

Dawson County

This is a typical county, where a good many populists became possessed of the idea last year that "there was nothing to vote for in this campaign—no issue worth going to the polls for." The railroads were then paying 29.3 per cent of the taxes in Dawson county, and it may be that other taxpayers there felt that any effort to bring about equitable taxation, might result in hurting them, even if it should benefit many other portions of the state. At any rate a good many populists stayed at home and shucked corn election day—and this year they must help pay \$4,300 of additional state taxes for allowing John N. Baldwin's board make the railroad assessment.

Dawson county assessors this year added \$183,091.88 to the assessed valuation of farmers' and business men's property. Baldwin's state board added \$4,499.23 to railroad valuations—about the ratio of \$1 to \$40.

The 1902 levy of state taxes was at 73-8 mills, amounting to \$12,648.63, divided as follows:

Railroads\$3,713.01
Others 8,935.62

The levy this year at 91-2 mills foots up \$18,075.27, divided thus:

Railroads\$ 4,825.61
Others 13,249.66

Thus the extravagance of the railroad-dominated legislature of 1903 necessitated a heavy increase of taxes. Dawson county farmers must pay 48.3 per cent more state taxes than last year; but John N. Baldwin's railroad gets off with an increase of 29.9 per cent. Hence, where last year the Dawson county farmer paid \$10 in state tax, this year he must pay \$14.83; but the railroad's \$10 tax in 1902 grows to only \$12.99 this year—an advantage of \$1.84 over the farmer, or 12.4 per cent. So for ever hundred dollars the farmer pays this year, \$6.20 goes to pay what the railroads should bear. This means about \$775 in the county—absolutely clear gain to the railroads and clear loss to the farmers and business men. But that is on state taxes alone. The local taxes have a similar inequity and much more heavy.

When the new revenue law gets in operation we may safely expect even greater inequalities next year. Do the populists of Dawson county wish to have this law interpreted or construed by railroad attorneys on the district and supreme bench? If not, they better get busy hustling for Judge Hand and Judge Sullivan.

Several times in this state when it has been pretended that there was a great contest between candidates for a nomination in a republican state convention, and ballot after ballot was taken amid much hurraing and shouting, the moment the nomination was made, thousands of buttons were distributed through the hall with the candidate's picture and the office for which he was running printed upon them which had all been prepared and were on hand before the convention met. That would seem to be proof positive that the corporations had picked their man long before the convention, even though nothing had been said about it in the public press. Notwithstanding all this, several republican editors in this state pretend to be very much shocked because the pops say that the present candidate of the republicans for supreme judge is the railroad candidate.

Jefferson County

In the early nineties the populists of Jefferson, in a triangular contest, were a good second in the race. Later by co-operation with the democrats, part of the county officers were captured. Dissatisfaction because of mistakes made by fusion state officials, and, perhaps, some growing out of the local campaigns, which were made on the "every fellow for himself and the devil take the hindmost" plan, caused the populists to sulk in their tents, so that the county now goes republican by some 500 majority.

Jefferson is a good example of a county hard hit by the extravagance of the last legislature and the servility of Baldwin's board to railroad domination. This year the assessors found \$168,481.90 more assessable property in the hands of farmers and business men than was found last year. But the republican state board cut off \$7,568 from the railroad assessment.

Last year the state levy was, at 71-4 mills, \$18,300.94, divided thus:

Railroads\$ 4,278.81
Others 14,022.13

This year, at 91-2 mills, the state levy is \$25,509.03, divided as follows:

Railroads\$ 5,534.53
Others 19,974.20

Thus others must pay an increase of \$5,952.08 in state taxes, or 42.4 per cent; while the railroad increase is only \$1,256.02, or 29.4 per cent.

Farmers' and business men's prop-

erty which last year paid \$10 state taxes must this year pay \$14.24; but for every \$10 of railroad state tax last year, \$12.94 will pay the bill this. That is an advantage of \$1.30, or a little more than 9 per cent. For every \$10 bill paid by the farmer to the county treasurer, 45 cents is to pay for what the railroads shirk—and that is no small sum when you calculate state, county, school, district, and other taxes on the \$2,100,000 of farmers' and business men's property returned for taxation.

With the populist apathy which seems to exist in Jefferson, it is probable that the railroad candidates for supreme and district judges will carry the county by a nice majority. But if these populists could be made to see how they have been robbed in this one year's taxes alone, and what the new revenue law is likely to mean next year, they would be out working to carry the county for Sullivan and for Kreisinger and Kelligar. Judge Sullivan carried Jefferson by a few votes in 1891 over Judge Post, whose term on the supreme bench certainly made him a stronger candidate than Judge Barnes. So if Barnes carries the county by any considerable figure, it can be laid to populist apathy.

While the fusion government was in force at the state house it reduced the state debt \$658,092.63. It paid off bonded debts to the amount of \$449,267.55, and reduced the floating debt \$208,825.28, and it did that without increasing taxation. That was also done in the hardest years that Nebraska has ever known. The republican state government in these years of prosperity has paid off no bonded debts and has increased the floating debt. That is what the people of Nebraska got by going back to republican rule. Because some voters stayed at home and picked corn on election day, it will cost them and all the rest of the voters in some of the counties about \$2.25 each, in increased taxes. The sad thing about the matter is that so many thousands will pay the \$2.25 without protest. They belong to the "contented" sort.

The rich have played the same trick upon the people time and again for more than 2,000 years that the trusts and promoters have been playing during the last four or five years. In the old book of prophecies of Amos, if one reads it carefully, he will find that Amos brought the same charges against the rich of that day who took to themselves all the fruits of pros-

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perity that are now brought against the combinations of wealth by the "discontented" in these United States. How very often The Independent has warned the people during the last few years that there was an effort being made to enable the rich to take to themselves all the increase of wealth coming from the advance of science, the discoveries of the inventors and the education of the people. In the very beginning, as the readers of The Independent will remember, as soon as the volume of money began to increase, it announced week after week that that was the intention of the Wall street crowd.