

HOW POPULISM GROWS

Enormous Majorities in Illinois for Populist Principles—Referendum and Election of Senators by the People

Endorsed

The leading dailies of Chicago have been declaring lately that populism is dead—that it has passed away as the know-nothing craze, and other foolish propositions did which for a time attracted the attention of the people. If they would read the election returns from their own state they would find out that populism is marching onward, as it were, with seven league boots. They, no doubt, have read those returns, but they are so accustomed to lying that they would not feel comfortable if they did not publish one or two unvarnished falsehoods every day.

The people of Illinois last election voted on the questions: Whether the state legislature should be advised to secure to the people the right of initiating particular legislation in state affairs, and the right of approving or rejecting legislative enactments by process of the referendum; whether the legislature should be advised to secure to cities and towns the same right of initiative and referendum; and whether United States senators should be elected by popular vote. The vote throughout the state on these questions was as follows:

State initiative and referendum, yes, 428,469; no, 87,654.

Local initiative and referendum, yes, 390,972; no, 83,377.

Election of senators by popular vote, yes, 451,319; no, 76,976.

Presumably all these proposals were carried by overwhelming majorities; but the number of persons who went to the polls, as shown by the vote for state treasurer, was 859,975, and it has been decided by the state board of canvassers that a majority of this total vote must be shown to carry any one of the above proposals. The only one of the questions to be carried, therefore, is that relating to the election of United States senators by popular vote. The Illinois legislature is thus urged to do what it can to bring about an amendment of the federal constitution to this effect.

The strange fact remains that while the people of Illinois are overwhelmingly in favor of populist principles they continue to keep in power a party that is energetically working the whole year round to keep those principles from being enacted into law. Illinois has a republican legislature and the indications are that it will be under control of Lorimer, the vilest political boss west of Quay's baitwick. Of course none of these things for which the people have voted will they get. After a while perhaps they will learn enough to vote for the party that advocates them instead of the party that repudiates them.

IRRECONCILABLE

The Two Elements of Democracy—Safety of Republic Lies With Peoples Party

Immediately after election the editor of the Gouverneur (N. Y.) Free Press asked J. S. Corbin, the liberal democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, to give his opinion as to why the republican party won in New York. Mr. Corbin replied:

Editor Free Press: Responding to your request I will say that the late election in this state was lost to the democrats because it came to be understood in all that tremendous region known as "above the Bronx" that the party was hopelessly in control of the disloyal element which has brought defeat in two national elections. In that region the revolt against Hillism was universal and in Hill's own county was so pronounced as to amount to a personal condemnation of the man and his methods by his immediate neighbors. Smith M. Weed, a democrat by the way just as disloyal as Hill, saw his opportunity to pay off his old grudge in Clinton county, and he paid it with compound usury added. McGuire, whom I heard introduce Bryan to a Syracuse audience with apologetic grimace and Hibernian pretense of regularity, found himself seated on a cake of ice after the wires were first warmed up with the news from New York city. The day of his damnation for recreancy had come.

Another weakness existed in the gubernatorial candidate, Coler. He was a known tool of corporate greed, a Croesus made by Wall street methods and withal, was believed to be made of clay not yet baked to hardness—a dilettante statesman who would wax his mustache if the state were falling to ruin. His only recommendation was the negative virtue of not having stolen appreciably when comptroller of his native city. He was not of the stuff that crusaders are

made and if the state is ever rescued, some man with a conscience and a will behind it must carry the flag.

One thing is apparent, the reorganizers have failed miserably. They had full control; they had money galore; they had the party press; they had the machine, such as it was. They spent their money between the Battery and the Bronx upon those whom Hearst had gathered with red fire and the seductive oratory of politicians ready to sacrifice loyalty for place. The one unflinching democrat was not invited and the great questions of national import were not discussed. The rabble gathered to roar of bursting bomb and splutter of hissing skyrocket. It was a corraling of the submerged by the plutocrat element in the party. And the tremendous plurality which followed was the result of prodigal purchase and the bat-like following of the voters who thought Andrew Jackson was on the ticket. It was a procession made up of the depraved and the ignorant with the spoilsmen sandwiched between them and the blaring brass bands.

Another fact as apparent as if painted with cyclopean brush on the steep sides of Monadnock is, that there are two irreconcilable elements in the party now, henceforth and forever. There must be a new alignment or all practical opposition to republican dominance will be as futile as trying to stop a runaway horse with a ping-pong fence of mosquito netting. Plutocracy and democracy will not mix. The spasmodic Hearst, who is a decent democrat when at his desk and a plutocrat when ten blocks further down Broadway, is not the brand of alkali which will make the water and oil in the party coalesce. Indeed, such a result is not desirable. There is too much soap in politics already.

The safety of the republic now lies with the people's party. The innoxious desuetude has passed out. If decency cannot win, let no one masquerading under the livery of Jefferson win. The only decent democrats on the ticket won out this year, Cuneen always loyal to Bryan and sobriety; Gray untainted with Elmira methods. There is no room for two parties in this state or the nation, that fight under different names, but are one in spirit and purpose. Republicanism and plutocratic democracy are twin brothers born of the same mother—greed. One can do the business better than two as it has done it for forty years, and the trust will reign, the pension roll expand, the railway absorb and the dollar go undisturbed in its triumph over man. But with one party, the floater will stand forlorn in blocks of five upon the street corner waiting for a competing bid and his price will shrivel to the compass of a drink of whisky or a free ride in a livery wagon. That will be something gained, at least. J. S. CORBIN, Gouverneur, N. Y.

The Foolishest Thing

"Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is overproduction which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom:—no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages."—John Ruskin, "Fors Clavigera," Vol. I., page 59; (Merrill & Baker, N. Y.).

The McMillan Fur & Wool Co. have placed their circular of December 1 on file at our office for reference. This house was established a quarter of a century ago, and on account of their extensive business, they are in a position to pay high prices. Shippers find their dealings with them very satisfactory.

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