

Songs of the People.

All times of great popular feeling have their representative songs. Luther's great hymns were the songs of the Reformation. The French revolution, with all its changes, produced nothing more lasting than that song of freedom the Marseillaise. Our own wars and exciting political campaigns have each had their songs from Yankee Doodle and the Star Spangled Banner to "Marching Through Georgia" and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. In fact most of our great national hymns have been written at such times and taken up and popularized under the waves of feeling which seem to call for expression in song.

It is hard to get up a great deal of enthusiasm or poetic genius over tin plate or iron billets and the last twenty-five years have not been productive of thrilling popular songs. It is only great issues that stir the popular breast till plain words fail to give utterance to the feelings they would express. Then a truly noble and uplifting theme and an appropriate melody will often times carry a popular movement to success.

So true is this that we are very apt to believe its converse and to think that unless a party has some songs of worth it cannot hope for success. Till recently the songs of the people's party have been for the most part doggerels to the air of popular dance-house ballads, with an occasional camp-meeting song of similar style. Truly elevating words and music have been very generally lacking.

It has been left to Mr. Geo. Howard Gibson to introduce a new tone into the songs of the party, and to write a series of patriotic songs which are hardly surpassed by any in our literature for loftiness of motive and real merit from a literary point of view, while at the same time they are not at all lacking in the musical quality which must necessarily be present before any song touches the chord of popularity.

The series which is known as "The Songs of The People" contains much original music written by several different composers, together with a number of stirring pieces arranged to fit the best of the old war tunes.

The song which appears above is only one of many, all of which are remarkable for their fervid patriotism and broad humanity. In fact, if the people's party rises to the patriotic level of these songs, we have little doubt of its ultimate success as a party. There is nothing in them of the sordidness and selfishness which have seemed to characterize some of the party's representatives.

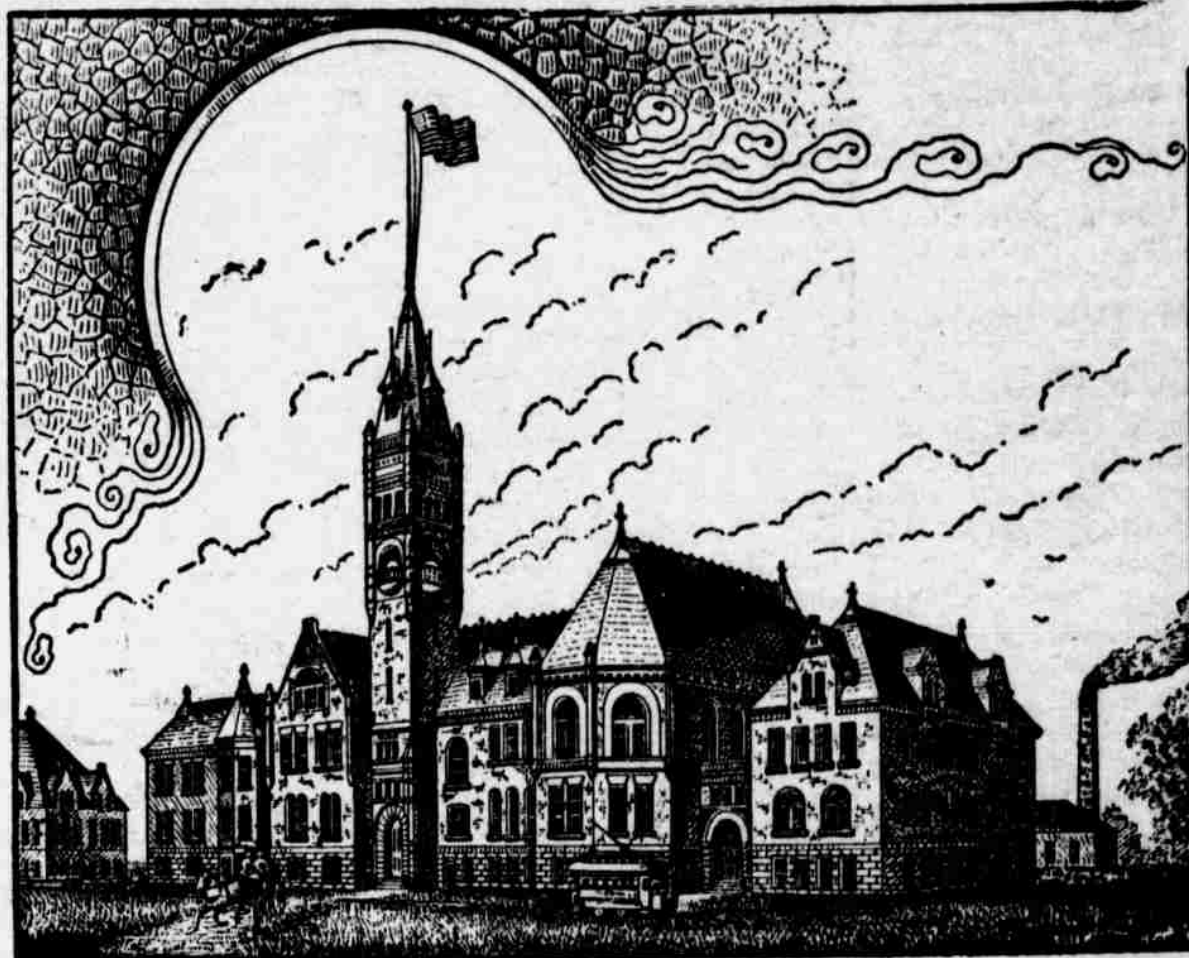
The songs strike the whole octave of human sympathy. Sparkling humor, keen wit and bitter sarcasm, as well as the loftier patriotic themes, are touched in turn by the talented author, and we are inclined to agree with the editor of the Arena when he says "These songs will add tens of thousands of votes to the ranks of the people's party."

Mrs. Ella W. Peattie, a brilliant newspaper writer reviewer and critic in the World-Herald of Sunday, July 24th, writing of poets, "calls up George Howard Gibson, who has been writing campaign songs for the people's party," and says: It is a difficult matter to write a campaign song. It has to be written for the masses. It must be simple and terse and taking. Therefore it must not be hampered with refinements. It must contain truth, or the people will not respond to it. The rhymes must be neat, the lines natural and ringing and music easy. Mr. Gibson has a "knack" for this kind of thing, and his songs are likely to be sung by glee clubs in every state where the people's party has a foothold. And glee clubs means interest—and interest means votes. When a cause gets to be the one of the common people and they get to singing songs about it, there is a lot of fire along with the smoke.—

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