

The Commoner.

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Vol. 2. No. 39.

Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 17, 1902.

Whole No. 91.

A PROSPERITY CATECHISM

Nearly every republican spell-binder begins his speech by asserting that we always have good times under a republican administration and always have hard times under a democratic administration. This is a sweeping statement and it is seldom safe to use the word "always" in a political argument. It is very easy to show that the republicans are entirely too emphatic in their indorsement of republican times and in their condemnation of democratic times. One is reminded of the experience of a man in Memphis, Tenn., who, having imbibed liquor until he felt in a fighting mood, went out in search of a row. He met a stranger on the street, and stopping him, said: "I can whip any man in the city of Memphis." The stranger saw that he was under the influence of liquor and passed by and let him alone.

After going a few steps he accosted another man and this time declared that he could whip any man in Shelby county. The challenge was again declined, and he went on till he met a third man to whom he declared that he could whip any man in the state of Tennessee. The last stranger to whom he addressed his remarks promptly proceeded to knock him down. He got up with much difficulty, wiped the blood off his face, extended his hand and said:

"Shake, stranger; I took in too much territory the last time."

The republicans take in too much territory when they argue that there is some mysterious charm about a republican administration that makes an industrial depression impossible, and some peculiar ingredient in a democratic administration that produces soup houses. A brief catechism brings out the fallacy of their argument and shows how groundless are their assertions.

Q. How long since the republican party first came into power?

A. Forty-two years.

Q. How many panics have occurred during that time?

A. Two.

Q. When did the first panic begin?

A. In 1873.

Q. What party was in power at that time?

A. The republican party.

Q. To what party did the executive belong?

A. To the republican party.

Q. What party had a majority in the senate?

A. The republican party.

Q. What party had a majority in the house of representatives?

A. The republican party.

Q. How long had the republican party been in power at that time?

A. About twelve years.

Q. What laws were in force at that time?

A. Laws passed by the republican party, or laws passed previous to 1860 which the republican party had failed to repeal.

Q. How long after the panic began did the republican party remain in control of the administration?

A. About eleven years.

Here was a panic which occurred after a long

period of republican rule; it occurred under republican rule; it was not until about eleven years afterwards that the democratic party was in position to enact any law, enforce any law, or repeal any law. Why do the republicans overlook the panic of 1873? How can they shirk responsibility for it? The panic of 1873 was accompanied by failures in business, by industrial depression, by lack of employment, by tramps, and by soup houses—and all these things came while the republicans were in complete control of the government. Yet the republican speakers assert, and the republican editors reiterate, that we always have good times when the republicans are in power. Why do they say so? Are they ignorant of history, or do they think that the people have forgotten?

Q. When after the war was the first democratic president inaugurated?

A. In 1884.

Q. Did it cause a panic?

A. No.

Q. Did it produce an industrial depression?

A. No.

Q. Was it accompanied by hard times?

A. No; times were as good from 1884 to 1888 as they were during the republican administration that preceded or during the republican administration that followed.

It is evident, therefore, that a democratic administration does not always bring bad times.

Q. When did the second panic occur?

A. In 1893.

Q. Who was president at the time?

A. Grover Cleveland.

Q. What party had been in power during the four years previous?

A. The republican party.

Q. What tariff law was on the statute books?

A. The McKinley law.

Q. When was it repealed?

A. About a year after the panic began.

Q. What financial law was on the statute books in 1893?

A. The Sherman law passed in 1890.

Q. When was it repealed?

A. After the panic began.

It is evident, therefore, that the panic of 1893 came when a republican high tariff law was on the statute books, and when a republican financial law was in force.

Q. What financial policy did Mr. Cleveland pursue while he was in office?

A. A republican policy. He continued the general financial policy in force under the republican administration, and the republican president who followed him continued Mr. Cleveland's financial policy.

In 1896 Mr. Cleveland found himself so much nearer to the republican party than to the democratic party that his influence was thrown to the republican party. Isn't it a little unfair for the republicans to use a democratic president to advance their own policies and elect their president and then blame the democratic party for all the bad things that came under that administration?

The republicans were wholly responsible for the panic of 1873; if the democrats had been whol-

ly responsible for the panic of 1893 each party would have had one panic to its account and it would not be modest for either to brag, but with the republican party wholly responsible for the first panic, with their tariff and monetary systems in force when the second panic occurred, and with a democratic president leaning to their side and following the dictation of the same men who controlled the financial policy of the republican party, it is unjust in the extreme for the republicans to assert that the republicans always bring good times and that bad times follow a democratic victory.

The prosperity that has come since 1896 cannot be credited to republican foresight, to republican legislation or to a republican administration. It has been caused by better crops and better prices.

Q. Can the republican party bring good crops?

A. No.

Q. Can it control the rainfall and send copious showers on the country when the people vote the republican ticket and hot winds when they vote the democratic ticket?

A. No.

Q. What evidence have we that the republican party does not control the rainfall?

A. It is proven by an argument drawn from analogy. In many of the cities in which the republicans are in power private corporations are allowed to control the water supply. If the republican leaders will allow a private monopoly to control the water supply of a city what reason have we to doubt that if they had the power to do so that they would give to a private monopoly control of the water supply of the nation?

Reasoning from the less to the greater, is it unfair to assume that the republicans, if they controlled the rainfall, would allow it to be turned into a monopoly so that people would have to buy every shower at a high price? If this seems an unwarranted conclusion let the reader see how the republican leaders have turned over the lighting of cities to private monopolies. And while private monopolies tax the urban population the Standard Oil company is permitted to collect a tribute from the country folk who still use lamps, and the anthracite coal trust is even allowed to control the fuel supply of millions of people.

We are fortunate that the Creator still withholds from the republican leaders control over the movements of the clouds, still withholds control over the sun's rays and still brings springtime and harvest without consulting the g. o. p.

Q. Is the republican party responsible for the higher prices that have prevailed during the last few years?

A. No.

Q. What proof have we that they are not?

A. In the first place they distributed literature in 1896 urging laboring men to vote the republican ticket on the ground that the gold standard had lowered prices and increased the purchasing power of the dollar, thus enabling the laboring men to buy more with his wages than he formerly could; is it fair to assume that the republicans would have claimed credit for a rising