxes and counted for Governor Jones, that were never voted at all by anyone. The names of hundreds of dead men appear on the poll lists and ballots put in for them and counted for Governor Jones. When a copy of the poll lists was demanded of the judge of probate, which I charge would show these facts to exist, we were informed that said copy would be furnished the next day; but lo, and behold! when next day came, we were told that the poll lists had been stolen the night before. I charge that the vote of Lowndes, honestly counted as cast, would give me over 2,000 majority, instead of over 1,600 majority for Governor Jones, as returned, which would make a difference in my favor of over 3,600 votes. The same facts exist as to Wilcox county. I charge that not over 3,000 votes were actually cast in this county in the August election, and if honestly counted I would have received a majority of not less than 500. Yet by fraud and ballot-box stuffing and holding back the returns for over a week after the election, a majority of over 4,300 was given to Governor Jones. An honest count in this county would show 4,500 votes in my favor. But it was reserved to Dallas county to outdo all others, in the way of ballot-box stuffing and fraudulent returns, by which a

majority of over 6,100 was figured out for Governor Jones. An honest count of the vote as actually cast would give me over 3,000 majority, making a difference of over 9,000 votes in my favor, from this county alone. In Selma the returns show that 2,642 votes were cast, and a majority of over 2,300 returned for Governor Jones. The facts are, that not exceeding 1,400 votes were actually cast in Selma beat, and fully 600 of those cast were for the Kolb ticket. The census gave Selma beat a population of only 7,600, all told, and yet, they return 2,642 of this population as having voted. One voter out of five is above the average of most populations, but Selma has found a way to manufacture nearly three voters out of every five of her people. In some of the 'black' beats of the county, only thirty to forty votes were actually cast, by both white and colored voters, and yet the returns give from 400 to 700 majority from these beats, to Governor Jones. I charge that not as many votes were cast in the county of Dallas for both Jones and Kolb as the majority claimed for Governor Jones. The truth is, that Governor Jones did not actually receive over 1,300 votes, all told, in the county, and yet he is fraudulently given over 6,100 majority. In Perry county the same frauds and ballot-box stuffing were resorted to, and hundreds of dead men made to vote for Thomas Goode Jones. With an honest count of the vote of Perry as actually cast, I would have received a majority of over 500 votes, instead of a majority of over 1,800 for Governor Jones, as returned, which would make a difference of over 2,300 votes in my favor. In Hale county, all will remember, that the first report received from that county after the election, gave me the county by over 1,600 majority, but the political bosses here urged them to hold back the returns and 'doctor' them; that the 'organized' ticket was in great danger and the 'black belt' was expected to do her duty. Hale was equal to the emergency, and in a few days revised her returns and figured out over 1,200 majority for Governor Jones. I charge that the vote of Hale, if honestly counted, as actually cast, would give me a majority of over 2,500, which would be a difference of over 3,700 in my favor. The same irregularities occurred in Greene county, where a true majority of over 500 for me was changed into a fictitious majority of 500 for Governor Jones, showing a difference of over 1,000 in my favor. In Sumpter county my majority was fully 500 more than was returned for me, and about the same in Pickens; and in Marengo county, an honest count of the vote as cast would have given me the county by a safe majority, instead of 1,000 majority for Governor Jones as returned.

"In Macon county, by fraud and manipulations, a true majority of about 2,000 for me was reduced to a little over 700. In Bullock county, by frauds, manipulations and partisan abuses by county returning-boards, a majority of over 1,800 was given Governor Jones when, in fact, if he was entitled to any majority at all, it should have been less than 200. In Autauga county an honest count of the vote actually cast, would have given me the county by at least 500 majority, but by ballot-box stuffing and fraudulently counting-out votes cast for the Kolb ticket and substituting Jones tickets instead, a small majority was falsely returned for Governor Jones. In all these 'black belt' counties a majority of the judges of probate, sheriffs and clerks, whose duty it was to appoint the inspectors of elections, were friends of Governor Jones, and in most of the counties, the rights of the Kolb faction were utterly ignored, and no friend of mine permitted to act as manager or clerk at any of the beats. Only at a few 'white' beats, in any of these counties, were we allowed any representation. My political enemies were not satisfied with this great wrong done me in the 'black belt' counties but invaded some of the 'white' counties, and by fraud and manipulation in the beats, or by partisan action on the part of county returning-boards, on the Saturday following the election, robbed me of over 10,000 votes to which I was justly entitled. In Conecuh county I received a majority of 1,235 votes, and yet, by throwing out boxes and robbing others, this majority was all wiped out, and a false majority of 270 given to Governor Jones. In Pike county I received a majority of 910 votes and the returns from eleven beats, giving me large majorities, were thrown out or destroyed by the county returning-board, and a majority of 55 given to Governor Jones. The contests in both of these counties (Conecuh and Pike) have been virtually decided in my favor by Judge Hubbard, in his decision in the contest cases for judge of probate in each county. His opinion, as rendered, being in favor of Dr. R. A. Lee, of Conecuh, and T. H. Brown, of Pike, both of whom were candidates for probate judge on the Kolb ticket. In like manner, as in Conecuh and Pike, I was robbed of over 1,000 votes in Butler, over 1,000 in Elmore, over 600 in Coosa, over 700 in St. Clair, over 700 in Shelby, over 100 in Chilton, over 1,000 in Talladega, over 500 in Walker, over 1,000 in Morgan and over 1,000 in Madison. I have given plain and unvarnished facts, as I believe them to exist, and positively assert that a fair and impartial investigation will prove every statement made, to be true. It may be asked why the evidence is not here adduced to prove these allegations. If adduced here, these same parties would say that it was all *ex parte* and that it would be controverted and destroyed, if both sides should be heard. Besides, they know that the details

necessary to be recounted as to each beat in so many counties, would make a summary too voluminous to be incorporated in an address. All I ask is that a full, fair and impartial investigation shall be had and that a true judgment may be rendered. If Governor Jones and his friends are not afraid of truth, equity and justice, why do they refuse? If the effect would only be to remove a cloud from his title to the office, would he not gladly embrace such an opportunity? 'But there's the rub.' They well know that an investigation would disclose frauds and manipulations which could not be defended, and would prove his claim to the office of governor wholly unfounded upon right. That is why they dare not permit an investigation. That is why some of them talk so glibly what they would not dare to utter over their own signatures. That is why the Legislature has treated this matter with silence, while patriotic representatives of the people have urged and insisted upon action, so that justice might be done, and right triumph. Every honest man knows that Governor Jones has no shadow of claim to the office of governor. The people, by their votes in August, relegated him to private life for the next two years, and yet he is sitting up at the Capitol upon a lot of stuffed ballot-boxes from the 'black belt,' and claiming his election. Some of his best friends have publicly declared that he could not afford to hold the office in the face of such fraudulent returns, and if he persisted in doing so, he would go down to posterity more despised than Rutherford B. Hayes. I am only contending for what is right. As a native-born citizen of Alabama, and one who has always endeavored to serve my people and state to the best of my ability, both in time of war and in time of peace, I feel that I have a right to demand that justice be done. Thousands of true men all over this great commonwealth honored me with their support in the August election, and in their name I demand of the Legislature, a prompt and impartial investigation of this matter. These people represent a majority of the white voting population and demand a respectful hearing. I beg you, members of the Legislature, not to mistake the temper of these people. Remember that a large majority of them have been life-long Democrats. While they don't believe in, and never will submit to the domination of a few party bosses, yet they do believe in the time-honored principles of pure Jeffersonian Democracy. They have been the true, the tried and unflinching Democrats, who have heretofore fought the battles and won the victories of the party in Alabama. True to its noble cause, true to every great principle, and true to every demand of patriotism upon them, they have been in the fore-front of every contest when victory was won, and the firm and immovable, the true and faithful guardians of its cause, in every defeat we have ever sustained. Many of these people were gallant soldiers in the late war, and since 1865 have been battling for the Democratic party in Alabama. Many of them have reared sons, in whose breasts they early planted the principles of true Democracy, and taught them that it was the party of the people. They believe that Democracy means that the people shall rule, and that white people should govern Alabama. They now feel that a few political bosses are undertaking to overthrow a republican form of government in this state. I warn you to stop and reflect. Don't trifle with these people longer. Let justice be done, and sweet Peace will again spread her white wings over our beloved state.

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"R. F. KOLB.

"Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 15, 1892."

Nothing but silence answers this scathing arraignment of the Democratic party of Alabama. The burning charges of corruption and robbery meet no rebuttal; none could truthfully be made. Many weeks after the publication of Captain Kolb's letter, the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, of March 3, 1893, contained a remarkable editorial confession, headed: "That Political Pest,"—which may enable one to form some opinion of the sentiment of the average Jones Democrat regarding the Kolb-Jones contest and "dispute" over the election. This quotation from the editorial will prove quite interesting:

"Now the fact is that the Populists will fight the Democratic party in 1894 on the issue of the last August election, and their cry will be so many variations of the contest matter. The plain facts of this matter had as well be understood first as last. If Captain Kolb and the other gentlemen who ran on his ticket had supported Cleveland and held good their claims to being Democrats, a contest law would have been enacted. Public sentiment would have compelled it, and the dispute over the election would have been legally settled, and in all probability Governor Jones would have been governor just as he is now. But when Captain Kolb and his fellow candidates on his state ticket, went bodily over to Mr. Harrison and conspired with Chris Magee, public sentiment revolted. From that moment all possibility of a contest law vanished. The organized Democracy would not hear to yielding an inch of ground, and all the influence of Governor Jones himself could not have availed to procure a contest law from the Legislature. That is a plain statement of fact. That is the shape it will assume in 1894. In the meanwhile, if we begin the campaign

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already, how are we going to have any rest?"

As is easily apparent from reading the foregoing editorial, the principal excuse of the "machine bosses" as to why the office of governor was stolen from Captain Kolb, is "because he did not support Cleveland!" This silly twaddle about Captain Kolb going over to Harrison, is just such nonsensical stuff as the average of Alabama Democratic editors deem fit to feed the Democratic "gods and little fishes" on. What other available matter have they, when truth, right and reason have forever departed from their sanctums and from their cause?

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CHAPTER II.

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THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY ONE OF PREJUDICE.

Excepting those who have resided in the South, few people outside have any true conception whatever, of what means a contest against the fixed ideas and established policies of the ruling element in this section. Not until recently have the searching currents of thought inundated, to a great and perceptible extent, the foundations of bitter prejudice that have been the main basis of the monster political structure which has towered in its glory in the South since the days of reconstruction. For a long time, few there were who would dare to revolt against its darkened walls, lest they might forever be driven from the shadow of its wings.

It is no idle charge that is embodied in the frequent statement that the "par" prejudiced Democratic politicians in Alabama will adopt any method, foul or fair, *especially foul*, that may perpetuate the control of that party, in this state. And it has been the dire dread of becoming a victim of just such venomous partisans as these that has awed aspiring men of this state into party line and once made it seriously doubtful whether any able man would jeopardize his political prospects by being so bold as to stand out in opposition to the "Democracy (?) of Alabama," and its shadowy practices, which Southern young men have been taught by gray-haired parents to believe justifiable.

When, for once, the prejudice of the leaders and the animosity of the rabble of the Democratic party is fully aroused and incited against any person who would ally himself with the opposition, then the subject of this ardent persecution may expect that never will he, nor his seed, go forgotten by an unrelenting foe, until such prejudice-bearing life is extinguished.

The time has been when Alabama Democrats would not concede it a right for a Southern voter to be anything else than a "booster" for the "machine bosses." The privilege to oppose the Democratic party—considering the treatment accorded those who lately antagonized that party in the South—is generally supposed by "Bourbons" not to exist, even now.

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During the heat of political campaigns,—and especially was it the case in Alabama last year,—every imaginable pressure is brought to bear upon those who do not see fit to support the Democratic ticket. Ostracism is practised in both social and business life. Merchants withhold supplies from farmers, wealthy landlords threaten the discharge of their tenants, and mortgage-holders talk wildly of foreclosures, to those who express a desire to exercise the right of franchise according to their own belief and as free men of a so-called free republic. In no other section of the country are such political forces as these exerted to so radical a degree, or is the "party lash" wielded with so tremendous a flourish. The "party lash" cracker must be devised so as to "drive them into line;" it makes no difference what the nature of the material may be, if its popping is fitting for the time and purpose.

CHAPTER III.

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DIFFERENT KINDS OF "PARTY LASH" CRACKERS.

The rank and file of Democrats in Alabama, until recently, have blindly drifted along, neglecting every interest. Thinking of nothing else, scarcely, than "machine boss" protection from the near approach of some highly-pictured prospective woe, ever since before the late war, when slaveholders waved the party lash and popped the cracker of "secession or

ruin,"—until now, when the sons of ex-slaveholders, and others that form the "domineering bossism" in Alabama, pop the cracker of "Democracy or negro rule." From the time when the "old plantation darkey," hat in hand, stood humbly before his master to hear that he was no longer a chattel slave, until now, the "bulldozing" ex-slaveholding lord has "blowed" about the danger of "negro rule" and the sons of this class of office-holding hierarchy have as blusteringly echoed the farce. They failed to remember that it was the wrinkled hands of the old colored slave that were stretched out in protection over his master's loved ones when the deadly flash and quaking thunder of battle threatened Southern homes, and they soon unkindly pictured them as demon clutches. There is no reasonable ground for fear of "negro supremacy." It is the domination of the man with the black heart, without special reference to "hide," that the yeomanry of Alabama must really fear. It is not the supremacy of the negro that curses, or may curse the white productive classes, but it is the supremacy of "machine bosses" who, through the fraudulent manipulation of the ballot-box in counties with a predominance of colored population, roll up fictitious and enormous majorities in order to defeat the will of the white people of other counties. This white-"hided," black-hearted class, which has always popped the cracker of "negro supremacy" are now those who wrongfully dominate a majority of the white people of Alabama on account of stuffed ballot-boxes extravagantly based upon a negro population. The "antediluvian," ex-slaveholding Democrat has talked much about this or that party being a "negro party," but for a certainty this Pharisical set can now see in their own "dear old Democratic party" in Alabama a full-fledged "negro party." The Kolb-Jones election demonstrates this fact. Jones having received majorities in no other than "black belt" counties. Be it said to the credit of the "black belt" negroes, however, they protest that they did not vote for Jones and are amazed that the country has palmed the Democratic party of Alabama, and the responsibility for its existence, off on them. The national election in Alabama, a fac-simile of the state election, sustains the apparently dark complexion of that party.

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The "Force Bill" cracker is another very available "party lash" snap. Democratic campaign orators never fail to picture, in their denunciation of this hobgoblin, burly negroes guarding the polls with bayonets while timid white men come trembling forward to deposit their ballots. "Unless the Democratic ticket is elected, such a state of affairs will most certainly exist," shouts the office-holder, and there are, even now, voters in Alabama who are simple enough to believe it. No party advocates or indorses a measure of any such provisions, yet the people of the South are told that a vote against the Democratic party means the support of just such a state of affairs, and if possible, something worse. It is argued by Democrats, that under such a perilous probability, no farmer could justly consider his empty pocket, poverty-stricken home, overworked and shabbily-clothed family, and poorly-educated children, "and go off to discussing the money question."

Until of recent years, the rank and file of the people in Alabama usually "kicked up the dust" in their terrible display of hostility to anything antagonistic to the Democratic party. In the meantime, the "machine bosses" wielded the "party lash" and popped the snap crackers over their heads; ingeniously playing upon their passions and prejudices, and always holding the offices.

CHAPTER IV.

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THE TROUBLE OF THE SIXTIES.

The people of Alabama were plunged into the bloody, surging sea of trouble in the sixties by the same extremist element in the South, which has more than once ruled more desperately than wisely, and is, in times of great emergency, scarcely conservative or sensible. The writer often imagines he can hear some of these same old blustering members of the ex-slave- and present office-holding hierarchy exciting the common people back before the sixties with their now "moss-covered" harangues, and wonders if some of the common herd could again be herded by these same herdsmen and be driven into another conflict of "a poor man's fight and a rich man's war."

If it had not been for the rash domination of this "rule or ruin" element in the South at that time, there is no doubt but that "the war between the States" could have been averted, with far greater advantage to the people of this section.

The masses of the people of Alabama were not at heart secessionists, but it is, as heretofore, unwritten truth that this state was seceded fraudulently by the original "machine bosses" who dictated the seating of the delegates in the "secession convention," and who ruthlessly sacrificed the lives and property of the poor in a vain endeavor to add to the coffers of the rich landlord by further enslaving humanity.

Reformers in Alabama are to-day fought hardest and persecuted most by the sons of the

class of men who fought the poor white man during the late war and spoliated his meagre possessions, in order that the shackles might be kept on the ankles of the black man so the rich landlord could prolong his princely ways. Opposing the present movement for universal industrial freedom are represented those who have strangled Liberty at every stage of her growth, and who respect the needs of the poor white man now, as little as they did the wants of the poor slaves then.

The common people always fight all the battles in times of war, create all the wealth in periods of peace; but, whether in the battle of blood or the struggle for bread, they have never reaped a substantial benefit from either contest. They have been engaged in a prolonged, though varying struggle, all down the history of the ages, and greed and avarice have always sapped their energies and sucked their life-blood.

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Such is truly a too real recital of the actual experience of the Alabama citizen ex-soldier, as he now is in the ranks of "the common masses of the common people," battling for bread with about as much hope of reaping a happy reward in this contest, as he had of winning a soul-swelling victory in that of the sixties. How sad is the narrative of the real life of the average Alabamian, who has always been loyal to the political leaders of his native state, worshiping even at the shrine of the name "Democracy," but, after years of toil, privation and endurance, approaches the verge of eternity unable to bequeath a heritage of neither full-fledged liberty nor free-titled land to uneducated, homeless and hopeless children.

CHAPTER V.

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WANT PRODUCES THINKERS.

Some species of the brute creation open their eyes in nine days, but some of the poor, blinded and burden-bearing creatures of humanity scarcely ever succeed in getting their eyes fully open to the light of God's blessed bestowals to mankind. Others soon realize the repulsiveness of the black shadows that enthrall them and bite the dust in anguish in their struggle to be free. And often, when higher reason fails to prompt one to action, unsatiated appetite constitutes a never-failing reminder. As necessity is the mother of invention, so is poverty productive of thought. The earlier one's condition is reduced to want, the sooner will the thought "materialize into action." Thus it is with the debt-ridden toiler, the farmless farmer and the produceless producer in their unrest in Alabama to-day. The general want has produced general thought. Thought has instituted inquiry. Investigation has inaugurated a revolt. The opposition to the Democratic party was, in this manner, born out of want. Term it the "third party," or whatever you may choose, it is really a necessary party; and its growth will continue as long as the wants and demands of the neglected productive interests go unheeded.

The ingenious old party leaders may appeal to the passions of some; the "Force Bill," like Banquo's ghost, may continue to "bob up;" the farcial cry of "negro supremacy" may again fill the air; but the wide-awake spirit is becoming prevalent, and these politicians, instead of being absorbed with the tar-*iff*, will soon be astounded at the tear-*off* from the Democratic party.

The feeling of the usurer's grasp is more likely, hereafter, to convince the possessor of the ballot of his duty, than will the artful arraying of one section by corporation talent. The presence of the legislative curse that makes the over-producing producer produceless, will, in days soon to come, more largely influence a vast majority of the citizens of this state in the exercise of their inalienable will, than will the Democratic hobgoblin of the farcial prospective (?) "Force Bill." The appeal for education that comes from the innocent eyes of little children, as they caress a weary mother's careworn face, shall soon carry more force of persuasion with the voter than will the bluster of office-seekers in their feigned warnings of "negro rule;" and the father will then seek to hand down to his children the magic wand that is dispelling brutishness from the face of all the earth.

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Thought having once inundated the passion-played Southern public mind, an awakening is begun, and, aroused to an appreciation of affairs as they exist, the rank and file of the people of Alabama are in an astounding state of agitation. Some idea of the extent of this unrest can be derived by recalling to mind the results of the last elections. This change in public sentiment, and attainments of the reform crusaders against the organized Democracy, will best be appreciated by an understanding of the campaign intolerance and election methods which have made the "Bourbon" historic, and which is fast making all those who believe in keeping sacred our free institutions, shrink from the support of men of such a party and a party of such methods and men.

CHAPTER VI.

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“BOURBON” CAMPAIGN INTOLERANCE.

The revolt of the common people of Alabama against the “machine bosses” is, simply speaking, a revolution against revolutionists; and the increasing strength of the former is rapidly developing the intolerant spirit of the latter. This savage-natured sentiment that has characterized the campaign policy of the Democratic party of the South in its treatment of the opposition, has often received the scathing criticism of many a caustic pen. Yet nothing too severe could be said in its condemnation.

It is the most idle and hollow mockery for any writer or any newspaper to attempt to repudiate the rightful accusation, so long made, that the Democratic party in the South is responsible for the campaign intolerance that is practiced in this section. These outbursts of violence in the South and in Alabama are but the spasmodic ventings of an overwrought public sentiment that has been instilled and tutored by the press and leaders of that party ever since the war. In reality, not half has been told of the attempts at stifling free speech in Alabama.

Although the entire record of the “Bourbon” element is indeed unenviable and astonishing, yet, never before in the history of Southern Democratic campaign ruffianism had this spirit reached the height of devilry displayed during 1892, in Alabama. With organized rabbles at their back, and partisan courts at their faces, political bullies openly boasted of their lawlessness and engaged in their dastardly outrages defiant to morality, honesty, conscience or prosecution.

During the last weeks of the Kolb-Jones campaign this barbaric nature was beginning to be fully drawn out; the most cowardly demonstration of its existence having first been made at Florence, Ala., where the writer was attacked at midnight, July 27, by a mob that had assembled at the depot to do him violence upon his departure from the town. The mob, as was stated by dispatches published in the Democratic press, consisted of “fifty enraged citizens.” The riotous crowd was incited and collected by partisans, for no other than a political cause; and had it not been that the writer succeeded in reaching the platform of the car unobserved, no doubt but that he would have been egged, stoned, or shot to death. The lights had been extinguished in the depot, which is located in a desolate part of the town, and every other arrangement was seemingly made for the doing of a dark and bloody deed. These villainous plans proved, however, to be advantageous to the writer, who escaped a brutally-designed assassination by getting on the platform of the car before the shower of missiles had commenced. The writer’s hat suffered ruin from the “indignation,” and a Memphis & Charleston car was turned into the shops spattered and battered. Herewith is given a letter, referring to the Florence incident, and as its author is one of Alabama’s most eminent ministers, this document will prove valuable literature:

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“Study of L. F. WHITTEN,
Pastor M. E. Church, South.
JASPER, Ala., Aug. 1, 1892.

“My dear Brother Manning:

“As soon as I have the time, I hasten to tender to you my sincere sympathies for the barbarous and uncivilized treatment you received at Florence a few days since. The correspondent of the *Age-Herald*, who lives at Florence, saw ‘an amusing sight last night to see the boasted disciple of Kolbism, J. C. Manning, run from a volley of rotten eggs thrown by fifty enraged men.’ He could have seen in this ‘amusing sight,’ the return of the Spanish Inquisition and diabolic intolerance of barbarism, had he been able to look ahead. This was outrageous and inhuman treatment for which I assure you I am full of regrets. I am ashamed that it has happened in Alabama or the South. This spirit shown you, and the abuse heaped upon you, if not denounced and punished speedily, will culminate in the hottest persecution of an honest minority; which will prohibit free speech and destroy the right to oppose the majority, although that majority be led by the devil himself. If that spirit is not rebuked in our state and the righteous indignation of our people does not stamp it out swiftly, then the darkest days of the Rebellion will be bright as compared to those to follow. This spirit will invade the pulpit and go into the sanctum of the editor, and sermons will have to be pleasant, pacific and agreeable, and editors must agree with those in authority, or else the minister will be driven out of town, and the editor will be rotten-egged or swung up by the thumbs! If that comes to pass, then give me a monarchical government. I should greatly prefer to appeal to Cæsar, than to an enraged mob of ‘fifty or more citizens’ (?) fired up with red liquor, and thirsting for the blood of the

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man who differs from them,—a set of brainless, heartless sapheads. I heard a gentleman who saw it, denounce it as the most villainous thing he ever saw in a land of freedom. He does not belong to your party,—neither do I,—but he was for you. You keep on, if you die at your post. Mobs to-day, mausoleums to-morrow. The party that resorts to such tactics may ride the top of the wave to-day, but the good time is coming when that rotten and rum-soaked method will be buried out of sight under an avalanche of ballots of brave men, who scorn the rotten-egg method of answering brainy arguments, which 'Bourbons' have not sense enough to meet in any other way. For my part, I do not believe in intolerance. The day has passed to allow it. God holds the reins of government. Life, liberty and free speech are our own inalienable rights. To destroy these, as the mobs would do, is to muzzle the press, kill the stump-speaker, and hang the preacher who does not court popular applause, and who defies public sentiment that is wrong.

"Cordially yours for the Right,
L. F. WHITTEN."

"P. S. I said I do not belong to your party. I am a political Prohibitionist, and pray for the day to dawn when the sober and sensible and honest manhood of our country may get together and rule it.

"L. F. W."

Other instances of this frenzied partisan madness soon abounded. But the most wicked resort of Democratic party passion, be it said to its eternal shame, was made upon Col. J. M. Whitehead, editor of *The Living Truth*, Georgiana, Ala. Not content with destroying peace, planning and attempting midnight assassinations, hooting and howling at public meetings, these haters of civil liberty and "dying hard" Democrats come forth in their extreme infernalism, and hurl eggs at a gray-haired, one-legged, ex-Confederate soldier and citizen of irreproachable manhood. In response to a request for a statement on this subject, the writer received the following reply from Colonel Whitehead:

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"GREENVILLE, Ala., April 3, 1893.

"J. C. Manning:

"*Dear Sir*,—You ask me to write to you some of my experiences during the campaign last year with our friends, the organized Democracy. Knowing their methods so well, their 'wild and woolly' ways did not surprise me. I had some experiences with them in 1884, when I was an independent candidate for Congress in this district, against Herbert. At Ross Hill, Covington county, I was set upon by their tools, who had been organized before to kill me. It was a miracle that the plan failed. As it was, I had an arm broken, a shoulder dislocated and was left for dead on the ground. I had just closed a speech in which I had exposed the unfaithfulness of their Congressman (the nominee), which I had been doing for the past two weeks and he had heard of it. He is now the Secretary of the Navy! I had challenged him to a joint discussion and he had declined. He was a Confederate soldier and so was I. I had lost a leg and he had lost the use of an arm, but nothing of this kind could stand in the way of his ambition. I never had any doubt but that he and his henchmen instigated this cowardly assault upon me. Last year, most of my speeches were made in the 'white counties' where our friends are largely in the majority. I went to Union Springs, in Bullock county,—a 'black county'—to engage the Hon. W. C. Oates in a joint debate. He declined and I made no attempt to speak. As I was leaving on the train from the depot that night, I was honored with a shower of eggs coming through the car window at which I was sitting. They passed within a few inches of my nose and breaking on the other side of the car, fell on the good clothes of an enthusiastic Democrat. Of course he was mad, while I was in the best possible humor. I did the laughing and he did the swearing. It took place as the train moved off, so that there was no chance to investigate who the parties were. They were under the cover of darkness, and doubtless will there remain."

"Most respectfully,
J. M. WHITEHEAD."

"They are under the cover of darkness, and doubtless will there remain." What manner of Democracy (?) is this, which forms a prominent part of the nation's administration—even entering the make-up of the cabinet of the President! It is no surprise that an opposition cause to such a party as this Democracy (?) would dare to undergo the most trying difficulties in its struggle to maintain freedom of speech and to sustain human liberty; it is no wonder that the Southern champions of reform dare to preserve law, protect home and have honest government.

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ELECTION METHODS OF THE DEMOCRATS.

"Bourbon" campaign intolerance, ballot-box stuffing and other similar crimes against human liberty have become a common practice in the political contests in Alabama. It is said frequently by the opposition in this state that one's skill in fraudulent election manipulation wins promotion in the councils of the Democratic party. It is also not untrue that voters who have been accomplices in perpetrating election frauds have been rewarded with official positions "on account of efficient services rendered the party."

The election law in Alabama was framed for facilitating fraud as an alleged necessity for protection from negro supremacy. But, once having secured the "machine," the "bosses" have taken advantage of this "original purpose," and have carried the practice of stealing ballots so far as to feloniously take white men's votes in order to preserve the "machine" intact. This practice has been carried out to such an outrageous extent that an overwhelming majority of "white" ballots have frequently been reversed by the "machine bosses" in order to continue the evolution of the office-holding hierarchy. The original ballot-box stuffing law has been recently displaced by another equally as iniquitous. This new law was enacted at the last session of the Legislature and is known as the "Sayre Election Bill." As fair and able criticism that has been made of this bill appeared in the *Alliance Herald*, Montgomery, Ala., edited by Frank Baltzell, one of the ablest and most forcible writers in the South. The *Alliance Herald* says of this measure:

"The law should be captioned, 'A Bill to be entitled an Act to Perpetuate the Frauds which have heretofore been practiced in Alabama.' It is very ingenious in its draft, very adroit in its omissions and very mischievous in its operations. The principal idea in the bill is that it absolutely puts the control of elections in this state into the control of the inspectors of elections, by making everything about voting so hedged about by secrecy that it is impossible to ever get the evidence of any fraud that may be committed, and by making them the absolute directors and controllers of those who may not be able to read and write. The principal omission of the bill is that it does not provide for the appointment of inspectors from each party or faction, or rather fails to make provision for the enforcement of the existing section in the code which provides for it, effective and certain to be enforced. All the frauds in the elections are due to that defect. The probate judge, clerk and sheriff do not pretend to enforce the law fairly. Appeal to the courts to secure enforcement is a farce, as appeal from the decision of the court delays the application of the remedy, if the supreme court should order it, until after the election shall be past. Each party or faction should be guaranteed, under a heavy penalty upon these officers, fair and just representation in the management, by having at least one inspector and one clerk—those, too, whose names shall be suggested; for to appoint one ignorant, careless or indifferent inspector, to watch two inspectors and two clerks, is folly. The average ballot-box stuffer can count out every time, when that is done. One man is needed to watch the one who reads the ballot, and another to watch the clerks. Without these two, the 'slick' artist can count out every time. This omission in the bill makes it safer than the present law, for a voter can now keep a list, and those of his party can give their names and voluntarily tell him for whom they voted, and thereby afford evidence available in a contest. This bill purposely does away with this right by putting all the power in the hands of the inspectors and keeping everybody fifty feet away from any evidence whatever. The law is almost wholly devoted to how voting shall be done. Nobody is concerned about that. Everybody wants to know how the counting will be done, or how the stuffing will be prevented. That power is kept securely in the hands of the inspectors, and the inspectors' appointment is equally as firmly kept in the hands of the judge of probate, clerk and sheriff. That may seem a very adroit way of perpetuating fraud, but it is neither smart, shrewd nor fair.

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"The law provides for booths or stalls—one for each fifty voters as shown by the preceding election. One voter at a time gets a ticket from an inspector, goes into the booth and is allowed five minutes to prepare his ticket. If he cannot read or use his hands to make a cross mark opposite each name of the candidate for whom he desires to vote, the inspector appoints one of the partisans of his party—not the voter's—to fix the ticket. He will fix it, too. Nobody can see or hear what transpires between the voter and this appointed manipulator. No penalty is provided for deceiving or wrongly marking the ticket. All the frauds about that feature are protected. When it is marked, the voter casts it. Why not number it, so that it can be identified in case of contest or dispute? That would prevent fraud, and is not wanted. No one is allowed within fifty feet of the voting place nor the booths. There is great particularity

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about the way the ticket shall be prepared, and none shall be voted unless they shall have the initials of the inspector who hands them out, on the ticket. Any other ticket, if voted, shall not be counted. There is another chance for fraud. Suppose the inspector refuses to mark his initials on the tickets, there is no penalty and each one can refuse and defeat the election.

"The law requires the registration of voters to be completed the first twelve days in June, before the August and November elections. Before registering for each election, the voter must present his poll-tax receipt. When he registers he gets a registration certificate. When he votes he must present this registration certificate and leave it with the inspector. The way is not plain how it will get back to him, when he delivers it in August and desires to vote in November, but it is supposed that he will have a slim or good chance at that, as he shall be in accord or opposition to the officer who ought to return it. If the registrar fails to act after he shall be appointed, there is no way for the voters of the beat to register that year; the probate judge and registrar can manage that little trick so as to disfranchise all the opposition beats with heavy majorities. The probate judge can appoint another, but there is no penalty for not serving nor for the appointment of an incompetent registrar. That feature is well fixed. The bill provides penalties for everything to protect secrecy, but nothing to protect the honesty of the count. It seems to proceed on the assumption that the principal thing about an election is secrecy, and that the honest expression of the will of the voters is not to be protected. The inspectors will fix that for the party to which they belong and the probate judge will see that no other party or faction has any chance or prospect. As a remedy for the troubles now complained of in the state, the bill is wholly at variance from everything needed. It simply puts in the power of the probate judge, clerk and sheriff of a county the power to control every election."

The foregoing review of the "Sayre Election Law," is no more than a just exposure of a legislative document devised and enacted for the subversion of the will of the people. In other language, this law is nothing more nor nothing less than a legalized plot to commit treason against a republican form of government.

With the registration of voters and the management of elections in their own hands, the "machine bosses" of the "black belt" never fail to return any majority "that is needed." As an instance of this corruption, let us refer to the vote of last August, and of last November, in some of the polling places in the "black belt" counties. In the city of Montgomery, when in fact less than 1,000 votes were cast in August, 3,561 votes were returned. Some weeks after the state election, one of the managers of election in Beat 5 in Montgomery county, stated to Captain Kolb that there were about 200 votes actually cast in this beat in the August election and that the Kolb ticket received over one hundred and fifty of them, and Jones the balance, but the returns gave Jones over four hundred majority! This statement was made to Captain Kolb unsolicited, and by a man who said he had voted for Jones, but was suffering from a punctured conscience on account of the wrong he had done the people of Alabama and himself, by assisting in ballot-box stuffing. Hundreds of similar cases that occurred in the August election may be given, where the ballot-boxes were not only stuffed, but the count reversed.

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During the session of the Legislature, at the time of the election of district court solicitors for the present term, a gentleman who happened to be in Montgomery at the time, found the following letter on the floor in the office of the Merchants' Hotel:

"HATCH., Nov. 8, 1892.

"MR. J. V. SMITH, Seale, Ala.:

"We are going to be 'snowed under' here to-day. Our only hope is to be able to throw out the box. Write me by this P. M. mail the most complete plan to do it. Would too many ballots in the box do it? or which is best?"

"Yours, L. 3—3.—"

The envelope which contained this interesting letter, was addressed "J. V. Smith, Esq., Seale, Ala.," and bears the postmark—"Hatchechubbee, Ala., Nov. 8, 1892." This letter revealed "election methods." Upon investigation, it was learned that Hatchechubbee is a small box of not over 300 votes and that it took two days to do the counting, and then, in spite of being "snowed under," the Democratic ticket claimed 79 majority! It is only ten miles from Seale to Hatchechubbee. At Oswichee, a beat in the same county of Russell,—in which is Hatchechubbee,—there were 74 more votes in the box than were voters' names on the poll list. Just such "double-dealing" as this, no doubt, won Cleveland's majority in this county. It is useless to add that "J. V. Smith" is an office-holder. He was elected solicitor for the present term in the Third Congressional District. As to "L. 3—3.—" it will be noticed that the letter *C* is third in the alphabet, which makes "L. 3.—3.—" when the letter *C* is used in place of "3.—3." read "L. C. C." This "L. C. C., Hatchechubbee, Ala.," is quite partisan in his feelings and is very much disturbed in his sleep with nightmares of "negro supremacy!"

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"Doctoring" registration lists is an effective way of preventing boxes from being thrown out

on account of not having enough names on the poll list. In some of the "black belt" counties these lists are very sacred, as they contain the names of many dead negroes and good coon-dogs. An ex-sheriff of Marion county stated to the writer that, in the discharge of the duties of that office several years ago, it became necessary for him to save his own life by killing a negro criminal, who had attacked him. The ex-sheriff said that the occurrence often came to his mind, which was full of regrets because of the affair. "However," said he, "I am now feeling easy over the affair, as upon examining the registration lists at the court-house a few days ago, I found the name of this same negro registered, and learned that he was voted for Jones."

Many are the ways by which the Democratic party has overcome any opposition in Alabama. "Doctoring" registration lists, stuffing ballot-boxes, reversing the count, throwing out election returns, etc., has been quite a pastime for the "machine bosses." And soon they will begin to realize "the cost of their game."

Suppose the opposition party, which now has control of thirty-nine counties out of the sixty-six in the state, should resort to the shameful election tactics of the Democratic party! Who could picture the termination of such a result? Referring to such a revolutionary improbability, the *Alliance Herald* says:

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"When the thirty-nine 'white' counties shall commence to count, if they should regard that as the last resort, the figures in a state election would be as startling as amusing. Think of Dallas rolling up 10,000 majority one way, and Etowah rolling up 12,000 for the opposing ticket. Then let Montgomery roll up her 7,000 and see how they would compare with Coosa's 7,000 or Cleburne's 5,000. Then let Wilcox come serenely forward with her usual 6,000 and DeKalb call her hand with 7,000. Lowndes, too, could bob up serenely with her 6,000 and Dale could 'see her' with as blossoming a rose of innocence in a game she does not understand and show up 6,000. The 'white' counties have been holding aloof, until the tricksters worked them in November, but they have found out a thing or two, and if counting must be done they will startle the natives with the unblushing character of what could be done. The 'black belt' had best not force this competition. When Dallas kills 5000 'white' votes in a 'white' county, by fraudulently counting that number of negro votes in order to succeed, should the whites play for even, it will not be difficult to divine what will be the result. The *Herald* does not advocate this sort of tactics nor does anyone in the 'white' counties, but there is a great deal of silent thinking about it. No one wants to do it; but if self-preservation shall demand it to thwart the aggressions of the 'black belt,' just watch and see how the innocent and guileless man can 'swear to conduct this election for the best interests of the white people' and down the 'black belt.'"

But the writer thinks "self-preservation" will not demand such a course. This is not a time for such practices. The common people know it. They are determined to press forward their revolt against the party that gave birth to such revolutionary ideas. The common people of Alabama will not submit longer to such outrages. They are demanding, and, in the name of God and humanity, *will have* a free and fair expression of their political will on the rostrum and at the polls.

CHAPTER VIII.

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SUCCESS OF THE POPULISTS ASSURED.

The people of Alabama will no longer vote the Democratic ticket simply because the "antediluvian" leaders say so. They will no longer be intimidated by party threats, or blindly driven by party lash, but they are going to have a good reason for so doing, hereafter, before casting their votes for the party which has been in power in Alabama for eighteen years, during the whole of which time the people have grown poorer and poorer and no measures have been adopted or suggested for their relief. The great masses of the people cannot again be forced to neglect more pressing interests to take issue on tariff reform only. While these people favor tariff reform they demand other more vital things as well, and they have formulated these demands into a party platform; and the brave and patriotic people who have the courage to maintain their convictions, will no longer be frightened from the issues they indorse, by threats of disrupting an existing political party,—especially when there no longer remains any necessity for keeping that party together.

For what purpose are political parties organized and why do they continue their existence? The reading and thinking masses understand that there is but one answer: Political parties are formed to educate the people upon a proposed policy and to be instrumental in having

such policy enacted into law as soon as the majority of voters favor and cast their votes for it. When the policy which brings a party into existence has become accepted as a proper theory of government and ceases to have any opposition, then the necessity of the political party itself ceases, for it has nothing else to accomplish. It is proper and usual, however, for such a party to continue its existence until some other living issues arise which demand the consideration of the voter. When this is done, one of the political parties which has accomplished its mission, should, by appropriate platform, present the issues of the voters of the country; or some new party having that object in view, should be formed.

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The Republican party was formed for the purpose of eradicating chattel slavery in America, opposed secession, and incidentally favored a high protective tariff to enable the United States Government to carry on the Civil War. The Democratic party in the South favored slavery and secession, and thus the issues were made. The Republican party established the objects of its organization and it is conceded that it was right, both in its opposition to slavery and secession, and hence the issues then dividing the old parties are now dead issues, leaving the only issue the incidental one of protection. The fundamental principles promulgated by Jefferson upon which the Democratic party was organized, have been instilled into the hearts of practically all Americans and no organized political party is necessary to maintain them. The issues formerly dividing the Democratic and Republican parties (excepting the tariff) are no longer in politics; and the political "bosses" of neither party can show why those who once opposed slavery and secession should remain as a separate political organization, and those who once favored it should remain as one also, while there are living issues concerning the welfare of the masses of the common people, about which no concern is manifested by either of the old parties.

Had the Democratic party adopted the living issues and burning demands of the common people in its platform, and honestly advocated their speedy enactment into law, then it would be the party of the people. The rank and file of that party in the South and West does not express any marked disapproval of the principal demands for reform that are embodied in the platform of the People's party, yet, nine-tenths of the voters of the Democratic party are controlled adversely to their political belief by one-tenth—the Wall Street or Eastern portion. And, as S. S. King, Esq., a noted reform author, has said, "Whistling against the wind in the effort to drown the fury of the tempest, has always been as effectual as the effort of Western and Southern Democracy to reform in the face of Wall Street dictation." Unfortunately for the Democratic party, it has been controlled by this un-Democratic Eastern end of itself until the importunings of the common people of the West and South have been ignored. The thunder of the "Tammany tiger" having drowned the appeals of the Western and Southern producers, they have been forced to present their demands by independent political action, and the People's party was necessarily the result; and if these people have the courage and manhood to stand firm to their convictions, and to resist the "party lash" which the "machine bosses" will of course continue to vigorously apply, there can be no question as to its success in Alabama.

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First and foremost, however, before the strength of any new issues can even be tested in this state, the "machine bosses" who have reigned supreme in Alabama for the last nineteen years must be dethroned. In the name of Democracy they have perverted every principle which the word represents, and by "bulldozing" and fraud, have constantly thwarted the will of the people at the ballot-box. They have inaugurated methods as corrupt and revolutionary as their despotic minds could conceive, that their dominancy of the common people, might be perpetuated with ease; they have shaken the very foundation of the sacred covenant of liberty, broken the peace, blighted the prosperity and threatened the homes of the people; they have also hastened the time when all good, liberty-loving and truly democratic citizens of this state must unite in re-establishing the fact that they are the equals of the "machine bosses," and that a majority should rule. When this is established in fact as well as in theory, then, and not until then, will the demands of the people, which are favored by a majority of the people, be enacted into law. Whether favoring or opposing the demands of the common people, all honest citizens should unite in an effort to secure to those favoring them, the right to have the issues that come before the people fairly tested by a free ballot and a fair count of the votes polled. Anything else is slavery, which will not be submitted to by the common people of Alabama. In the language of the greatest Alabamian of to-day, Capt. R. F. Kolb, the grandest Commoner of them all, whose every impulse is actuated by a desire to do service to his downtrodden fellow men:

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"The common people of Alabama believe that democracy means that the people shall rule. They now feel that a few political 'bosses' are undertaking to overthrow a republican form of government in this state. I warn the 'machine bosses' to stop and reflect. Don't trifle with these people longer. Let justice be done and sweet Peace will again spread her white wings over our beloved state."

Transcriber's Note:

Punctuation has been corrected without note.

Corrected text is marked by a gray underscore. Hover the cursor over the text, and the nature of the correction will appear.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK POLITICS OF ALABAMA ***

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