

INDEPENDENT VOTING

The legal name of the populist party in Nebraska is the people's independent party. When first organized its fiercest invectives were hurled at the partisan slave who, regardless of candidates or principles, always rallied to the cry of "vote 'er straight." It is beginning to be impressed on the minds of the best men everywhere that the hope of reform must rest more upon independent voting than on party organization. Two signal victories have been gained by the people during the last few weeks by independent voting—one in Chicago and one in Denver. Last winter another victory was gained over corporations and hoodlums in the Illinois legislature by the independent voting of men of all parties. The bill that made municipal ownership possible in that state was passed by the votes of populists, democrats, republicans and prohibitionists.

The populists of Nebraska have steadily adhered to this principle. They have always been willing as a party or as individuals, to work and vote for the best men—men advocating the principles in which they believed—whether the men were members of their own party or some other.

They have differed from the faction called middle-of-the-roaders. It seemed to the Nebraska populists that the idea that the party must always have a separate ticket in the field and "vote 'er straight," was adopting the most baneful thing in political life. Not only have populists held to the principle of independent voting, but a large majority of the democrats in the state have held and practiced the same views.

The fact is that the time has come when most of the democrats of Nebraska have abandoned that kind of democracy which is conducted by those who furnish the funds and puts out a platform loaded with cant, hypocrisy and promises that are never intended to be redeemed.

To make independent voting most effective the populist organization should be perfected in every state of the union. With two or three million of voters, well organized, who it is known will vote for no plutocrat or candidate who is opposed to the public ownership of transportation and communication and who constantly assert that the private ownership of these things means the private ownership of congress and the legislatures, will be a power almost equal to the two other parties. It will send disorganization into the ranks of rapacious capitalism and the worshipers of Mammon and finally end in their disintegration.

A recent copy of the Manila Times is almost filled with notices of the failing health of prominent Americans who have had the misfortune to be ordered there or have gone there of their own volition. Governor Taft has retired to the new "health resort" at Baguio, which has an elevation of several thousand feet. The vice governor has been ordered home as has also Prof. Behard Moses, and so it goes all the way through the columns of the paper. In addition to the soldiers who are constantly dying there the civil officers are perishing at frightful ratio. This whole Philippine business has been nothing but a damnable curse to these United States and the Filipinos alike. It is the punishment that follows the desertion of the principles upon which this government was founded.

WEST VIRGINIA

What the corrupt and imperialist brand of republicanism will do for a state is exemplified in West Virginia since Elkins by the corrupt use of the millions that he stole elsewhere got control of it. There is a condition of human slavery and forced labor there that is more inhuman and cruel than African slavery ever was in any state of this union. The victims are mostly foreigners, but they are held to labor in camps surrounded day and night by armed guards, they are beaten with clubs, butts of guns and iron rods and held in absolute and complete slavery with the knowledge of the republican authorities of the state.

There is no longer any more of free government in West Virginia than there is in the darkest corners of the dominions of the czar of Russia. If the doctrines of imperialism and the worship of Mammon is to continue in this country, state after state will be reduced to the conditions now existing in West Virginia.

West Virginia is full of iron, coal and other valuable minerals and the building of railroads to make this natural wealth available is a necessity. The demand for labor is enormous, but the greed and cruelty of the Elkins style of capitalists has made the reputation of the state such that

laborers will not go there of their own free will if they know the facts. The resort has therefore been made to foreign labor, especially to that of Italians. These men not being able to speak English are lured into the state by false representations and when once they are in the lonely mountain camps surrounded by armed guards they are made slaves of the contractors and capitalists. If they try to escape they are followed by armed men, captured, tied with ropes in gangs and driven back to the camps by force. The republican governor of the state does not deny the facts, but says that he is helpless. This state of republican slavery in West Virginia has attracted the attention of philanthropists in some of the eastern states and societies are being formed to take measures to abolish it. The predictions of The Independent concerning the degenerating effect of imperialism are coming true every day. If this government had dealt with the Filipinos in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, there would have such a wave of the love of liberty swept over this land and the whole world that deeds like those perpetrated in West Virginia would have been impossible.

CASPER CRITICIZES

The Nebraska Independent has taken a new departure—it is handing its columns over to single taxers, socialists, mid-roaders, a new pop party, and heavens knows how many other crankisms. The editors appear to have gone out of business, and its old time good, hard sense, and plain, wholesome language has given place to long-winded verbiage which the next set of long-winded cranks pronounce clap-trap. Columns are written by one set of impractical visionaries correcting the supposed "unscientific terms" of another set in abstract propositions of political economy. The practical man, looking over all that mess of truck will never have his mind cleared up, and learn what his duties are. As a friend of The Independent, wish to say that not one practical man out of ten will read that Carl Marx truck. One page of editorial from Bros. Tibbles and De France is worth a dozen Carl Marx editions. What they all say as to conditions is not new, and when it comes to the application of remedies the angels in heaven might live the ideal life they clamor for. These visionary cranks couldn't hang together thirty days to save their souls. No two of them can agree to anything except a Bible of noise. The Almighty Himself couldn't do what those fellows imagine they can do, without recreating the human race, so what is the use of fooling with them.—C. D. Casper, in The Press, David City, Neb.

Unfortunately (or fortunately) for The Independent it has no recalcitrant and renegade populist ex-president upon whom to expend its surplus columnns these summer months in cartooning and lambasting. Occasionally, however, when the situation seems to warrant it, The Independent takes time and space in hurling a few denunciations in the direction of Princeton and Buzzard's Bay, but that is a sort of "truck" of which even "practical" men tire—especially when it is not our "funeral" and we are fearful of being "called down" for "butting in" on "the mourners." A little study of single tax and socialism will not hurt any man—even a "dimmycratic" editor. He ought to be sufficiently acquainted with these subjects to make an intelligent criticism of them if occasion requires. Brother Casper's critique, with a change of very few words, sounds for all the world like what has heretofore been said of his "long-winded verbiage" by those "practical men"—the gold standard advocates.

This is not a time for preaching to "practical men" upon what their "duties are." They had plenty of that last year—and they were so highly "practical" that a good many thousands of them shucked corn election day. Political parties today are in a chaotic state; men who have not allowed their brains to ossify are conscious that in the not distant future a crisis is coming that cannot be met by columns of taffy concerning our candidates and other columns of denunciation of the other fellow, and such men are studying these "crankisms" which offend Brother Casper. Single taxers and socialists cannot be snubbed out of existence by the ignorant process; ridicule—one of the most effective of weapons—has lost its sting, and if the "clap-trap" of either body of men contains the slightest element of truth, it is our duty to recognize it; and if error, to expose it in gentlemanly terms.

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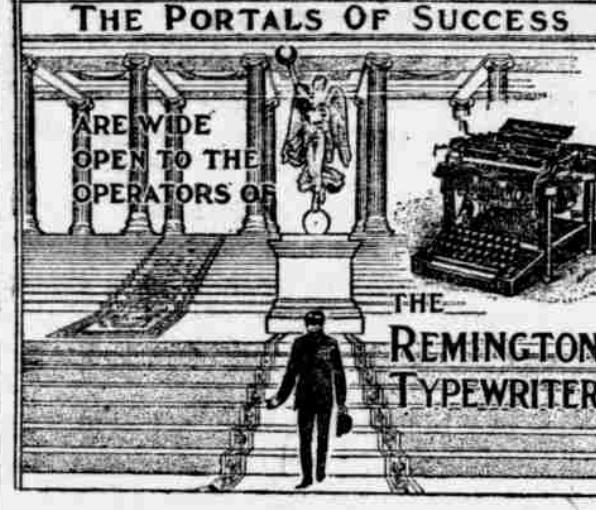
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THE INDEPENDENT'S IDEAL

The ideal that The Independent has always attempted to follow is that the man who constantly makes protest against injustice, though poverty is the result of independence and loyalty to conscience, and proudly refuses to take advantage of opportunities to steal even though the stealing be in accordance and protected by law, who scorns every tempting bribe and prefers a clean conscience to anything that money can buy, is the hero, the man who should be respected and honored. In these days of Mammon worship such a course is denounced by those who are called "successful," but to the advocacy of such a standard for the heroes of mankind The Independent will continue to devote its energies. For twenty years the editor of The Independent has often been told by his closest friends that his ideas were impracticable or foolish, but in these days of sorrow he finds comfort in the thought that during all these years he has tried to follow his ideal. He believes that the great success of this paper has resulted from the fact that its readers believe that it cannot be bought or its opinions affected in the slightest degree by money. What greater "success" could any man or any publication attain than that?

The materialistic conception of history—see Karl Marx Edition, July 23, 1903.

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