

Trusts—The Cause and Cure**TRUSTS A NECESSITY.**

Editor Independent: I take quite an interest in many articles in your paper and notice the wonderful difference of opinion expressed. I like Congressman Stark's idea of primary nominations, but I wonder whether people would turn out to such or would only a few who make politics their business still manipulate as has been the case in the past? There must of necessity be a "machine," the organization, which consists of state, county and precinct committees. These are generally supposed to do about all the work and my observation has taught me that precinct primaries are attended by them and a few who have axes to grind. But under our present system of telephones and rural mail it might be possible for each county chairman to get an expression over these routes by giving a few days' notice, but to get voters to attend a primary election to simply choose between two or more neighbors as delegates to a county convention it requires something very important and as a usual thing will result about as the present plan has.

I also notice many of your writers are giving trusts fits and I wonder how they are going to stop them without checking all advance in commercial evolution. In my opinion trusts are a necessity. No single person can carry on great enterprises. It requires combined effort. Take the oil trust: when coal oil first came into use it cost 50 cents per gallon; now it costs 12½ cents. How was this done? First, by competition in opening oil wells; second, by combining capital to still increase production; third, by merging many interests and piping the oil at less rates than railroads would deliver it. Each of these conditions made it possible for cheap oil and larger profits. Why curse Rockefeller for getting rich when at the same time he has lessened the cost of oil 75 per cent. I love to see any man make money when at the same time he is saving others money. I believe, however, that human nature is selfish and that Rockefeller is not cheapening oil as he might for, if reports are true, he is getting very rich.

How would it do for Uncle Sam to say, "Now, Rocky, this oil is a God-given comfort to all mankind, therefore, I will put a graduated income tax on you until your profits are large enough for any man, after which you can take your choice; cheapen your oil to the people or give the surplus to me and I'll use it in lightening their burden of taxation."

I see the old tariff bone is being gnawed a good deal in your columns. The populist party cannot afford to try to take that bone from those two "old dogs." It's dry gnawing anyway.

The people of this country are for tariff and no political party can live unless it advocates some tariff. What the populists should do is to advocate a just tariff exempting nothing we can produce, let it be raw or manufactured material. It is the inequalities by privileges given under the law and not the law that is wrong.

W. C. STARKEY.

Violet, Neb.

(Mr. Starkey evidently burns pine-knots or candles for lighting purposes—or has a "pull" with the oil trust—for we cannot get kerosene at 12½ cents a gallon in Lincoln; 19 cents in five-gallon lots is the best we can do. Mr. Starkey overlooks the fact although kerosene is cheaper now than it was in the days when it was distilled from coal, or before the art of refining the petroleum was developed, yet for the past several years the price has been steadily creeping up in defiance of all known laws of price when controlled by competition. There is no such economy of production as Mr. Starkey believes—it is economy of transportation, a better rate than anyone else can get. There are hundreds of dismantled refineries which could refine oil as cheaply as Rockefeller can—but they can't get it to market. Rockefeller did not reduce the price of oil 75 per cent—he was not omnipotent then and couldn't prevent its going down. But today he is showing the world the spectacle of increased production and increased price, with no new use to indicate an abnormal increase in the demand.)

SOCIALISM.

The creator of the trust is special privilege. This may come (1) from an act of the legislative body, such as a tariff, or statute excluding foreign competition; (2) freight discrimination or rebates in transportation of freights; (3) or "by the weight and force of money itself, or what is called

the power of capital; that is to say, the power which money, once obtained, has over the labor of the poor, so that the capitalist can take all its produce to himself, except the laborer's food." The privilege or prerogative, may have come from any one, from any two, or from the three things given here. The fault being in the prerogative of capital to accumulate to itself the most of the weight, which is created solely by labor, the remedy must come from a complete removal of the cause. We now have and always have had laws against illegal restraint of trade. These laws are not enforced, the executive power and the courts as well, allow to become practically obsolete. Outlawing men who take advantage of privileges granted them by law, custom and conditions, cannot be justified by reason. A law making it a crime for an individual, corporation, or an aggregation of corporations, to exploit labor; when this is but the natural and logical result of the system, cannot but prove futile.

The remedy means the taking away from capital the privilege of exploiting labor to any extent. In other words, a system whereby all wealth hereafter created, shall go exclusively to the laborers creating, or producing it. This means industrial revolution, which cannot come by temporizing with the present competitive system. It means the nationalizing of all industry, where each laborer shall have the privilege to work for all, and where the All (the nation) guarantees to him the full product of his toil. This means socialism.

JOHN EVERSON.

Alma, Neb.

ABOLISH CORPORATIONS.

Editor Independent: It appears to me that writers on trusts and their cure have failed to get at the root of the evil. To me it seems that the causes of trusts are laws creating private corporations and the privilege of alien ownership. Tariff duties, bounties, license, loaning of credits and private ownership of means of communication and transportation have wonderfully aided the growth of trusts but did not cause them. We must adopt drastic measures to curb them. Take away all private special privileges. This would effect a radical cure. Then if we would expect it to be permanent a sharply graduated income and legacy tax must be enacted and enforced.

E. W. FERGUSON, Jr.

Hartington, Neb.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP.

Editor Independent: I believe that there is only one remedy for preventing trusts and that is public ownership. The trusts and capitalists don't care a darn whether the democrat or republican party is in power. It delights them to see democratic and republican editors quarreling with each other, each one claiming to be the poor man's friend; but, reader, did you ever stop to think that perhaps many of these bullet-headed editors are paid to quarrel and rip in order to keep us blinded?

They never mention public ownership unless to say it would cause business stagnation and is impracticable. Perhaps it might cause a business stagnation to the Rockefellers, Morgans, Hills and many other fortunate possessors of numerous business talent, but is it not better to cause business stagnation among the few millionaires instead of the millions of ragged workers? Suppose Rockefeller and Morgan owned the postoffice; if they charged 25 cents to carry a letter we would have it to pay; but fortunately it is owned by the public and 2 cents does the work. Now, I ask if land, oil, coal and other public necessities were owned by the government why wouldn't it, like the post office, work like a charm for the struggling millions?

ALPHA L. NEELY.

Ogden, S. C.

Try one of Branch & Miller's special combinations of groceries as advertised in this issue. The Independent guarantees you will not regret it. All who have ordered express entire satisfaction.

Able Educators

Editor Independent: Like that other fellow and some millions of other fellows, if the truth were known, I am sorry I cannot send something substantial. I have been working steadily, but could not save anything, though I do not drink. Such papers as The Independent and Commoner should be supported for their educational methods if for nothing more. They should be patronized for their logical treatment of economic subjects

as being free from those technicalities which savor so much of Wall street slang, which is better adapted to the perusal of the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer, or some foot-of-his-class graduate of Yale or Princeton.

Experience is an impressive teacher. It will not be necessary to orate to any extent before the "masses" in the next presidential campaign about the existence of a coal monopoly. Three years ago they could not or would not believe that any such beastly thing existed. They also felt the pinch of the money trust during Cleveland's infamous administration, but the dupes refused to be convinced that the same malign influence was the prime factor in both cases. All honest men should work to save the country from any more panic breeding candidates who take the name democrat for the purpose of robbing the people. They are no better than the murderous brood whose object in life seems to be to torture to death a people struggling for the God-given right to liberty, and who facetiously call themselves republicans, the better to carry out a policy of plunder.

PHILLIP KELLY.

Danville, Ill.

Thinks He's All Right

Editor Independent: Please stop The Independent, as I don't think it will do me a dollar's worth of good. I don't think taking your paper will save this country, or the pops, or the democrats, as money will talk. There are too many fools in the world. They won't read anything but trash. Your paper is all right, but the right people don't read it. I don't need it, as I am with the reform party first, last and all the time.

J. W. ENIX.

Imperial, Neb.

(That's the same idea which produces so many mullet heads. After Lincoln freed the slaves, these mullet head republicans said, "I am all right; I don't need to know anything more about republicanism; I don't need to read; I have learned all there is to know." They were not mullet heads then, but they are now, simply because they failed to keep abreast of the times.

The fundamental principles of populism are eternally true and, like the tree, always young; but how to build government upon this solid foundation is a problem that cannot be worked out in a day, in a month, in a year—perhaps in a lifetime or longer. There is no such thing as standing still. The man who is not learning something new each day, is forgetting something. And the populist who thinks he has learned all there is to populism, and who quits reading, will some day wake up to find himself a genuine mullet head.—Ed. Ind.)

Physician, Avondale, Okla.: I am greatly interested in Captain Ashby's article on "Money and the Taxing Power." I hope it will be published in book form.

John Hansen, Suring, Wis.: I shall not renew. Your paper is very good for a "fuse" paper, but "fuse" don't go with me after this. I am fully able to appreciate your efforts and many ways in saying what you have to say—and it is no pleasant task for me to send you this notice. (No hard feelings against you, Bro. Hansen. People have a right to differ as to methods. Would you resent public ownership of the railroads if it came under a republican or democratic administration?)

Should be at It Now

Editor Independent: Well, Mr. Editor, I think fusion with the democrats is done with. I don't think the democrats are doing fair with us pops. I think they are too much on the hog order; they must have the best of everything and then we all get beat. I don't think there are ten populists in Valley county that will ever fuse with them again. I for one can't vote with them any more; neither will I vote with the republicans. There will be a bid landslides over to the socialists in Valley county, but I must see their platform before I can go with them; but one thing is certain, we must do something to bust the republican machine and we should be up and at it now.

J. O. SMITH.

Ord, Neb.

A Careful Survey

Editor Independent: Enclosed find 50 cents for subscription. I notice you have requested your subscribers to express their opinion on the change in the form of The Independent. I think it is decidedly more convenient. Now, Mr. Editor, I want to say something through The Independent that has never been said before.

Now, while you are traveling the national road of reform, cutting

bushes on both sides, it would be worse than folly to turn out of the plain wide populist road for a divided democratic party.

Let the reorganizers, Cleveland, Hill and Gorman, have full swing: I do hope one of them will be nominated for president, so we can see their overwhelming defeat and death.

They can't carry New York, and not exceeding a half dozen states all told. I see no way to get rid of them, only to let them go ahead to certain defeat.

Another thing, it is nonsense to think of accomplishing any change or reform while a majority of millionaires are in the senate, and so many parties in the field. These millionaire senators are big Masons whose secret obligations make them conveniently forget the promises they made to their constituents. To illustrate:

Some years ago I attended a public dinner given by the Masons on the 24th of June. They had imported a young brother from Louisville to make the opening address, after a short apology for his inexperience in addressing large audiences, he said: "We meet to celebrate a day, not the Fourth of July, but a greater day, a day in which Masonry had its origin." Of course that would stagger a Fourth of July patriot.

Again, for more than fifteen years an undoubted majority of the people and legislatures has petitioned for a change to elect United States senators by the people as congressmen are, twice at previous sessions the lower house has passed almost unanimously a bill to make the desired change, and as often have these millionaires received the bill in the senate and chucked it in a pigeon hole, to sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

Yet, while a candidate for the senate every one of them declared in favor of it. Now all this makes it plain that no change or reforms can be expected as long as they hold a majority in the senate. It makes no difference whether they are republicans or democrats, they are all one and the same when they get in the senate.

There never will be any reforms in government until the people elect a majority of senators of a different stripe and kind. Now, I want to go on and look over the road, and after making a careful survey of the whole route I now offer my report:

First—The government shall coin gold and silver at the present ratio as it has, and is now doing.

Second—The government shall issue all paper money without the intervention of any bank or banks.

Third—The government shall own and operate the telegraph and telephone system.

Fourth—The government shall own and operate the principal through lines of railroads, and acquire others necessary as may be.

Fifth—The government shall own and operate the principal coal mines.

Sixth—The government shall make said purchases at a fair valuation or by the right of eminent domain.

Seventh—The government shall stand pledged to increase the wages of all coal miners and railroad employees double what they now are.

Eighth—The government shall stand pledged to reduce freight and passenger rates one-half of what they now are. Thus ending all future strikes and coal famines, and thus distributing wealth more equally and justly.

Ninth—The government will save enough by thus getting rid of swindling bankers, and from telegraph and telephone service, and railroad extortion for carrying the mails, to pay in full for said purchases inside of fifteen years.

Tenth—We are in favor of an income tax and again demand that United States senators shall be elected by the people.

Now it is no use talking about a new name; that would only play into the hands of the enemy. The only way that these reforms can be accomplished is, for all the miners and all the railroad employees, farmers, and all other laborers, to unite on the above platform, to be known as the People's National Silver Party with Tom Johnson of Ohio for president and John Mitchell of the coal miners union for vice president; and with W. J. Bryan, Towne and Teller in the cabinet, then success would be certain.

But if two or more parties made a canvass against the reorganizers and republican party nothing will be accomplished, and a few fleeting years will see our liberties and boasted republic supplanted by a plutocratic dictatorial government.

When I call to mind the prophetic words of prophecy spoken by our martyred president, I am ready to exclaim, Oh, for a Lincoln, to lead us out of the wilderness.

L. S. FRYMIRE.

Frymire, Ky.