

Nebraska Stock Growers

Lose Millions in Slump of Prices—A Sample of Roosevelt Prosperity.

In 1900 a large number of men engaged in raising cattle and hogs, and who had been voting the populist and democratic ticket, decided that as they were getting good prices for their products they would "let well enough alone" and vote for McKinley. Enough of them did this to carry the state for the "advance agent of prosperity."

Today they are getting a different brand of prosperity—the Roosevelt mixture; none genuine without name blown in the bottle. The prices of cattle and hogs have slumped off to such an alarming extent that conservative estimates place the loss on hogs alone to be between two and four million dollars in the past week and compared to prices a year ago it foots up \$8,700,000, or nearly \$6 a head for 300-pound hogs.

The cattle situation is even worse. Very few herds of cattle of any considerable size are owned clear, but most of them are covered by a chattel mortgage to secure "cattle paper" given at or near the time of purchase. The purchaser in effect bets the banker that he (the purchaser) can, by holding the cattle, realize something above their cost, keep and the usury he pays. The banker is willing to bet, but requires plenty of security so that he can't lose.

Millions of dollars of this "cattle paper" is coming due. To sell the cattle now would mean that they would not fetch enough to pay the principal, to say nothing of the usury. So ruin stares thousands of cattle growers and feeders in the face. The banks are not looking for "cattle paper" now, but, on the contrary, are anxious to realize on some they are now holding, and more than one of the "let well enough alone" supporters of McKinley in 1900 is up against the real thing. He must fish or cut bait, and the way his business is fixed he can't well do either.

There are intimations that a lot of "cattle paper" will not be collected except at the end of long and tedious litigation. The cattle men purpose to fight for delay, hoping a turn in the tide will let them safely into port. It was the rankest kind of dishonesty for populist farmers to contest farm mortgage foreclosures against them clear through to the supreme court and back again, simply for delay; but republican cattle men now consider this eminently proper for them to do to save their own skins.

It remains to be seen whether these men, whose politics changed with the price of cattle and hogs, will still vote the republican ticket. They are beginning to realize that a large part of their present trouble is attributable to the packing house trust; that the trust has been built up by collusion with the railroads; and that the republican candidates for supreme and district judges are almost to a man the choice of the railroads. The question is, Will these cattle growers kiss the hand that smote them?

What if they did clear a pot of money when prices were going up—where is the money today? Pretty generally tied up in that last bunch of cattle which promises to sell for less than the mortgage.

The election of Judge Sullivan and the populist and democratic candidates for district judge, of course, could not at once affect the price of cattle or hogs. No sensible man would make such an assertion. But their election will be a rebuke to railroad domination and an entering wedge for ultimate control of the railroads by the state.

State control is a long, weary road, but it will eventually be traveled—because railroad domination is finally reaching a point where it is unbearable. It is quite true that the populists and democrats, when in possession of the state government, did not accomplish as much as many believe they might have done. But the republicans make no attempt to do anything whatever, and lately have not even the self-respect to blush at wearing the railroad collar.

If the stock growers were justified in supporting the republican ticket the past three years because of good prices, they certainly have equally

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good grounds now for supporting Judge Sullivan on account of low prices. The Independent does not urge any such reason in behalf of Judge Sullivan, because he deserves election on higher grounds—but merely mentions the fact.

The following, quoted from the Lincoln Evening News, a republican paper, will give some idea of the loss sustained by Nebraska hog raisers, due to the manipulations of the railroads and packers:

SLUMP IN HOG MARKET HITS NEBRASKA HARD Millions Lost to Raisers of Pork by Big Drop of Past Week Caused by Manipulation of Packers.

These are trying times for the Nebraska farmer engaged in the raising of hogs for the market, for the slump in prices during the past week have cost the hog raisers of this state something like \$4,000,000. That is if the price of hogs is based upon the Chicago market. Since last Monday morning the prices paid for hogs in Chicago have dropped from 70 to 90 cents on heavy hogs to one dollar on the lighter quality.

The report of the state labor bureau gives the 1903 crop of Nebraska hogs at 1,482,764. Taking the average weight at 300 pounds and the average decline in the Chicago price at 90 cents per hundred, it would give a net loss to the farmers of Nebraska of a little over \$4,000,000.

The market reports from South Omaha do not indicate so sharp a decline. There has been a falling off of but about 50 cents per hundred in that market during the week, which would mean a loss of about \$1.50 on each hog, or about \$2,200,000 on the total Nebraska crop.

Comparisons with the prices prevailing at the South Omaha market one and two years ago must be truly appalling to the hog raisers of the state. The average price paid at South Omaha yesterday was \$5.19, which lacked but 5 cents of being \$2 less than the average for a year ago on the corresponding date, which would mean a loss on the hog holdings of the state of approximately \$8,700,000, or nearly \$6 per head.

The statistics of the labor bureau show that there were in the state two years ago, 1,451,777 hogs, which fell to 1,303,386 a year ago and increased to 1,482,764 this year. Taking 300 pounds as the average hog, the crop of 1892, with approximately 180,000 less hogs in sight, was at the price prevailing that year, worth nearly \$5,000,000 more than this year's crop at the figures now being paid.

Two causes are assigned for the prevailing depression. Probably the most important is that the high prices which hogs have brought during the past two years has started every one to raising them. The other is the lard and rib corner operated recently by one of the big packing concerns.

Local market men declare that the depression in live pork prices has not been reflected for some time past in the prices paid by them for wholesale meat supplies and that the consumers are not therefore getting any benefits from lower prices. It would appear as if the packers are playing a whip-saw game, which is working greatly to the disadvantage of the producer while it affords no benefits to the consumer.

One prominent Lincoln market man is authority for the statement that retail dealers are becoming extremely and heartily tired of the furies frequently created by the efforts of the big packing establishments to corner the markets on certain commodities. Some time ago one of them attempted to work a lard corner, but fell short in the attempt, except that for months retailers dependent upon the concern for supplies were unable to get a pound of lard from it, as it was under the necessity of sending every pound to Chicago to fill the hole it had there created by its attempted corner.

Cass County

Cass is a county where the populist movement was never very vigorous. It has always been hampered by lack of a progressive local populist paper. The democrats are just strong enough to ignore the few populists in Cass, and just weak enough to lose pretty regularly. Until recently they, too, had no paper of much force. However, under its new management, the Plattsmouth Journal is a strong paper even if it is somewhat of a "remorganizer" nationally.

Cass county farmers and business men are obliged to suffer from republican extravagance to the tune of over ten thousand dollars additional state taxes. Cass county assessors found \$246,067 more taxable property of

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We will deliver the following \$10.00 combination to any towns in the state of Nebraska, freight prepaid by us, any time during the month of October, 1903. Reference:—First National Bank or The Independent.

50 lbs. Best Granulated Sugar.....	\$1.00
10 lbs. Choice Prunes.....	.50
4 lbs. Nectarine.....	.50
25 bars Good Laundry Soap.....	1.00
2 lbs. High Grade Tea.....	1.00
5 lbs. Gilt Edge Coffee.....	1.00
3 packages Celluloid Starch.....	.25
4 lbs. fancy, bright Apricots.....	.50
4 pounds fancy 4-Crown large Raisins.....	.50
4 pounds fancy Muer Peaches.....	.50
12 lbs. fancy Japan Head Rice.....	1.00
2 cans 16 oz. Cream of Tartar Baking Powder..	.50
3 packages 10-cent Soda.....	.25
3 packages 10-cent Corn Starch.....	.25
3 packages 10-cent Gloss Starch.....	.25
1 pound pure Black Pepper.....	.25
1 bottle Lemon Extract.....	.10
1 bottle Vanilla Extract.....	.10
3 cans 10-cent Phoenix Lye.....	.25
5 doz. Clothes Pins.....	.05
3 bars 10-cent Rising Sun Stove Polish.....	.25
All the above for.....	\$10.00

Orders for customers outside of the state of Nebraska and on line of railroad entering Lincoln add 75 cents to pay part of freight.

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 - No. A26. 160 acres, well improved. \$30 per acre.
 - No. A27. 120 acres well improved. \$2,200.
 - No. A29. 320 acres choice rolling land, improved. \$15 per acre. A snap.
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 - No. 627. 880-acre stock farm, splendid improvements. A bargain at \$20 per acre.
 - No. 648. A splendid 320-acre farm, highly improved. \$7,200; \$4,500 cash.
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- Franklin County.**
 - Some splendid bargains in this county, both in highly improved farms and pasture land.
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 - No. A51. Well improved 320-acre farm 10 miles from McCook at \$10 per acre. The best
- Merrick County.**
 - No. 742. 380 acres, well improved, for \$2,200.
 - No. 743. 240 acres, good improvements, for \$1,800.
 - No. 745. 160 acres of sugar beet and alfalfa land for \$2,250.
 - No. 746. 220 acres, all bottom land, good improvements. \$15 per acre. A hundred others just as good.
- Webster County.**
 - No. 1M. 200 acres, 90 cultivated, living water, timber, buildings, 6 miles from town. \$3,200.
 - No. 2M. 160 acres, 3 1/2 miles from town; a splendid farm and a bargain; \$3,500.
 - No. 3M. 200-acre alfalfa and stock farm; fine improvements, 6 1/2 miles from town. \$30 per acre.
 - No. 4M. 405 acres all bottom land, joining town; 285 plowed, 100 seeded to alfalfa; a splendid bargain. \$50 per acre.
- Fillmore County.**
 - No. 88. 80 acres, highly improved; \$3,500.
 - No. 892. 160-acre farm with splendid improvements. \$7,000.
 - No. 897. 160-acre farm, fair improvements. \$5,200.
 - No. 901. 160 acres, extra choice improvements. \$10,500.

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farmers and business men than they did last year. The republican state board, looking through railroad spectacles, saw only \$641.91 more railroad value than last year! They added \$1 to the assessment roll for every \$410 added by the assessors.

The state levy of 1902, at 5 1/4 mills, was \$24,447.21, divided as follows: Railroads \$ 4,540.66 Others 19,906.55 And this year, at 7 1/2 mills, it is \$36,774.91, divided thus: Railroads \$ 6,491.47 Others 30,283.44

The farmers' state tax is 52.1 per cent heavier than last year; the railroads get off with an increase of 42.9 per cent. Republican extravagance causes the increase. Republican subservency to railroad domination gives the railroads a big advantage over the farmers in who shall stand the in-

creased expense. Having indorsed the candidacy of Judge Paul Jessen, the democrats of Cass doubtless feel that he is free from railroad strings—a rare thing among republican office-holders and office-seekers. They have thus made his election unanimous. But they should not forget that Judge Sullivan is needed on the bench of the court of last resort. This tax matter will be an all-absorbing one in the next few years, because the intent of the railroad legislature was to allow the corporations to shift the increase of taxes upon the farmer and business man.

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