

704,280. The late fusion administration reduced the stated debt \$677,093 in four years, while in three years of republican administration the state debt has been increased \$535,729. We hereby pledge our candidates to a policy of strict economy in public expenditures.

"We demand that the next legislature shall enact a law which shall effectually insure to all persons, associations and corporations equal shipping and elevator site privileges on all railroads in this state.

"We demand that steps shall be taken to revive the operation of the maximum freight law by suitable proceedings in court if that can be done, or in lieu thereof that legislation shall be enacted to regulate and reduce the prevailing high freight rates."

Cemetery Sold for \$50.

Sheriff Miles had the unique distinction of being the auctioneer for the sale of a cemetery. It was the Rose burying ground, on the south side of Ludlow street, that the sheriff was called upon to dispose of to the highest bidder, and it was bought by J. C. Hinckley, a lawyer, for \$50. The sale was merely to perfect title.

The property was purchased June 30, 1798, by Peter Rose and set apart as a burying ground for his relatives and their descendants. Nearly five years ago all of the Philadelphia families bearing the name of Rose decided to abolish the burying ground, and this sale was the first step in that direction.—Philadelphia Telegram to the St. Louis Republic.

Does Mr. Bryan Mean to be Mischievous?

There have been times when we have regarded Mr. William J. Bryan as an honest politician. We have been inclined now and then to credit him with a sincerity carried to inconvenient excess. We have seen in him a fanatic rather than a hypocrite and a trickster. We have, therefore, described his influence as maleficent, rather than malicious or malignant. On more than one occasion in the past he has been obviously a mischief-maker, but it was by no means equally clear that he meant to be mischievous. In view, however, of one of the statements issued by him at Lincoln, Nebraska—a statement purporting to explain why he should support Parker and Davis—it is scarcely possible any longer to acquit Mr. William J. Bryan of a deliberate design to injure the democratic nominee. He begins, indeed, with a show of magnanimity, by setting forth four reasons for deeming the democratic ticket superior to the republican. It will be observed that three of these so-called reasons are sham reasons, because they do not refer to matters in which the American people seem deeply concerned at this time. Mr. Bryan applauds, for instance, the democratic declaration in favor of reducing the standing army. He commends, also, the pronouncement against the retention under the American flag of transmarine dependencies in the status of colonies. He asserts, in the third place, that the platform and nominee of the democracy stand for peace and arbitration, as against bluster, force and conquest, personified in the republican standard bearer.

Now it must be obvious to Mr. Bryan, as it is to any keen-sighted man, that, with reference to none of these three matters are party lines sharply drawn, and that none of them is likely to figure in the foreground of the campaign. As regards, on the other hand, the injection of the race issue into American politics by the republican platform makers, this

would, undoubtedly, be recognized as of vital importance if the republican party was believed heartily to approve of the adoption, at Chicago of a force bill plank. That some of the longest heads in the St. Louis convention doubted whether the race issue was likely to play a great part in the campaign now begun is evident from the fact that no allusion to it was contained in the relatively compact, coherent, and well-considered platform reported by the subcommittee to the full committee on resolutions. The subcommittee evidently thought that the contest would turn mainly on the question of tariff revision; provided, of course, the attitude of the democratic party toward the gold standard, on the one hand, and toward the trusts on the other, should be definite and satisfactory.—Harper's Weekly.

Mr. Bryan's New Issue.

William J. Bryan is a wonderful man—in some respects. He can sway an audience with a mastery few men now living possess. He is a striking and dramatic figure, but when it comes to practical things he is as dreamy and illogical as a medieval philosopher. In the last issue of his Commoner he maps out a new line of action for the radical wing of the democracy. The most important step he advocates is government ownership of railroads.

Now government ownership is not dreamy or chimerical, as France and Germany have demonstrated. But Mr. Bryan is not satisfied with demonstrated systems. He wants each state to take possession of the mileage within its borders, and to run the roads as a state enterprise.

It does not require a practical railroad man to see what endless confusion would result from this. State lines make trouble enough now in the relations between the railroads and the authorities. Interstate business would be in a continual tangle, not only on questions of rates, but in the matter of operation. Through trains would be stopping at the state line to change crews and each state would be surrounded with a cordon of railroad division points. The compact and practical railroad systems of today would be split up into a checkerboard puzzle.

Mr. Bryan would have a board composed of representatives from the various states to deal with interstate traffic, as traffic between different systems is now dealt with. Instead of the long-headed traffic experts with autocratic power, who now settle the intricate rate problems with some degree of success, Mr. Bryan's plan would involve a board of political creation with warring interests, compelled to deal with and settle questions that baffle master minds of long experience.

Conceding Mr. Bryan's great ability as an orator and an editor, the nation must look to some other expert to solve the railroad problem.—Minneapolis Journal.

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 we may come to government ownership of the railroads in this country, but if we do, it will never be by ownership by the states. The railroads are no longer state institutions except in name. They have become trans-continental systems and must remain so. People will never put up with any system that shall divide these systems again into separate lines, thus destroying that unity which is so essential to rapid and cheap transportation. The country suffers already too much from conflicting laws passed by the various states in regard to corporations. The trust problem and the railroad problem can not be solved on lines of states' rights. They must be met by federal enactments, if at all. Mr. Bryan's idea that the railroads could be owned by the



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separate states, and then a board composed of representatives of the various states could deal with the joint traffic of the lines, is not a satisfactory solution of the difficulty presented by ownership of the railroads by various states.

We do not believe that government ownership is necessary in the United States, and we do not believe it will be favored by the people, if the railroads will themselves, in the interest of fair play and of public protection, favor a policy of the widest publicity of their affairs and of a reasonable government regulation of rates.—Wall Street Journal.

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