

Back to the People

At the banquet of the Iowa Democratic club, held at Des Moines on April 1, Mr. Bryan spoke on the subject, "Back to the People." Following is a synopsis of Mr. Bryan's remarks:

"Back to the people" is the phrase that best describes the tendency which is manifesting itself in the nation and in most of the states. For a period of years the tendency was toward corporate domination and the voice of the voter grew weaker and weaker in comparison with the influence of money. The tide has changed and we see evidences everywhere of a determination on the part of the masses to assert themselves in the management of parties and in the conduct of the government. Take, for instance, the agitation in the republican party in favor of primary laws. LaFollette made that the basis of his fight in Wisconsin, and he has won his fight against tremendous odds. A republican governor has taken up the matter in Illinois, and a republican governor is advocating the same reform in Iowa. In Minnesota the republican party is also committed to the primary system, and in some form this system is being endorsed by the republican party in other states. It is democratic in the broad sense in which democracy means the rule of the people. The primary system has been in force for years in most of the southern states, and the fact that it is now being adopted in the north is one of the best evidences that the slogan, 'Back to the people,' has caught the attention of the republicans as well as democrats.

Combat With Trusts

"Take another illustration. In many of the states an anti-trust movement is clearly discernible, with Kansas leading the way. A republican legislature in that state has defied the most notorious of our monopolies, the Standard Oil company, and a republican legislature, with the aid of a republican governor, have enacted a number of measures intended to put the people in control of their own affairs. The republican legislature of Kansas has gone so far as to provide for the establishment of a state oil refinery, a thing that a few years ago would have been denounced as socialistic had it been suggested by the democrats or populists. But even the republicans of Kansas have advanced to the point where they recognize that there is in the people a reserve power that can be invoked whenever necessary and which, when invoked, is sufficient for the people's protection. It is needless to say that the democrats have acted with the republicans of that state in the effort to break the grip of the Standard Oil company. Another illustration of this tendency to put the government back in the hands of the people is to be seen in the agitation in favor of legislation regulating railroad rates. For years the railroad magnates have dominated the state governments of many of the states, and have been in control of the federal government. During the last national campaign the question of railroad legislation was scarcely discussed. While the democrats declared in favor of railroad regulation, the issue was not made prominent in the campaign and the republicans did not discuss it at all. But after the election the president called attention to the need of a law vesting in public officials the power to determine and prescribe railroad rates. His recommendation at once revealed a much stronger senti-

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ment in favor of this proposition than the casual observer would have suspected. Encouraged by the president's attitude, a number of republicans took up the fight and the democrats, of course, threw their strength with them. The railroads at first tried to defeat the movement by preparing an ineffective measure, but the sentiment was too strong to be thus turned aside, and the house passed a bill which, while it did not go far enough, gave promise of relief. The senate has for the time being stopped this movement, and because of the method of its selection and the length of the senatorial term, may for a time delay it, but only for a time. A number of states, following in the wake of congress, have seriously taken up the railroad question, and there is more discussion today of the right of the people to control the corporations created by law than there has been before for many years. Public sentiment is crystallizing in favor of the proposition that the people have a right to have what they want in government, and this, I need not tell you, is the democratic position. To deny either the capacity of the people for self-government, or the right of the people to regulate their own affairs and to deal with all questions that concern them, is treason to our theory of government, and this treason is about to be rebuked by a revival of faith in the people.

The New Tendency.

"This tendency to restore to the people their lost rights and to put them in possession of their own affairs is not going to stop with the trust question or with the railroad question. It will extend to every issue. When applied to the tariff question, it will put an end to the system that has been in vogue for a quarter of a century under which the manufacturers have been permitted to write the schedules and determine the amount of the collections that they can take from the people through the operation of high tariff laws. The application of this principle will bring together the capitalist and the laborer by legislation which will give to the laboring man the protection which he has so long needed and compel the recognition of his rights as superior to the claims of capital. It is forty years since Lincoln declared in one of his messages that labor was prior to and more important than capital, a principle which has since been so often ignored. But the conflict between human rights and the demands of organized wealth can only be settled finally by a recognition of the superiority of the claims of men over the claims of money. Even the financial question which has not only been overshadowed by the question of monopoly, but has lessened in importance by the increased volume of money—this question will also feel the impulse of the movement 'back to the people.' The doctrine that a few financiers can safely be permitted to dictate the financial policy of the nation will be overthrown with the overthrow of the doctrine that railroad magnates can safely be allowed to control the traffic of the nation, or trust magnates the industries of the country.

"The democratic position is being vindicated, and the democrats face the future with hope and courage. The last election proved the folly of the attempt to make the democratic party a conservative party, or a competitor with the republican party for the favor of the trusts and syndicates. The aggressive and progressive element—the radical element, if you please, of the democratic party is again in control of the party. The democratic party is again united, and it is united upon a basis of a forward movement. There will be no more suggestion of retreat, and while the democratic party hav-

ing emerged from the valley of the shadow of death, is preparing for an attack all along the line, the republican party is just entering upon a struggle which will shake it to the foundations. As today organized the republican party is under the control of the corporations. The reform element in the party is under the control of the corporations. The reform element in the party is protesting and demanding that this leadership shall be overthrown. However much democrats may wish to see the reform element in the republican party successful in its efforts to control the party, it is inevitable that the triumph of the reform element must come through convulsions in the republican party as the reform came through a convulsion in the democratic party. But out of this convulsion will come good; reform can come in no other way. Just as the flood is increased by the height of the dam, so are the difficulties of the party increased by the obstructions which are raised to reform, but reform comes at last. The timid republicans will be afraid to fight for fear of disturbing the harmony of the party, just as timid democrats were afraid that the harmony of the democratic party would be disturbed. But there will appear courageous spirits in the republican party who, seeing the necessity for a reorganization of their party, will risk their political lives to secure this reorganization, and in risking their lives they will win a place in history.

Democracy Stronger Than Ever

"The democratic party has lost in three campaigns and the majority has increased, and yet the party is stronger today than it has been at any time since the polls closed in 1892, because it stands upon solid ground, and be-

cause events have been proving the correctness of the position taken by it. The democrats who have been keeping the faith have no doubt of the final triumph of their principles. The forces that are behind the truth are as irresistible and as constantly at work as the forces of nature which bring forth the harvest from the seed that is sown, and sustained by faith in the triumph of their cause the democrats are ready for the fight of 1908. Wherever in any state republican reformers propose legislation in the interests of the people, they will receive democratic support, and the democrats will thus prove the sincerity of their purpose. If through republican initiative reforms are accomplished, democrats will share in the honor of securing those reforms, and if republicans fail to secure reforms the efforts made will furnish an education of which the democrats can take advantage in their next appeal to the voters."

INFORMATION WANTED

F. D. Britt, Roby, Texas, is anxious to secure information concerning the whereabouts of his brother, J. S. Britt, a post commissary sergeant who was discharged in April, 1903, at some post in Wyoming after service in the Philippines. Anyone able to give the information desired should address F. D. Britt at Roby, Texas.

BOOK WANTED

Gar Borden, of Greenup, Ill., wants to know where he can get a book entitled "The Wild Riders," being an account of the First Kentucky Cavalry, which was commanded by Colonel Wolford. Anyone able to give the desired information is requested to address Mr. Borden direct.

A New Book

By William J. Bryan, Entitled

Under Other Flags

Travels, Speeches, Lectures.

SINCE Mr. Bryan's European tour a year ago he has been besieged by requests for copies of letters describing his travels abroad. These letters together with a number of his lectures and other public addresses, have been gathered together and published in book form. The European letters contain Mr. Bryan's account of what he saw and learned while in Europe, and present interesting views of Ireland, England, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Holland, Belgium, and the Netherlands, together with a description of his visits with Count Tolstoy and Pope Leo. In this volume Mr. Bryan writes entertainingly of the "Birth of the Cuban Republic." He also included his lectures on "A Conquering Nation," and "The Value of an Ideal."

Other articles in the volume are "The attraction of Farming," written for the Saturday Evening Post; "Peace," the address delivered at the Holland Society dinner in 1904; "Naboth's Vineyard," the address at the grave of Philo Sherman Bennett; Democracy's Appeal to Culture, address before the Alumni Association of Syracuse University; and an account of his recent trip to the Grand Canyon entitled "Wonders of the West." The book is illustrated, well printed on good paper and substantially bound.

One of the features of "Under Other Flags" is the "Notes on Europe," written after his return from abroad, and giving in brief form a resume of the many interesting things he saw.

The sale of *Under Other Flags* has been very gratifying to the author. Although the first edition appeared in December the fifth edition is now on the press. The volume of sales increases from day to day. Agents find the book an easy seller and order them in lots of from 25 to 100.

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