



# THE COURIER

LINCOLN, NEB., SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1895.



John H. Ames is a democrat and a politician who has been wholly unaffected by the wave of political and anarchistic socialism that has swept over the country in the last few years, more especially since the

Grangers and urban malcontents gathered themselves together and raised the banner of populism and began preaching destruction. The clamor has not called Mr. Ames into the field of demagoguery; he believes what he believes and the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal of these political marauders cannot shake his honest convictions.

Very recently Mr. Ames was requested to state in an address before the National club, of this city, his objections to socialism. He was prevented from accepting the invitation, and instead wrote a letter of regret in which he gave his views on this subject, briefly and concisely. Mr. Ames recognizes in this recent socialism a modified communism. True communism, he says, involves the principle of individual liberty. It can only be realized among men when all, or at least nearly all have learned to obey the golden rule, not because it is re-enacted in the statute book, nor indeed from mere set purpose and calculation, but instinctively and from natural impulse. "Any attempt to compel the universal observance of this rule, or of legislative substitutes for it, which is the characteristic feature of socialistic schemes, so far from promoting freedom, unity, fraternity, equality, etc., must of necessity result in the destruction of individual liberty, and the introduction of social despotism, and would, in my opinion, if undertaken on a large scale, be productive of incalculable evils."

Mr. Ames believes that the nearest attainable approach to the ethical ideal, under existing conditions, is the democratic republic with universal suffrage, and the widest freedom of individual conduct and effort consistent with the maintenance of the public peace and order, and the enforcement of voluntary contracts and the redress and promotion of what, according to the prevailing standards of public morals, are regarded as wrongs or torts.

The taint of this current socialistic cabal has penetrated into many unthought of places, and Mr. Ames will find many persons who take exception to his views outside of the membership of the National club, and its immediate environment. But time and experience will prove to the satisfaction of intelligent people that it isn't practicable to legislate money out of the pocket of the man

who earned it into the outstretched palm of the man who has done nothing to entitle him to it. Financial and commercial equality cannot be brought about by the enactment of laws. Prosperity cannot be evenly spread like molasses. Shiftlessness and profligacy cannot be legislated out of existence. Freedom to work out one's destiny according to one's own capability is just as precious a privilege, infinitely more so in fact, than the freedom of thought and expression which every citizen of this country enjoys. Proper restrictions are necessary and desirable in the latter case, and they are equally essential in the former. The law says a man shall not libel his neighbor and the law should prevent a man from taking his neighbor's property, and interpose barriers in the way of unjust combinations to force him to pay tribute to these soulless aggregations.

But the individual should not be restrained in the proper pursuit of sustenance and wealth. Success in life should not be made a crime. Anarchy is the means by which the improvident and vicious, the rascally and ignorant would obtain that which others' labor and enterprise have earned. Socialism such as is currently advanced leads but too directly to anarchy, and populism is the gate that swings inward to the nests and dens of socialists.

In Lincoln the republicans are numerically in the lead; so that it may not be improper to say that their membership embraces a greater number of intelligent, respectable, decent people than that of any other political party. The intelligent, respectable, decent people look with pride upon the universities and colleges that are so prominent a feature in this city, and some of them are given to boasting of the culture that characterizes our people. Under the circumstances one would expect to find a high order of citizenship in Lincoln. One would think that these intelligent, respectable, decent people who predominate in the rightfully dominant party in this city of colleges and culture would name and elect only intelligent, respectable, decent men for public office. But what are the facts? Here is the republican party, composed so largely of so-called good citizens, held in the dusky palm of a social outcast and nominating for important public offices men who cannot properly be described as intelligent, respectable, or decent, men whose names suggest vile associations, corrupt administration, palpable incapacity. Strange but true.

The proposition to abolish the death penalty in this state has provoked much serious discussion, and it is encouraging to note the increasing sentiment in favor of relegating the hangman's rope and the electrocutionist's volts to the cobwebbed mausoleum wherein repose the implements of torture and death that marked the barbarity of the dark ages. Human life is a sacred thing; it is not within man's province to destroy the being into which God has breathed the breath of life. The death penalty for crime comes to us from the remote past, a time long before civilization had begun to shed its benignant rays upon the nations of the earth. Civilized man has largely outgrown the barbarity and cruelty of the unenlightened age, and