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Wholesale and Retail Clothiers,

1017 and 1019 O St., Lincoln, Neb.

Branch Houses: Beatrice, Grand Island, Weeping Water and Auburn.

"VESTED RIGHTS."

The Power of Monopoly That Has Grown up Under the Evils of Class Legislation.

The average man pays very little attention or gives very little thought to his right under the constitutional framework of our nation, and particularly so wherever a class of citizens have by special legislation usurped those rights. If a "franchise" has been acquired, no matter by what deceit, fraud or violence of public right, it immediately settles in to the public mind as "law," and becomes "vested rights," sacred in use to the schemes obtaining such rape on the public's equity. When any one during breathing spells in his struggle for existence by his chosen avocation, observes and makes public mention of such outrages, he is met with abuse instead of argument, and called "liar," or if his reputation for veracity is very good and no rank blemishes on his personal life, "crank!" is the argument against him or "office seeker," "demagogue" or "politician" until the sleepy public finally wakes up and finds the "crank" is right in his claims and thus it is the wheels of universal opportunity turn for our nation's good. The truth of this can not be better illustrated than in citing to the so-called "vested rights" of railroad corporations. Government, and more especially this of ours, has been instituted for the express purpose of guarding by the united power of the republic the individual right of each citizen. The free nation that grants "vested rights" to a class of its citizens, or by special enactments in rights of eminent domain and permits those rights to be exercised to the profit of such class at the cost of others, places itself in danger of losing its quality of freedom; as much so as would a pure maiden place her virtue in jeopardy by frequenting houses of prostitution. We have undoubtedly the grandest most fruitful and highly developed manhood nation on earth and Nebraska is behind none of her sister States in this respect. This however should not dissuade us

in the desire for further upward progress any more than did the fact of King John of England being a better King, than was Nero, of Rome, stop the citizens of England from demanding Magna Charta. So long as hunger and poverty depresses a large portion of an industrious public, while more than a surplus of plenty to a part of this people is given, we are far short of perfection in government of the people for and by the people.

The argument that this is the best country on earth for a poor man is true, but that shall not stand in the road of its being made much better, nor excuse "class" legislation for keeping us but one degree better than monarchial Europe. The Republican party in the nation and the Democratic party in the South are soon to call upon the individuals of this republic to return them to power and reason for so doing they cite to the goodness of God in his sunshine and showers on a land made fruitful by the toiling millions, and point with pride to protected wealthy manufacturers and railroads developed under their fostering care, they fail to note or analyze why mortgaged farms and chattels and railroads are eating life-blood out of our producers of this wealth, and making one money king as result of interest bearing medium of exchange, where ten thousand freemen become serfs of poverty. Let them come with me to the cities and they can be shown whole blocks of squalid poverty in tenement houses populated from the slums of Europe, which population is bidding against American workmen to the profit of the protected manufacturer and lowering our ability for self government the same as fever lowers the body's ability to healthy action. This being an opening letter on railroading it will perhaps be proper to explain that a few branch lines must be constructed to carry material for the main lines; otherwise an old railroad man might think we were digressing. And the first material we want to lay on the foundation of reason should be used and properly applied by every individual who reads this letter. It is this: We are each to blame in a manner proportionate to our public and private

influence for the class wrongs put upon us by the old party legislation. We should not rail at them and the corporations, but blame ourselves and resolve to change matters by study of all platforms, all candidates, and measures the party machinery to be run by the people and for the people, as a whole and not as a class. Our eye-sight would be as dim as their sense of patriotism is deficient, if we failed to see that the Republican and Democratic parties are Siamese twins, connected by ligament of gold standard, running from stomach to stomach of selfish "vested rights"

The Democratic twin being the more lovable child at this time because of his anti-trade protectionism, which is explained by his want of Yankee ingenuity in manufacturing and his inability to completely corner the "nigger" market of ground cultivation by tariff. Neither old party subscribes to the tenets of the Independent party in its demand for equal rights to all and special favors to none, and neither the g. o. p. nor the d. o. p. can continue to steal God and labor's livery in which to serve the corporate classes and in meantime neglect to develop equality of opportunity, which alone can maintain self government. When this nation was born steam power in transportation was not yet applied but the need of communication by mail service was known and it was expressly stipulated that such service devolved upon the nation. It is wonderful that in the postal system three cents would transport a letter anywhere throughout all this broad land and such service be more than self-sustaining. And more wonderful still that no matter how rich a man nor how many letters he wrote nor whether in a large city or small village, he had no advantage over his fellow citizen who had no business and money.

What a revolution this principle would work in freight service if a man's business was not dictated to, by location or traffic manager. This will be discussed further in my next letter.

A. J. AUSTIN.

Kearney, Neb.

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