

ployes of the national government. Powerless as the people would undoubtedly be to rectify evils imposed by the misconduct of an administration supported by such an army of adherents, it appears that in avoiding one difficulty Mr. Bryan has fallen into another almost as serious. He proposes that there shall be, for continental America, forty-eight railway systems, each confined by state or territorial boundaries. Does he think that the general boards he proposes could defeat the consequences of state jealousies and divergent state interests? Breaking of bulk and transfer of freight from car to car are costly impediments to interstate transportation, but exceedingly profitable to the communities who are thus enabled to impose an effective tax upon traffic that would otherwise pass uninterrupted and toll-less through their limits. Would it not seem profitable to many state legislatures to create conditions that would make trans-shipment at state points necessary? Again interstate railways must be constructed for the broad purposes of interstate commerce and not with the narrow view of state and local interests. How long would the Pacific coast have waited for railway connections with the east if Arizona and Nevada and New Mexico had been relied upon for the outlay required for the links of the through line which lie within their respective borders? Would Pennsylvania have built a line to connect Pittsburg with lines extending to Baltimore and divert traffic from Philadelphia? Would Missouri have connected Kansas City with lines leading to Chicago at the expense of Saint Louis?—Railway Age.

State or National Ownership.

Mr. Bryan's conclusion that public services should be owned and managed by the public, places him in line with the progressive democrats that have seen the absurdity of permitting a public service to be operated for private profit with the expectation that the interests of the public will be made paramount to the profits of the private owners, but his opinion that to avoid centralization of power the railways should be owned and managed by the several states is a detail of method that he must soon come to realize is wholly impracticable.

The whole tendency in railway management has been and is toward consolidation. That the public has benefited by the consolidation of the small and weak lines into the large systems, hardly needs demonstration. With consolidation has come a vast improvement in service. The traveler may journey for thousands of miles over the same railway company's tracks without change of cars or delays. The inconvenience that would follow should the management change at each state line is obvious. Before the era of centralization, the traveler going any great distance was obliged to change cars every hundred miles or so, with long waits and great inconvenience.

At the present time rival railway companies arrange their time schedules to avoid making connections at junction points, to the inconvenience of the public. If the railways of the country should be placed under the management of the general government, all this confusion could be

Not Hungry

when you should be means disordered nerves, which, will lead to nervous prostration. Dr. Miles' Nervine is guaranteed to benefit you or money refunded. Book on nerves sent free.

DR. MILES' MEDICAL CO., Elkhart, Ind.

avoided. But to place the management of the railways in the hands of the several states would be retrogressive and lead to a species of chaos. The objections to state ownership and management are vital. Under ownership by the general government the states could build, own and operate purely local lines, in the event there should be communities needing railway service that the federal lines did not reach, but it would be essential that the great systems—the through lines and their connections—should be operated by a single management to avoid confusion.

The fear that public ownership would vest in the federal government vast power of a political nature is not unwarranted. Without a strict merit law public ownership would permit the creation of a powerful political machine, but it is to be assumed that when the American people undertake public ownership of the railways they will provide against the danger of turning their operation over to the spoils politicians. There is not the slightest reason that the men who now manage the railways for their private owners should not manage them for the public.

Why such fear of centralization of power? The power now exists. Would it not be better to have it placed in the possession of the representatives of the people than to remain in the keeping of the Rockefellers, Goulds and Morgans? The railway postal service, which at one time was given over to the spoils politicians, has been entirely divorced from politics. Instead of providing for a strict merit law, would it not have been the height of folly for the general government to have abdicated its power and turned the postal service over to the several states to avoid centralization of power?—Milwaukee, Wis., Daily News.

A Voice From The Past.

We made the point last week that, no matter what Mr. Bryan may have been in the past, he had by his declaration in favor of state ownership of railroads and federal ownership of telegraph lines, ceased to be a democrat. There were not many corporations in Jefferson's day, but there were some. At that time it was also proposed that the government should control them more directly, and so a bill was once sent to the senate from the house providing for the federal incorporation of a certain copper mining company. It is interesting to recall that the mines were known as "Roosevelt's copper mines," and that they were in New Jersey. Concerning the plan to incorporate the concern by giving it a federal charter, Mr. Jefferson, who was then president, wrote in 1808 to T. J. Randolph thus:

"The senate received yesterday a bill from the representatives incorporating a company for Roosevelt's copper mines in Jersey. This is under the sweeping clause of the constitution, and supported by the following pedigree of necessities: Congresses are authorized to defend the country; ships are necessary for that defense; copper is necessary for ships; mines are necessary to produce copper; companies are necessary to work mines; and this is the house that Jack built."

Of course, Mr. Bryan does not propose that the federal government shall incorporate a telegraph company; what he demands is that it shall buy out the companies already in possession, or build lines, and that in either case it shall be the owner. But in this case, as well as in the case referred to by Jefferson, there would be centralization of an extraordinary kind. We are not arguing against Mr. Bryan's proposition, but simply

pointing out its extremely un-democratic and un-Jeffersonian character.

The same thing is true of his scheme for state ownership of railroads. That is also a very foolish proposition. The Lake Shore road, for instance, which is now owned by one company, and is operated as a unit, would, under the Bryan plan, be owned by the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and because of this divided ownership, its operation as a unit would be practically impossible. New York could not compel an engineer hired by it to run his train beyond its own boundary, and Pennsylvania would be under no obligation to permit such engineer to do so. If he did travel beyond the New York line, which state would pay him—the one hiring him, or the one in whose territory he made his run? If the states owned the railroads, they would also own their rolling stock, and the earnings of that rolling stock in other states would have to be accounted for to the owning state. If through interstate commerce were to be maintained at all, we should have such a complicated system of accounts among the various states as the world has never seen. The only possible alternative to private ownership is federal ownership or control. In the nature of things, the states could not deal with the subject.

But considering it from its political point of view, its un-democratic character must be apparent to all who know anything of democratic principle. Think of the power that our governments, state and national, would have if they controlled both the railroads and the telegraph. In Indiana we should have thousand of new officeholders—engineers, firemen, brakemen, conductors, section men, clerks, managers and superintendents. Such a political machine could—and would—be built up as the world has never seen. The cost of administering our local governments would be increased many fold. We should lose all the taxes that we now get from the railroad and telegraph companies. There would be discrimination in fares and freights to political favorites, and one shudders to think of the proportions that the pass evil would assume.

The moment the democratic party should adopt such a policy, it would cease to be democratic. It may continue to exist as an organization, may even show great vigor and vitality, but it will not be the democratic party which the nation has known for more than a century. Here is democracy as defined by Thomas Jefferson in his first inaugural:

"Still one thing more, fellow-citizens, a wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them free to regulate their own pursuit of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities."

And as if almost foreseeing the time when men should run to the government for protection against abuses and for the cure of undoubted evils. Mr. Jefferson wrote thus to a friend:

"It has been said that our governments, both federal and particular, want energy; that it is difficult to restrain both individuals and states from committing wrong. This is true and it is an inconvenience. On the other hand, that energy which absolute governments derive from an armed force, which is the effect of the bayonet constantly held at the breast of every citizen, and which resembles very much the stillness of the grave, must be admitted also to have its inconveniences. We weigh the two together and like best to submit to the former. Compare the number of wrongs committed with im-

punity by citizens among us, with those committed by the sovereigns in other countries, and the last will be found most numerous, most oppressive on the mind, and most degrading of the dignity of man."

We should be careful lest we allow present abuses to drive us to the extremity of changing the nature of our government even for the sake of the better coping with them. We may here, as in so many other cases, safely appeal to the wisdom of the fathers. If Jefferson was a democrat Bryan is not.—Indianapolis, Ind., News.

State Ownership of Railroads.

Mr. Bryan has come out in favor of government ownership of railroads. This is not surprising in a politician whose tendencies have always been in the direction of socialism. Mr. Bryan says that he has hitherto refused to take a position on this subject for two reasons; one was that as a candidate of his party in two campaigns, he did not think it was right for him to take a stand on a subject on which the party had not declared itself; and the other was that until recently he had himself not given the subject much study.

Now that Mr. Bryan is free from the responsibilities of party leadership and has given the subject of the government ownership of railroads study, what is the result of his investigation? He is not in favor of government ownership, but of ownership by state governments, not by the federal government. He fears the concentration of private control of the railroads which has gone on through the process of consolidation after consolidation, but he also fears the results of the concentration of government control that would result from ownership of the railroads by the United States. In order to get rid of the evil of control of the railroads of the country concentrated in a few private individuals, he would have the railroads owned by the people, and in order to get rid of the danger of the railroads concentrated in the federal government, he would have them owned by the separate states.

It would appear to us that Mr. Bryan's study on this subject has been to little purpose. It is possible that

Subscribers' Advertising Department

A little thought will convince that this department of The Commoner offers superior advantages to those who desire to secure publicity. Only Commoner-subscribers are allowed to use it, and only responsible articles are allowed to be advertised. Confidence in the advertising management will explain in large measure why advertising in The Commoner is profitable. The manager is in receipt of many letters from advertisers who have used this department with profit. The rate is the lowest made in this publication—6 cents per word per insertion, payable in advance. Address all orders to The Commoner, Lincoln, Nebraska.

YOU COULD SELL OLD LINE LIFE INSURANCE if you knew how. We teach the art free of charge and pay you for your time. Desirable contracts awaiting special and general agents for the states of Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas. Address L. care of Commoner

WATER PROBLEM SOLVED. MACHINE for Domestic Well-making, cheapest by half, most practical of any. Catalogue free. Koger & Sons, Mooresburg, Tenn.

WANTED—GENERAL SALESMEN ON recently patented well specialties of great merit. \$20.00 a week and expenses. Write for particulars. Hills & Ross Co., Medina, Wis.

FOR SALE, THREE SMALL FARMS IN GOOD farm land and stock locality. Bargains. Correspondence solicited. A. D. Gardner, Paragould, Arkansas.

FOR SALE:—A 50 BARREL FLOUR MILL up to date machinery. Steam power, in a good wheat country, at a bargain. Comstock & Company, Real Estate, Cleveland, Wash.