

The Commoner.

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The Passing of Plutocracy

Every one of intelligence and heart is, to some extent, a reformer. It is a dull mind that does not recognize the possibility of improving conditions; and, it is a hard heart that, knowing of the possibility, does not desire improvement. Reformers differ as to the relative importance of the many reforms proposed; it is the desire of *The Commoner* to concentrate the attention of reformers upon the reforms within reach. Reformers differ, too, in temperature; some are just above freezing, others are at boiling point—*The Commoner's* aim is to raise the temperature. Reformers are apt to become discouraged. Because they see clearly that abuses exist they wonder why others do not see; because they have found what they regard as a remedy they wonder why all do not accept it.

The Commoner offers a word of encouragement to reformers—God is still on his throne and the world moves forward. Monarchy has run its course—monarchs are now largely figure-heads, legal fictions, with but little power to help or hinder progress. Aristocracy is dying—it is losing all over the world. Plutocracy is passing—its power to coerce is weakened year by year.

Among the influences at work for the overthrow of plutocracy, four may be mentioned as the most important:

First—The increase in the supply of money. Just as the dark ages receded before the increased volume of money that followed the discovery of America, so the wonderful discoveries of gold since 1890 are releasing the disposition of debts that accumulated to the point of bondage during the period of falling prices, beginning in the early seventies. Rising prices have brought prosperity to the masses, and with easier times comes greater independence. This independence on the part of the voter is manifesting itself in an increasing protest against plutocracy.

But there are three fundamental influences at work in the world—each one of them a foe to plutocracy—and the three together give assurance of the complete rout of the reign of the dollar.

First—The spread of intelligence. The world is moving—all the nations joining in the march—toward universal education. As the plutocracy is an indefensible system it can not hope to live when ignorance is banished.

Second—The world is moving toward popular government—here, too, a like tendency is to be observed in all nations. And popular government is the natural opponent to plutocracy—there is external enmity between them.

Third—The world is growing better; moral standards are rising; ethical rules are being applied—and the conscience condemns plutocracy.

Let those take heart who fight for better things; let those who have been indifferent begin to fight. Every one can help some—no one can tell how much until he tries. It is time to try.

ALDRICH DEMOCRACY

The senate democrats have decided to put an Aldrich democrat in charge of the organization in that body. Senator Martin, of Virginia, voted eighteen times with Senator Aldrich, more than any other democrat save the two from Louisiana, and only one of them remains. He is to the democratic party what Aldrich was to his party and his selection was the first unfortunate step of this session. The chief argument in his favor was seniority, but this ought not to have been given weight—it

did not have weight with most of his supporters. Most of those who voted for him voted for him because they are themselves reactionary and are not in sympathy with the progressive legislation now demanded by both democrats and republicans. A few new members were misled and may repudiate his leadership when the tariff fight comes on.

It is a matter of congratulation that nearly all the new men voted against Martin—O'Gorman of New York, Martine of New Jersey and Johnson of Maine, our three eastern democrats among them. This is powerfully significant—it indicates a progressive triumph two years hence when some of the Martin men will have been retired by an indignant constituency. Seniority may be all right in the army but in a representative government the man fresh from the people speaks with even more authority than the one who represents ideas that have been repudiated at the polls. Mr. Martin stands for the kind of democracy that is passing. Senators Chamberlain, Davis, Gore, Hitchcock, Johnson of Maine, Kern, Lea, Martine, Myers, Newlands, O'Gorman, Owen, Pomerene, Reed, Smith of South Carolina and Stone, stand for the policies that are growing.

Hail to the brave band who defied pressure and stood for a democracy that makes the peoples' interests the first consideration. May their like increase.

CLARK TO THE FRONT

Champ Clark, speaker of the house, now occupies a position at the very front of the stage. He is the second man in authority in the government and he both looks and acts the part. His speech was admirable. It was short, clear, concise and courageous. He represents the pro-

gressive spirit of the party and the country and the program outlined by him will meet with hearty approval. The beginning is auspicious: Now for the fulfillment of the party pledges.

TOM L. JOHNSON

An Associated Press dispatch, under date of Cleveland, O., April 10, carried sorrow into many American homes, saying: "Tom L. Johnson, twice congressman from the Twenty-first Ohio district, four times mayor of Cleveland, champion of 3-cent street railway fares and leading advocate of the single tax theories of the late Henry George, died here at 8:45 p. m., after a long illness. He was fifty-seven years old."

Tom L. Johnson rendered faithful service to the people. Men in every walk of life will keenly regret his death and his career will serve as inspiration to rising generations.

WILSON'S BUGLE CALL

Governor Wilson has already secured the ratification of the income tax amendment in the New Jersey house, and he has sent a second message to the republican senate urging that body to reconsider the matter and ratify. Success to him; he is a governor who recognizes the responsibilities of his position.

SYNONYMS

"The New York Sun says Champ Clark's real name is W. J. Bryan. 'When you see it in the Sun it's so.'"—Dubuque (Iowa) Telegraph-Herald.

But even if that were the synonym it is nearly as good as "Ananias" which is the synonym sometimes used for the New York Sun.

CONTENTS

THE PASSING OF PLUTOCRACY
ALDRICH DEMOCRACY
SENATOR O'GORMAN
THE LORIMER FUND
THE CATHOLIC IN PUBLIC LIFE
MR. BRYAN IN THE PRESS DISPATCHES
INCOME TAX IN NEW JERSEY
MR. BRYAN VS. SPECIAL INTERESTS—
RICHARD L. METCALFE'S ADDRESS
PRACTICAL TARIFF TALKS
CURRENT TOPICS
HOME DEPARTMENT
WHETHER COMMON OR NOT
NEWS OF THE WEEK
WASHINGTON NEWS