THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Ex-Gov. Altgeld's Labor Day Speech in New York City.

# Religious, Political and Industrial Problems Past and Present.

# Mission of Political Parties --- Changes and the power, in certain emergencies, to Progress Made.

BRYAN DECLARED THE NEW JEFFERSON

The following speech was delivered | a tremendous stride, and in taking by Ex-Gov. Altgeld on Labor day at this stride he has come up through a Cooper Union, New York City:

## A RETROSPECT.

The History of the Future Written by the Past.

A little over two centuries ago the world began its great struggle for religious liberty, for freedom of thought, for the right to worship God according to the dictates of the individual conscience. The established interests of the time, the government, the church and the powerful influences in society were opposed to this, and the earth was made red with the blood of men and women and even of children -all slaughtered by the established interests in order to prevent the growth of a higher idea; in order, if possible, to arrest human progress. But their efforts were vain. The human race moved forward and stood in a purer light, a great principle was established and man was made nobler and better. A little over one century ago the world began its struggle for political freedom, and again the governments of the earth, the church, the commercial interests of the world, and the powerful influences in society were opposed to the new movement, and again the earth was reddened with the blood of men and of women, guilty of no offense except that of aspiring to freedom. But in spite of all opposition the cause of liberty triumphd, humanity made another stride forward and took another step upward. It camped on higher ground and stood in a still broader light. In spite of the sneers of the privileged classes, the great principle of human equality was established, and the further principle that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the goved by the majority. Under the inspiration of religious liberty there came an intellectual activity such as the world had not seen. and under the inspiration of political liberty and of human equality there came an intellectual, a moral and a physical development that eclipsed all the ages and that changed the world's civilizations. Now, another century has elapsed and the world is facing the morning of a new epoch. Today the world is making its fight for financial and industrial freedom, and again we see the government, the commercial interests and the powerful influences of society in opposition and striving to defeat the new movement. But the hand of Omnipotence has never been stayed. Evolution has never been arrested, and human progress has never been stopped by the forces of organized selfishness. This movement for industrial freedom is the new and next unfolding of the great flower of man's progress, and the new century upon which we are entering will see it blossom and gladden the souls of men with its beauty and its fragrance. Just how it will come, just who must fight and who must die, we know not. The religious burnt at the stake, nor when their cause should triumph; but with deep convictions they stood firm, and, although the earth trembled, the race was delivered. Our forefathers could not foresee Bunker Hill, Lexington or Yorktown; but with high resolve they went forth to battle, and man, ennobled by freedom, embarked on a higher mission. So, today, we know not what must yet be borne, nor how much must yet be suffered, but we do know that this cause must triumph, and if this generation of men cannot furnish the heroes who will fight the battles of justice and push forward the car of progress, the Almighty will raise a generation of men that will do it. And, with industrial and financial freedom, with the establishment of a broader and higher justice, will come a nobler conscience; and hand in hand with these will come happiness to humanity. Industry must be freed from the burdens and restrictions due to vicious laws and still more vicious systems, and the hand of toil must have a more equitable share of the fruits of that toil. Justice and the higher welfare of man require new systems to take the place of the cometitive system in all cases in which the competitive system has entirely failed, and in those cases in which the competitive system, when left to work out its ultimate results, tends to de-stroy all that is noble in man.

# great variety of conditions, each of

which for the time seemed best adapted to his protection in his struggle again superior brute force. It took the world a long time to acquire even a perception of right and wrong in the simplest cases. Might was the sole standard of right for ages; ever after it was recognized that one man has no right to rob another, it was considered permissible and even honorable for a band of men, under pretense of war, to despoil a peaceable people. After the family relationship, the tribal relationship and a variety of other conditions, what is known as the competitive system acquired sway throughout most of the civilized world. This system marks a certain stage in man's development, and it has been claimed for it that it had a tendency to make him self-reliant, and therefore to make him capable of the highest achievement. In this system, what Darwin called the "fittest" (he should have said the "toughest") survive, and the weaker of necessity go to the ground. And by and by it was discovered that while this system did tend to make man self-reliant and to develop his individuality, yet under it the nobler elements of man's nature, kindness, generosity, pity, were apparently a hindrance to his struggle; that inasmuch as the struggle was constantly in an environment of brute force the man who had the greatest cunning and controlled the greatest brute force must win; in short, that if this system is left to go on to work out its ultimate results it will tend to produce a race of hyenas, sharp, keen and flerce, but destitute of those elements that ennoble human life. Seeing this, some great men whose hearts went out to humanity have long cast judge. It is, a complete subversion of Various remedies and systems have the assassination of free institutions. been suggested, a few of which have | Even in monarchical Europe no such a been partially and imperfectly tried. They "looked through a glass dark- If it is to continue here, then the rely." They saw here and there a ray of light amid general gloom and endeavored to follow. They were like the infant crying in the night, an infant crying for the light, with no language but a cry. The Financial Question. There is the great financial question, the effort on the part of the toilers and producers of America to restore one of the great money metals of the world to the function and position which it had held for ages. By stealth and by fraud one of the money metals of the world was demonetized by governmental action; not by commerce, not by the industries and enterprises of the world, but by the strong arm of the government, wielded by chicane and the greed of the world. As the re- to the world the highest ideals and sult of this act the world's volume of actual money was gradually reduced by nearly one-half; and, as the world's volume of money tends to determine the selling price of property, it follows martyr could not tell who would be that the property of the world, and particularly farms and farm products, fell in the selling price by nearly onehalf, while the debts and fixed charges remained the same. And even today, when we are told that the farmer is prosperous, he is selling his products at just about one-half what he formerly got. This determines his purchasing power and of necessity determines his social status. By reducing his purchasing power to about one-half what it formerly was, by depriving him of his ability to buy at the factory and at the store as he formerly did, the great American market has been destroyed to a large extent, and we are looking abroad in foreign lands for markets for our goods, when we would find a greater market than we could possibly supply right at home if we would again restore the farmer's purchasing power to what it would be if the world's prices of products were fixed by a volume of money consisting of both metals, instead of being fixed by a volume of money consisting of only one metal.

## THE NEBRASKA INDEPENDENT.

# moneyed classes.

Enthroped Dollars, Enslaved Men Again, 'the flerce commercialism of he age, which has tended to enthrone the dollar and enslave the man, has lowered the standards and has covered the land with corruption until corrupt concentrations of money, wielded by unscrupulous men, have acquired such a complete control of the governments, national, state and municipal, that the people are almost helpless. Laws destructive to their interests are passed through bribery, and laws necessary for their protection are kept off the statute book by bribery. To meet this new and unfortunate condition it is necessary that the people be given legislate direct, either by a popular vote to put specific acts upon the statute book or to declare certain specific acts already on the statute book to be null and void. This would destroy the business of bribery, because it would render the fruits of bribery worthless. No corporation would buy a legislature or a city council if the acts of that legislature or council could be nullified by the people,

## Initiative and Referendum.

In some countries of the world they have long had a system of this kind. They call it initiative and referendum meaning that the people shall in certain emergencies have the power to initiate legislation and shall have the power to have legislation that already exists referred to a vote of the people. This system has worked marvelously well where it has been tried, and we must have a political party in our country with sufficient devotion to free institutions and republican government to establish it here. It is not a question to speculate about. It is not a chimerical idea; it is simply a question of self-preservation.

## Trial by Jury.

Again, the Anglo-Saxon race has shed more blood to maintain the right of trial by jury and the right of free speech than for any other purposes. And the establishing of the right of trial by jury and of free speech is regarded by the world as the greatest achievement in the history of government. Both our federal constitution and our various state constitutions guarantee those rights to every American citizen. Yet within the last few years federal judges, appointed through corporation influence, and sitting on the bench with a corporation bias. have stricken down trial by jury and brushed it aside with a mere wave of the hand. And they have established what is now known as government by injunction in its stead-a system under which the liberties of the American people become subject to the whim, the caprice and prejudice of a federal ed rights of man. It is system would be tolerated for a day. public is at an end. Then the highest hopes of man must be broken, and we will be governed by a money oligarchy, governing through the creatures whom it puts on the bench. Need I say to you, my friends, that to put an end to this system and to re-establish in all its sacredness and all its purity trial by jury, the bulwark of the liberties of the English-speaking people. we need a political party that stands for something higher than spoils? We need a party that has high ideals, and that is capable of lofty devotion and great self-sacrifice. The Democratic Party. What about the other great party? For the first forty years of our history it was the party of progress, that gave shaped the destiny of our country. For thirty years after the war it stood for practically the same things that the republican party stood for. That is, it had become a mere convenience of political and commercial manipulators who used it to further their own ends and amass fortunes, During these thirty dark years it held out no inspiration, it pointed to no great principle, it espoused no great cause, it made no heroic fight for anything; but great mission. the Almighty has wisely provided that every lane shall have a turn, and that there shall be an end to all things. And there came an end to the lane of trimming, trading and trickery in which we had marched; three years ago the party came out of the lowlands and took a position on the hill top of progress. It repudiated the men who had degraded and betrayed it; it flung new banners to the breeze; it espoused the cause of humanity, and it adopted a new declaration of American independence. Standing for the noblest and highest thought of the time it has drawn to its standards the patriotic intelligence of America. A new set of men have come to the front; men who. instead of seeking only selfish ends on the low plane of brutality, stand out in the sun, ready to make every sacrifice for the welfare of the race. These men have high ideals, and the party guided by these men is capable of dealing with the great problems that confront us; is capable of leading the American people onto the great plane of industrial freedom, just as their ket of the world, but he has to sell predecessors a century ago led this republic unto the plane of political freedom.

out this reform without the aid of the scious of being in harmony with the evolution of the age, conscious of moving along the line marked out by the Almighty for the guidance of His people. And we know that the cause we represent will triumph, but until the hour of final victory we must be on our guard, and we must be constantly ready for every conflict.

## Watch the Trimmers.

First, we must be on our guard in our own party, for those interests which have dominated the party so long have not yet surrendered, but are seeking in every way possible to get control. Should they success it would defer the hopes of mankind and intensify the struggles of the toilers of this land; it would postpone the day of deliverance. Ever since '96 these interests have been scheming, organizing and systematically working to again get control of the machinery of the party and dominate its councils. They have talked about harmony. talked about getting the offices, talked about everything except a high idea and noble purpose, or a great end. They succeeded in getting control of most of the mayors of the large American cities; they got into friendly communication with what are known as county seat politicians all over the

country, who simply want office and do not care whether it is Christ or Beelzebub who is mentioned in the platform. The idea was industriously circulated that if we would take down the banners we hoisted in '96, if we would abandon the principles we declared for, if we would again straddle every vital issue and fool as many people as possible, then we could win and get the offices, then we could again elevate small men to high positions. But they forget that we have passed the turn in the lane; they forget that the six and one-half million men who fought with us in '96 had been taught for several years to hold their heads up and to work for a principle; that these men had been taught to be independent and to assert their manhood, and that, consequently, while they might be betrayed they could not be delivered, and that, therefore, any scheme which contemplated the control of conventions by fraud or bribery or trickery, any scheme which contemplated changing the great platform of '96 would lose to the democratic party fifty men where it would possibly bring it one. It would lose the men of high purpose and strong convictions who are doing the world's work, and gain a few men who represent the corrupt commercialism of the age, and who would render the party incapable of any high mission in case we should succeed and they were to dominate its councils. The machinations and systematic plans to which I have referred were carried so far, the schemers were becoming so bold and the trimmers were becoming so active that about seven or eight months ago it was felt that something should be done to check

the iniquity they helped to create. They are weary of duplicity in the White House, they see that the republic is being destroyed, and they look with hope to the Jefferson of Nebraska. We live in momentous times; the age is pregnant with mighty issues. Let us stand firm, let us rise to the occasion and great will be the joy of an emancipated people.

## THE PERCENTAGE PLAN.

Now It Has Worked as Applied to Toronto's Street Railways. According to the Toronto Mail and Empire of Aug. 10 last, the earnings of the street railways of that city for ten months of the present fiscal year have already passed the million dollar mark. By the terms of the franchise under which the Toronto street railway plant is operated the company was required to pay into the city treasury 10 per cent of these earnings. The city treasurer has therefore received a check for \$12,721, which is the municipal share of the earnings for July.

The increase of the earnings and percentages for four years is shown by the following figures for July:

	Gross	receipt		Parcent
July,	1800	1117,688 8	0	\$12,7
July,	1808	103,670 (	0	8,2
July,	1807	106,750 0	30	8,5
	1898			7,0

13 61

Toronto bought her street railroads in 1891 and operated them six months at a profit of \$25,000 per month and then sold them for what they cost on the following conditions: Eight hundred dollars per mile per year to be paid into the city treasury, 8 per cent of the gross receipts up to \$1,000,000, 10 per cent up to \$1,500,000 of the gross receipts, 12 per cent from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 of the gross receipts, 15 per cent on the receipts up to \$8.000,000 and 20 per cent on all receipts over \$3.-000,000. After 20 years the city can take back the plant at its actual value.

In 1894 the city received \$58,000 mileage rental and \$76,000 in percentage of earnings. In 1895 the city received \$60,000 for mileage rental and \$78,000 in percentages on its earnings. Up to 1899 the street railroads had paid into the city treasury of Toronto a little over \$1,000,000.

The experience of Toronto in dealing with her traction companies furnishes incontrovertible proof of the wisdom of the policy which secures to a municipality a fair compensation for the use of the streets based upon a fixed percentage of gross earnings.-Chicago Times-Herald.

## MUNICIPAL REFORM.

San Francisco's Mayor Tells of the Two Vital Needs of the Day. "What do you think are the most

urgent needs today in the line of mnnicipal reform?" I asked of Mayor Phelan.

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### Industrial Biavery.

Glancing back at man's industrial istory we find that it has been a ong struggle with brute force, but the progress made has been wonderful. From the aboriginal condition in

## Farmer and Trusts.

At present the farmer has to pay trust prices-that is, prices arbitrarily made high by monopolles-for everything that he buys; but he has to sell his products not only in the open marthem on a single gold standard value, which is only about one-half as high as a bimetallic standard of value would

be. This great wrong having been done to all property-owners and to all debtors, by government, must be undone by government; and, inasmuch as the powerful moneyed classes of the which man literally devoured his fel-low man after the manner of wild beasts up to the condition which we see today in which he seeks to de-vour only the ubstance of his toil is country are opposed to having the gov-

### Neuring the Promised Land.

My friends, we are not yet in the promised land! We have yet a mighty struggle before us. In fact, the great conflict is only begun. Mighty batties are yet to be fought, great sacrifices must yet be made; reverses, de-

air activity: felt that something should be done to serve notice on that class of politicians throughout the country that the Chicago platform democrats, who constituted the great bulwark of the party, would stand no triffing, that while they might be betrayed they could not be delivered. For if syndicates, chicanery, bribery and corrupt commercial interests must dominate the government we want the republican party to do it. It is today the especial mission of that party to represent those interests and the democratic party must not embark on that line of business. This country doesn't need two syndicate parties. The democratic party has an entirely different mission.

Why Altgeld Run for Mayor of Chicago Moved by these considerations, and feeling that it was necessary to prevent the banners of our great party from being lowered, we entered the municipal contest last spring in Chiplatform and municipal ownership. We maintaining great principles, and for the purpose of serving notice on the patriotic. politicians of the country that if the party were betrayed it could not be delivered, and that if they wanted to of principle, would require them to

Saving the Platform of 1896.

Here in this great state of New York you have formed an organization for the same purpose. And let me say that no man ever embarked in a nobler work. Recent events have indicated that the people are standing firm throughout the land, and very recent events indicate that some of the politicians have noticed this fact and are preparing to accept the situation. Whether the conspiracy to overthrow the Chicago platform will be abandoned, or whether it will go on, I do not know: but, my friends, we must take no chances. The people of America are with us and they are in earnest, and we must see to it that they are not betrayed. We welcome all men to our ranks who believe in the great mission of the democratic party and who are ready to help it carry out that mission. And, on the other hand, we say to all men who do not believe in the mission of the party, who are not willing to help establish the mighty reforms for which Providence has chosen it: Your place is not in the democratic party, and the manly thing for you to do is to seek those councils and that party that are in harmony with your idea. We look not to the past. We harbor no malice Our face is toward the sun, we are holding out our hands. If you love

your country, then come with us. Let me now say in conclusion that our skies are brightening. We have not lost a single devotee, while all

wnership of public utilities," replied the mayor, lighting a fresh cigar. "The advanced thought of the coun-

try not only considers public ownership and operation of public utilities as desirable and practicable, but that it is necessary to save our free government. By corrupt control, quasi public corporations are able to give expression to their demands through the very forms of law itself They fix excessive rates and evade their burdens of government. They have become superior to the law. They usurp the power of taxation. Now, by public ownership and direct legislation we propose to restore the power to the people. "This work is a great patriotic serv-

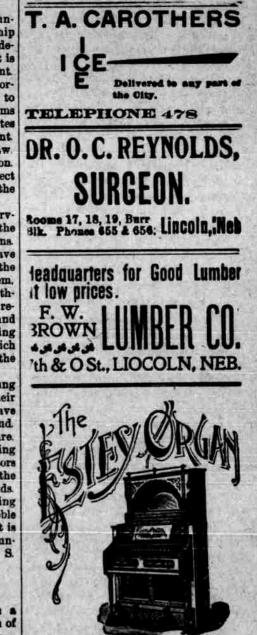
ice, and upon its success depends the perpetuity of American institutions. The people are realizing that they have merely the form of power, whereas the substance has been taken from them, and if there be no means proposed within the constitution affording them recago, making a fight for the Chicago lief, revolution cannot be averted, and to avert revolution by inaugurating made the fight for the purpose of those reforms in time is a duty which shall appeal to the thoughtful and the

"We are sending forth our young men to fight in foreign lands for their country. Let us see to it that they have win, then good politics, to say nothing a country of which they can be proud. Let's think and see things as they are. stand faithfully by the Chicago plat- Do not let us be led astray into making form and help the party carry out its the mistakes of Fourth of July orators who believe that everything is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Let us not be led into error by closing our eyes to these facts. It is a noble thing to die for one's country, but it is a nobler thing to help make one's country worth dying for."-Charles S. Aiken in September Ainslee's.

## A Progressive Mayor.

Mayor Snow of Oakland. Cal., in a recent message said on the question of municipal ownership of waterworks:

The piping of the city and the ownership of a water supply are only possible through an issue of bonds. These bonds, however, will never be a burden if intelligently disposed of, as the funds are required for the plant. The income from water rates will be sufficient to redeem the water bonds as they mature. and also to pay the interest thereon. though these rates be reduced 75 per cent from the present schedule charges. That is to say, if a supply of water for the city be so provided to the users as to insure the sale of it when piped to the property of the householder, then the ratepayer who is now called upon to pay \$4 per month for water will be charged \$1 per month for the same service, and the net income so derived will pay the interest on the water bonds issued and provide also for the annual redemption of one-fortieth. The cost of water pipe has recently ad-vanced beyond precedent. If upon in-vestigation it is c ncluded that this cost may soon be lowered, then common business prudence suggests that the inover the land men are rallying to our vestigation of the water supply of the must have a political party with sufficient de of standing for the right, conscious of standards who fought us in '96 and county go on as you have commenced



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