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THE OLD FARMERS

They are the Men Who Formulated the Doctrines That are Revolutionizing the World.

A good many men have been hanging around the state house this winter and giving their advice as to what legislation would meet with the support of the populists. Some of this advice has been of value and a good deal of it has not. One remark that was frequently made by gentlemen from the cities was like this: "You must not do this or the old farmers who make up the voting strength will not understand it," or: "The old farmers will never be able to understand such a movement as that." Whenever the editor of the Independent heard a remark of that kind, the speaker got a piece of advice that he was not likely to soon forget. The "old farmers" whom these chaps were afraid would not understand things, are very much better qualified to make policies and form plans of campaigns than these fellows who think that they know it all. They needn't fret about the "old farmers."

Every winning thing in the platform and every plan of campaign that has been successful is the crystallization of the thought of the men who follow the plow. Every one of the planks of the populist platform—a platform that is revolutionizing the governments not only of cities, states and nations on this hemisphere, but just as much so the monarchies of the old world—is the work of the farmers. This revolution of the governments of the world was thought out on the farms. How extremely silly of these city chaps to go around expressing fears that "the old farmers won't understand."

Now the editor of the Independent is anxious to get at the thought of the farmers of Nebraska and he asks their aid in the editing of this paper. He knows that the best thoughts that ever came to him was while he was toiling on the farm. In fact what he has written during the last five years since he left the farm is only a rehash of the thoughts that passed through his mind while he was following the plow. There is no originality and no inspiration to be gotten out of life in the city.

Some of the letters that this editor gets from the "old farmers" scattered over the state contain as sound political economy as can be found in any of the books and they have the added advantage of being applicable to the events of the hour. I know how hard a job it was when my hands were stiff and rough with work to sit down and write a letter, and it is just as hard for you, but you can make more money, even if it does come like the taxes in an indirect way, by getting out the pen and ink and saying a few things on current issues that will have a tendency to give us better government, than in any other way.

In a letter received last week one farmer remarks as follows: "Holcomb was a good governor, but if the \$100,000 spent during his administration to build a play house on the Omaha exposition grounds, had been used to keep those poor, hard working farmers on their lands out west instead, the state would have received a greater benefit from the money, as it drew our boys and farm hands to the city bringing unrest and discouragement. The railroads and dens of vice received the benefit." And again: "If our prisoners could be put to work on a road to the gulf, owned by the states, so that we should not have to submit to the extortionate freight rates, or to making twice for us so that we should not have to pay 15 cents a pound to the trust for it as we did last year, it would be much better than the present arrangement."

The plan for a railroad to the gulf to be owned by the states is going to be a question of great importance in the near future. The attempt to build and run an independent road to the gulf by private parties, seems to have been a failure. Since the road has been in operation it has undoubtedly had a great effect upon freight rates to the seaboard, but the big magnates who own the lines running east have come down upon it and it is now in the hands of a receiver. That will put an end to all efforts to lower rates. It will be no trouble to get some federal judge to pop up and declare that such a policy would be the consolidation of private property.

The following is some more farmer talk: "There is a mill on the Wabash. If the farmers would buy it and grind their own wheat we could change things materially and for the good of all. The mill is not running at all. I don't know why. I think it millers can live in the east by grinding for a sixth part, one fourth ought to pay here. But our millers take about one-half of our wheat for toll."

Another sentence in a letter is as follows: "I look for harder times than ever for all our produce is low. They say that 2,000,000 of Chinese are starving. That is all the sign of prosperity that is in sight. We will get the benefit of famine. Prosperity that depends on famine to bring it, is not the prosperity for me."

Here are some more farmer ideas: "The stand that you take against socialism is correct. It is used for the purpose to bring dissension to the ranks of reformers. We must have homes all our own to beautify as we please. I want to Lincoln to hear Bryan, Weaver, Simpson, Hartman and others. Arriving early on the ground at the capitol as none of the speakers were there, a socialist got up on the platform and said he had the key to restore prosperity at once and for all time. Just put all our farms into the government's hands and lease to the people five or ten acres a piece and that would bring the millennium. Farmers were of course disgusted at such a proposition. Some were there who insisted that that was populist doctrine. But socialism is not populism. It is, however, their best war club to use against us. Every populist paper should come out as you have done. Socialism may make some progress in the cities, but among farmers, never."

Some of the above are better editorials than this editor can write. They are fresh, to the point and show the trend of thought among the people who make this country what it is. The Independent says to the farmers come along and help edit this paper.

THE REPUBLICAN PLAN

Their Scheme to "Revise the Poll Books" and Shout Prosperity Becomes Public Property.

The republicans have had some gay old deceivers to manage their campaigns for them in this state in the days that have past, but their last deal is so wide a departure from their hitherto cautious course, that there seems to be a good many of their old workers kicking out of the traces. The appointment of Harrison, the discredited Bee reporter, to manage their campaign for them, is a little too much for the hayseeds to stand. Harrison sent out his first circular letter a few days ago and these old workers were so disgusted that quite a number of them sent the circulars to the populist state committee. The Independent is pleased to be able to give this circular a wide circulation among Nebraska voters. Read it and then write us what you think of it. It is as follows: Headquarters Republican State Committee, Lindell Hotel, Lincoln, Neb., March 11, 1899.

Dear Sir:—Some time ago you were asked to send in a list of names of doubtful voters who could be furnished some good republican paper. Can you not send in a list at an early date? Now that the senatorial struggle is over, the state committee intends to engage actively on the next campaign, and desires to hear from every county as to local conditions. During the month of April and May each county will be visited by some representative of the committee, who will meet with the local workers and consult with them on matters pertaining to the revision of the poll books and compilation of local, financial and industrial conditions. Facts showing the prosperity of the county will be widely published in the daily papers. You will be notified in due time of the date of the proposed visit to your county. In the meantime let us hear from you. F. H. HARRISON, For the State Committee.

It will be seen that the republican papers are to publish all the facts showing prosperity. Facts of the other kind are to be suppressed.

THE REAL ISSUE.

The real issue before the people of the various cities of the United States is practically the same as that which came before the thirteen colonies in 1776.

It is the question as to whether we shall allow ourselves to be taxed by corporations which refuse to allow us to have any control over their actions.

Instead of England we have electric light corporations and traction companies; instead of King George we have a few local magnates. But the question is essentially the same. If the city government is to become merely the political department of an unscrupulous corporation, it is clear that representative government would no longer exist. Such city would then cease to be an independent city, and become an industrial colony, governed and operated for the profit of the corporation.—H. N. Classes in Coming Nation.

A PERJURED NATION.

We should Have a Day and Night of Prayer for Relief From this Devil Worship Misceled Christianity.

The following is an account of the last address given by Prof. Herron in Chicago:

Cheering crowds greeted Prof. George D. Herron's denunciation of President McKinley's Philippine policy yesterday noon at Central Music hall as the teacher from Iowa college addressed himself to the arraignment of "Imperialism." He returned last night to Grinnell, Ia. He said in part: "A few months ago this nation had the master opportunity of the ages, so far as politics goes, to initiate an altogether new sort of international politics and diplomacy. But never in history was a nation false to its opportunity; never did a nation more shamefully and ignobly fail, and that in the face of such light as few people on earth have known. The attempt to liberate Cuba has resulted in American imperialism and the exploitation of Cuba. The war was unnecessary. The Cubans could have attained their own freedom if it had not been for the influence of the holders of Spanish bonds and their agents in America. There were many ways in which the Cubans could have achieved liberty without the incubus of American interference. The war was decided purely on commercial grounds, notwithstanding the chivalry and patriotism of our people who were deeply generous and sincere in seeking to liberate the Cubans."

"But the war came on. The people were moved by noble impulses. The administration gave assurance to the world in opera bonfide language that it was a war of 'humanity.' Spectacular language of every sort was employed to declare that fact to the world. We stood before the nations of the world solemnly pledged to disinterestedness. We stood pledged—if we are represented by our government—to a war in which there should be no appropriation, no aggression, no forcible annexation, but simply the liberation of the people from the oppressors of the islands of the sea. Never did any nation stand more solemnly pledged to a particular course than we did, and I repeat that we have as a nation, if we are represented by our government, today placed ourselves before the nations of the world as a perjured nation. Every pledge made has been broken. No single thing promised has been unqualifiedly fulfilled. American honor, because of our speculation and the wrongs we have inflicted on rich and poor alike, is a scandal and a by-word in every nation of Europe today."

"The war from start to finish has become merely a dress rehearsal of the great tragic drama of greed that is taking place in every industrial center of America. Our sons have not been slain upon the field of battle, but by the hordes of speculators and politicians having army 'pulls' and contracts. American greed and commercial debauchery have slain their tens were Spaniards have slain tens."

"Then, again, the Cubans are not free. We have driven out Spain, but the secretary of war's proceeding to divide up Cuba among American speculators and corporate interests. We have driven out medieval Spain, but American exploitation has gone in. There is not the slightest intention on the part of the administration, moreover to set Cuba free. It is a foregone conclusion, so far as the existing order of things is concerned, that Cuba shall be annexed and, if necessary, civil strife induced in order that we shall come in to preserve the order by which we shall annex the island. Annexation is the purpose and craft of the present moment—to keep all we can get; to get all we can. It is absolutely certain that this administration never had any policy or principles beyond pleasing its masters. I do not doubt for one moment that President McKinley is a sincere man—a man who piously thinks that the well-being of this nation depends on the government of America being administered for private corporations—but the most dangerous man in any crisis of the world is the well-meaning man without principles, who becomes merely characterless putty in the hands of his masters."

"It is to the Philippine islands, however, that we must turn when the question of imperialism is raised. What did we find there? A people who had for a long time struggled for liberty; a patriot leader whom Americans were wont to parade with Washington; a people in reality almost on the verge of victory. Their exiled leaders were invited to return. They came back, trusting us. They helped us conquer the Spaniard in the archipelago. They were victors as well as we. We invited them to renege their struggle upon the expectation that

we would gain for them their freedom. Their congress met. A provisional government was adopted far in advance of any provisional government adopted during the American revolution. Then what did America? First of all we persistently and shamefully misrepresented the Filipinos to the people of America. What next? We refused to treat with their envoys. It is said we have killed more Filipinos in three months than Spain killed in three centuries. Whether that be true or not, we have been guilty of shooting down men and women seeking for nothing except a chance to assert their liberty. Think of it—the country of Jefferson and Lincoln and Phillips and Garrison, moved by gigantic commercial interests, today engaged in striking at the heart of a people who are in the springtime of the first dawn of national liberty."

Corporate interests have their way of denying the right of these people to even attempt self-government. I say to you that if you follow blindly in that ruthless slaughter of the first birth of liberty your turn will come. Furthermore it is the deliberate and premeditated purpose that your turn shall come. "Then there comes the ghastly demand of the pulpit that expansion is the thing because it will enable us to carry the gospel to these people. If anything could ten thousand times justify the criticisms I have made of the attitude of the protestant pulpit, the cry for the carrying of the blessings of American civilization is that justification. It should be the day and night prayer of everyone who bears the name of the lowly Christ, that the islands of the sea should be delivered from the hideous devil-worship that we call Christianity."

When Prof. Herron's address was ended, President Wheelock of the Christian Citizenship league put a motion to arrange for a great public expression of anti-imperialism, and it was adopted by a noisy affirmative vote.

Don't buy a carriage or buggy until you read Billmeyer & Sadler's advertisement on fifth page in this paper.

BRYAN IN NEW YORK.

It appears from scanning all the reports that Bryan completely captured New York. The one dollar Jeffersonian dinner was attended by thousands. Nearly 3,000 sat down at the long tables in the various rooms in the big palace.

There were no flower emblems, but just great long avenues of tables covered with plain white plates. The only ornaments were bunches of celery and granite ware coffee pots. The boxes about the hall were festooned with flags, with silken banners suspended between the flags. Back of the stage were two American flags, draped, one bearing the portrait of Jefferson, the other the portrait of Bryan.

On the stage was an immense floral horseshoe of carnations, roses and heliotrope. It had worked in flowers, the words:

"Women's Bryan League." Below, in red carnations on white roses, was the name "Bryan." Surrounding all were the numerals "10 to 1." When Bryan came in the immense audience went wild and cheered and cheered until it wore itself out. The democracy of New York is with Bryan in spite of Croker, Wittner and the whole gold bug crowd.

SEND A MISSIONARY

In 1866 in northern New York, wheat sold at \$2.18, corn at 68 cents, rye at \$1.10, barley at \$1.00, potatoes at 68 cents, buckwheat at 97 cents and hay at \$14.50 per ton. The above is a fair average for a long time at that period. Then the farmer was an independent and free man. He could live in comfort and had no fears of want in the future. Farm mortgages were things unknown except in very rare instances. Today the farmers of northern New York are poverty stricken. They live in constant fear of the future. They can no longer adorn and beautify their homes. Their sons and daughters instead of being sent to the higher institutions of learning are maintaining a precarious existence in the great cities. This change has been made in thirty years. If the causes that produced it remain for thirty years more, what will their condition be then? It is only a question of mathematics. It can be easily told. It requires no spirit of prophecy to tell it.

If this change had been effected in a month or a year, there would have been a rebellion. But the spreading of it over almost an average life time has kept down revolts. The people gradually become accustomed to the changed conditions. There is no spirit of revolt. So far from it are they, that many of them go about the streets declaring that this condition of things is prosperity. That is just what the economists said they would do when they foretold what would happen "under the gold standard. If any of us recognize the changed conditions, they attribute it to anything and everything but the right thing."

Out here in Nebraska—and Nebraska is the most intelligent state in the union, the masses of the people have thought

out for themselves the cause of these changed conditions. A few of them learned it from books, but the majority studied the questions as they followed the plow. While they have suffered, they have not suffered like the farmers of New York and New England. The mortgage indebtedness in those states is much greater per capita than it is in Nebraska, and the wealth per capita is greater in Nebraska than in the eastern states. In those states there is a propertyless class that runs up into the millions. Here the propertyless class is very small. There they have the multi-millionaires by the scores. Here we have none of them.

Is there not some way by which the farmers of Nebraska can assist their brethren of the eastern states? Can't something be done to instruct them? If the old Alliance was still in existence it would send a missionary or two down there and point out the way of salvation to them. It would tell them not only how to save themselves, but how to save the wage workers who dwell in their midst by the hundred thousand. This missionary would point out to them how in the 'days of old, when the farmers got \$2.00 a bushel for their wheat, that they bought carpets, furniture, farm implements, pianos, organs and lots of clothes. That made work for the manufacturers and wage workers. Then these wage workers could buy something too and that made still more work. The pop missionary could tell them all these things and many more of which they never heard in all their lives. As soon as they began to understand the thing, some of them would get so red hot mad that they would get out on the street corners and make speeches. Then some fellow would get madder still and start a pop newspaper. Then there would be trouble for the plutocrats. The said plutocrats would call them anarchists, say they were long haired and wild eyed and then there would be more trouble. Everybody would get stirred up, the streets would be so crowded in some places with yelling and shouting men that the police would be called out to stop the discussion. Then there would be more trouble. But after a while they would have an election and the plutocrats would swear that the whole world had gone mad or the judgment day had come, and as far as the latter is concerned it would for them.

Say, old farmers, can't we send a missionary down there? The editor of the Independent will chip in his share.

THE WEST

To the west! to the west! so the human tide sweep
From land unto land, like a billow of song,
O'er Asia, o'er Europe, and thence o'er the deep
Unto a new world, came the avalanche on;
And o'er ever on, o'er mountains it rolled,
O'er rivers and plains, without pause, without rest,
Till it came to the verge by the gateway of gold;
And still it flows on to the west, to the west.

To the west! to the west! To the land of the free;
Where wide rivers wander through oceans of green;
Where broad living prairies stretch out like a sea,
And mountains behind them look over the scene;
The empire to be 'mid our fair dreams of "Theu";
The land by the bounties of providence blest;
The home of new hopes, new ideas, new men!
I am proud to be known as a child of the west.
J. A. EDGERTON.

WHAT IT IS

The following is taken from an article in the New York People, the national organ of the social labor party, and is part of an address delivered by Thomas Lawry. The capitals are as they were in the people.

"The socialist labor party is not a reform party. It is an organization of men united for political-economic purposes which, consummated, would entirely change our present system, by substituting for its senseless and brutalizing competition in producing and distributing the things we need, and must have if we would live properly, the collective ownership by all the people of ALL the means used in the production and distribution of such necessities."

HOG INSURANCE

THE STATE MUTUAL Hog Insurance ASSOCIATION is the only incorporated company of this kind on earth. It will insure your hogs against all manner of diseases and pay all losses in full. For further particulars address J. M. Sanford, Fairfield, Nebraska.

OLD AND NEW ECONOMICS

Whatever Pertains to the Public Must be Under Public Ownership and Private Things Under Private Ownership.

The Independent is able this week to present to its readers an original article by one of the authorities on the new sociology of these later decades of the present century. Prof. Stuckenborg is a stated lecturer on this subject at Harvard, Yale and other universities. He is the author of several works, some of which are used as text-books. This scholarly and forceful article goes a long way in clearing away the fog that obscures the subject in the minds of many men. It will be well, not only to read this article but give it some close study so as to fix the principles firmly in the mind.

Editor Independent: England and the United States were long regarded as the classic lands of individualism; that is, in them the individual claimed unrestrained liberty, particularly in economic affairs, so long as he did not interfere with the liberty of others. This has been known as the theory of industrial liberalism or of the Manchester school of economics. The function of government respecting the industries was limited to securing freedom for each individual in his business relations. "Hands off" was the motto of this school in their demands on the government in respect to their economic pursuits.

There can be no question that by thus leaving the industries to individual initiative and management England and the United States have made marvelous progress during the closing century. Not only were inventions encouraged and the best machines employed, but also human energy and skill wonderfully developed. The individual was thrown on his own resources; competition was unlimited; the struggle for existence and for the necessities of life became intense, in which only the fittest could survive and flourish. The social commerce grew rapidly, and this hastened the struggle and the rivalry. Thus the conditions were most favorable for intensifying and unbridling individual strength and enterprise.

But the disadvantages were as appalling as the advantages were glowing. During the first half of the century horrors were revealed in the mines and factories of England which were worthy of savagery but not of a Christian country; and in the United States there has been no lack of brutality in exploiting men, women and children. Individualism was found to exercise and develop the basest as well as the higher qualities of men. Selfishness was stimulated; greed was intensified; sharp practices of all kinds, low cunning, deception, fraud, and tyranny were resorted to for the sake of advantage over competitors. The freedom secured by this theory of non-interference on the part of the government was nominal; not real. A few were free, but the many virtually slaves. The man who inherited millions which cost him neither brains nor brawn; the scoundrel who amassed wealth by robbing his fellow-men; and the successful gambler; these no less than the honest man of means had an enormous advantage over those in moderate circumstances and wage-earners. The conditions of the struggle were not equal, and it was absurd to speak of freedom of competition when a few had everything their own way. The laborer was free in the choice of labor; but his own hunger and the necessities of his family obliged him to accept what work and what wages were offered him.

Another important factor enters into the social problem which individualism has created. It is a characteristic of money, originally intended merely as a means of exchange, to produce more money in the shape of rent from land, interest from loans, and profit from business. Capital well invested thus furnishes its owner an income without labor. A dollar becomes dollars, a million grows to millions. But while capital multiplies itself the laborer, with a bare subsistence, consumes his earnings. More labor is the perpetual demand on him, while more capital is the natural harvest of the capitalist. Rich idlers are found in the old countries who never earned what they possess and toil not for what they consume. They live sumptuously and daily grow richer, while the multitudes who toil for them get but a meager and precarious support.

In order to overcome these patent evils the various systems included under the general name of socialism were proposed. The term socialism was invented in 1835 to designate a tendency the opposite of individualism. It places the emphasis on society, as the other on the individual; and socialism no less than individualism has been used in an extreme sense. Such a variety of meanings attaches to socialism in different countries and even in the same country that the term must be defined in each case in order to make the meaning exact. Those who advocate a due regard for the claims of society have been called socialists, while the social democracy, the largest and the most powerful, and most determined body of socialists in the world, borders on communism, and sometimes designates itself as communist. Numerous varieties of socialism are found between these two extremes. Owing to its great influence the social democracy deserves special attention.

Social democrats claim that labor in the course of all value; but that under the present social system the full value does not go to labor. It is said that an "unearned increment" exists in the shape of rent, interest, and profit, which increment goes to the capitalist. The theory asserts that labor creates and

(Continued on Eighth Page.)