

The Experiences of an Implement Dealer

By W. H. Green of Creighton, Nebraska: I have been in the implement business twenty years and thanks to the vigorous vitality of my ancestry, I am alive. I was a pet agent of four of the different harvester companies before the amalgamation. I continued for two years after the trust was formed, but I never failed to register my convictions about the ultimate result, that greed would follow power.

A well groomed young gentleman called upon me in the early part of 1905 and after getting my convictions, informed me that he was in the secret service of the harvester trust and that I would have to shut my mouth. I told him I thought this was a free country, but two weeks after three representatives of the trust arrived and transferred the four lines of harvesters I had been selling to my competitor who already had the other two lines. I accepted the gauge of battle and began a campaign in the newspapers. I contracted with an independent line of harvesters and made a contract for half a page in our weekly newspapers. I must have produced original matter as the Implement Age of Philadelphia and Farm Machinery of St. Louis reproduced my advertisement in their publications every week. I was swelled up like a mushroom until one day a collector for the International Harvester company presented me with a bill for the independent line I had been selling, and derisively informing me that the trust had owned the independents all of the time and had carried on the campaign for the purpose of baiting suckers like myself out onto the limb and then sawing the limb off behind them. Since that hour my warfare has been of the guerilla pattern.

There is a rule in bridge whist which says when in doubt play trumps and on some such theory, I bought a newspaper and I have never been idle since.

Swift says that the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before is a benefactor, therefore the stockholders of the harvester companies must look upon George W. Perkins as a patron saint for he made one dollar into five when he took property and old notes not worth thirty million of dollars and coined them into one hundred and twenty millions of dollars worth of negotiable property, on all of which the American farmer pays a large dividend.

I furnished the evidence and ex-Senator W. V. Allen drew the pleadings for an ouster proceeding against the harvester trust in Knox county, six years ago. Edwin P. Grosvenor, the brilliant young special assistant attorney general of the United States has taken several extracts from this petition in the preparation of the instruments he has filed in Minneapolis to dissolve the trust. For some reason we could never get this case brought to trial in Nebraska. The trust lawyers would have to be absent in Europe one term and the next their wives were sick or something and finally the case was dismissed by our county attorney between terms without my knowledge or consent.

A year ago when the department of justice finally decided to prosecute the harvester trust the department requested me to come to Washington and bring my data and papers with me. I had an excellent opportunity for three weeks to mix with men who are specialists in this kind of work.

Before delivering the papers I had brought to Washington, several prominent democratic congressmen and senators tried to prevail on me to refuse the documents to the department of justice, but to retain them for the democratic investigation which was sure to take place. Two resolutions were introduced in congress, one the Foster resolution I prepared myself, and a hearing was held before the committee on rules, on January 17th, which the New York papers considered significant enough to devote a yard square of their front pages to, but the same influence which prevented the establishment of a twine factory at the penitentiary in Lincoln a few years ago, made itself felt in Washington. And speaking of penitentiaries, I spent the second and third of last January in the state prison at Stillwater, Minn., and after examining the success that state has had as a factor in the world's twine product, I was not surprised that the harvester trust made themselves good fellows to some of our Nebraska

legislators. Minnesota began the manufacture of twine with an appropriation of \$250,000 and out of that capital they have earned a surplus of one million six hundred and twenty thousand dollars in nine years and have become the third largest manufacturers of binding twine in the world and in reality set the price for which all twine is sold. Men who have studied the twine question say that Minnesota has not only saved the farmers of that state a million dollars a year but that they have saved nearly as much for the farmers of each of the other states. Minnesota will manufacture 2,500 mowers, 1,200 binders and 1,500 hay rakes this year and while the Nebraska farmer is paying \$165.00 for his binder the Minnesota farmer will buy his for \$110.00.

If the national campaign progresses in the same channel it has cut out for itself thus far, I look for the outsiders to get a peep into modern big business as it works behind the scenes.

Were Robert M. La Follette, as our international citizen, president, with Senator Clapp or Congressman Rainey in the attorney general's office, those cowardly criminals would be ordering life preservers for generations yet unborn. I have every confidence in my country and in my countrymen, but I think it dangerous to extend too much power or worse than all, to fawn upon men who possess no instinct but a bravado to plunder when they are under cover.

The International Harvester company with its one hundred and forty millions could not withstand the attacks made upon it for one week, were it not for the fact that the McCormick and Rockefeller families are intermarried. This family relation admits Cyrus H. McCormick to the directorate of the City National Bank of New York.

In his remarkable address before the house committee on rules, Samuel Untermyer stated that no individual or institution had money or power enough to be dangerous to our society and civilization but that it was the money which those men held within their powers as the fiduciary agents that enabled them to make or break individuals, corporations or communities at will.

I listened with breathless interest for two days while Louis Brandeis tore the reorganization scheme of the tobacco trust to atoms before the committee on interstate commerce of the United States senate and I am fearful that President Taft's scheme of reorganization will be impractical and impotent.

Three days after the hearing before the committee on rules Mr. George W. Perkins gave the Washington papers an interview in which he said that President Taft had promised that the harvester trust should have all of the time needed for reorganization and that the plans of reorganization were mutual.

I was commissioned by the national anti-trust league to call upon the department of justice and inform them that if they started a reorganization scheme for the harvester trust such as they had perfected for the tobacco interests, that impeachment proceedings against Mr. Wickersham would be started in the house of representatives within twenty-four hours. I was shown into Mr. Fowler's private office and that eminent prosecutor nearly took my head off with the challenge: "Do you come here to intimidate this department?" I answered, "No sir, even a one-horse newspaper man from Nebraska knows better than that. I came down simply to tell you." Mr. Wickersham's first assistant then wanted to know the objections to the tobacco reorganization and I told him that dividing an illegal corporation into parts with the same men owning and controlling the different divisions looked to me like apprehending a band of horse thieves who had stolen several thousand horses and the decree of the court being that a large band of horses was inimical to the welfare of society, therefore the horses must be divided into small bands and each thief to get his pro rata.

The fact that the farmer must pay 20 per cent more for his harvesting machinery than he paid before the formation of the trust; the fact that thousands of traveling men who had put in their best days with the harvester business were left without positions; the fact that every hotel man has his gross receipts cut down a thousand dollars annually; all of these pale into insignificance compared with the fact that the harvester trust is the spoke of the system's wheel which reaches out into the farming dis-

tricts whether it be to bribe legislators, subvert the press or blackmail and blackhand commercial interests.

I am not a pessimist yet I chose these words to close my address before the committee on rules:

"Mr. Chairman, a grave responsibility rests upon this committee and upon the committee of the whole. There are times when we need patriots as badly as we needed them in 1776.

"A wave of semi-socialism, unorganized anarchy, or incipient revolution is sweeping across the land. And can you question why?"

"When you see the man who steals a postage stamp sent to Leavenworth, and the man who extorts a million to Berlin; when you see the man who makes a gallon of moonshine whisky condemned to darkness and despair at Atlanta, and the man who wrings hundreds of millions from the consumers cheered as a philanthropist as he dances upon the precipice of perjury; when you see the man who smuggles an extra suit of underwear sent to Sioux Falls, and the man who wrecks one of the greatest commercial institutions in the nation and throws the financial life of the whole country into convulsions, made ruler over many things, then I say it is not any wonder that the whole fabric of our civilization should quiver with the fever of apprehension and alarm." W. H. GREEN.

LEST WE FORGET

The St. Louis Republic, a Clark organ, printed prior to the Baltimore convention this dispatch from Baltimore, as follows: It was stated in reliable quarters that an arrangement had been made between the Clark forces and Charles F. Murphy which would relieve Mr. Murphy of some of the opposition which he has been encountering in New York for the past few years and would at the same time help Mr. Clark toward getting New York's ninety delegates to the presidential nomination.

As a part of the arrangement, it is said that the Clark men on the national committee and in the convention will lend their support to Mr. Murphy in his effort to make Judge Parker temporary chairman. This, of course, would be a complete "throw down" of Mr. Bryan by the Clark men.

There is a strong feeling among many of the progressive leaders, however, that Mr. Bryan is "butting in" too much. This may be part of an attempt to show him that he can not run the whole show.

A Baltimore dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald, said: Word came from Washington, where Mr. Hearst was attending a conference of Clark leaders, that he had reached an agreement with his political enemy, Chief Murphy of Tammany, under which the Clark strength would be used in support of Parker for temporary chairman, in consideration of Tammany's support of Clark for the presidency. The coalition, it was said, was working to effect Clark's nomination on the first ballot to head off Colonel Bryan.

PUBLIC INTERESTS WELL SERVED

Louis F. Post in The Public: Never in any public body were public interests better served—more devotedly, more acutely, more broadly, more disinterestedly, more courageously, more successfully—than by William J. Bryan in his leadership at Baltimore against the natural affiliation of bi-partisan crooks and their democratic dupes, who, but for him, would have delivered the democratic party over to the financial proprietors of the republican party. We say successfully as well as courageously, disinterestedly, broadly, acutely and with devotion to principle, because the bi-partisan bargain of the political crooks with the financial interests, which was indorsed at Chicago, has been smashed at Baltimore under Bryan's brave leadership.

THE THANKS OF THE COUNTRY

Crookston (Minn.) Daily Times(rep.): For the resounding slap in the face given Tammany, Colonel Bryan has the thanks of the entire country. Wealth and selfish interests will no longer be allowed to dominate. It must be a fair fight, because the people demand it, and out of all the present turmoil good will eventually come. The political atmosphere will eventually be clearer.