

PASS TAKERS ARE CRIMINALS

EVERY PASS A VIOLATION OF LAW

The following is an extract from a speech made by President Stickney of the Great Western railroad, before the Economic Society of Washington, D. C., February 3:

"Turning now from the defects of the law, I desire to call attention to some extraneous conditions and influences which have conduced to rendering the law unenforceable and which, as long as they exist, will render the most perfect law unenforceable.

"The interstate commerce law not only forbids discrimination in freight rates, but it also prohibits free transportation of passengers. It makes the acceptance of a discriminating freight rate or a free pass by an individual a misdemeanor, each punishable alike by fine or imprisonment.

"If we examine the principles of law and the principles of sound morals which justify the law we shall find that every principle applies to the one as to the other. If we inquire as to the relative importance to men of small affairs we will find that one is as important as the other. If we inquire into the heart burnings growing out of railway discriminations, which are breeding class distinction and class hatred, and even anarchism, among the so-called lower classes, we will find that the bitterest feelings are aroused by being compelled to pay fare while richer men ride free. If we go among the laboring classes, either as individuals or in their public meetings, we will hear bitter denunciations, not of unreasonable or discriminating freight rates, but of free passes. In times of railway strikes we hear the park orators proclaim, 'Why should we work for scant wages in order that rich men may ride in the trains free?' Probably 80 per cent of the entire population pay fares, while not more than, say, 5 per cent pay freight rates.

"The law which makes it a misdemeanor for any individual not an officer or employe of a railway company to use a pass was enacted by congress and approved by the president fifteen years ago, and as an individual rule of action it was ignored by the congressmen who passed and by the president who approved it, and subsequent congressmen and president, with rare exceptions, have ignored its provisions. Traveling, they present the evidence of their misdemeanor before the eyes of the public in a way which indicates no regard for the law. The governors of the states, many of the judges—in short, all officialdom from the highest to the lowest—the higher clergy, college professors, editors, merchants, bankers, lawyers, present the evidence of their misdemeanor. Now, while sheriffs, district attorneys, courts and prisons may cope with the outcasts of society, they are powerless against the

classes which has been mentioned. Think of the impossibility of committing these classes to prison! Think of a sheriff arresting himself, or a district attorney prosecuting himself, and a court committing himself to the penitentiary!

"In England, where the laws against discriminations are enforced, these conditions do not exist. The members of parliament, who enacted the laws, have obeyed the laws, and even the king, when traveling on the railways, pays the regular fare, and if he has a special train he pays the schedule rates for its use. The minor officials, the railway officials and the public follow their example. Therefore the law of England against discrimination is effective."

The Spread of Populism

What populists foresaw and proclaimed, is now becoming so evident that it can no longer be denied, any more than a man can deny that the sun apparently rises in the east and sets in the west. That being the case populist doctrines are not only forcing themselves into magazines but into daily papers also, and papers, too, that denounced these same doctrines with the vindictiveness of Satan not long ago. The following paragraphs are taken from one column of editorial found in the State Journal of February 3:

"If American made steel were sold as cheap in American ship yards as in the yards at Belfast and Newcastle, one excuse for asking for a ship subsidy, the higher cost of building material, would be removed."

"Cautious persons who have refrained from mentioning the packers as the 'beef trust,' for fear of doing injustice to pure and law abiding men, may feel justified in dropping their reserve now. By a vote of nine to nothing the United States supreme court decides that there is a beef trust. Most people will take the word of the supreme court in preference to that of the packers."

"And now come Illinois and California into the list of states where it charged that legislators are bought by applicants for special privileges 'as fast as are bought and sold in the market.' Must the school boy of a thousand years hence read of the United States in 1905, somewhat as he now reads of ancient Rome, that there was an extreme scarcity of legislative virtue in that wicked time? It is not true. Punish the few grafters who throw discredit on large numbers of honest and patriotic men."

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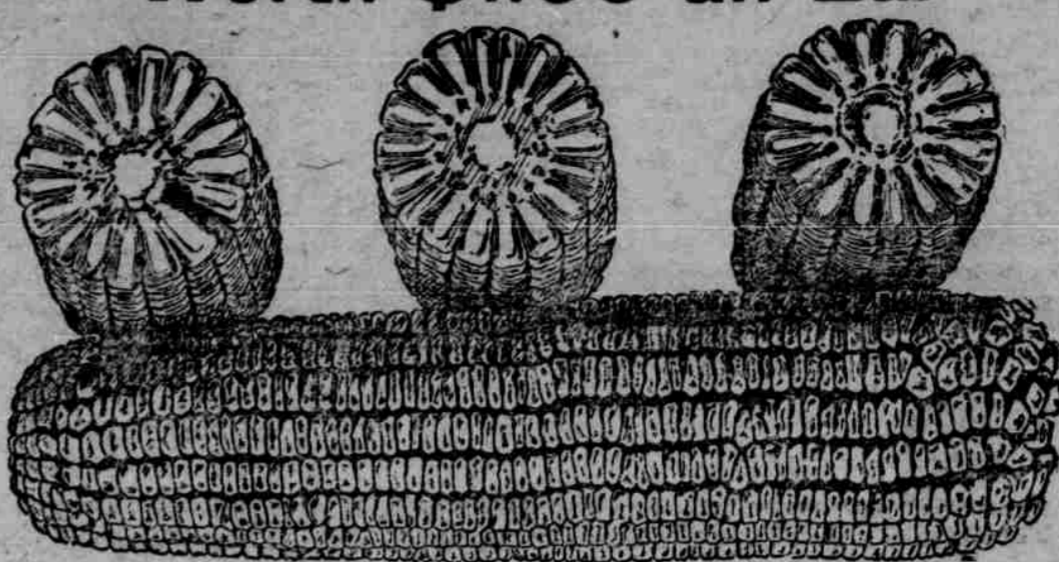
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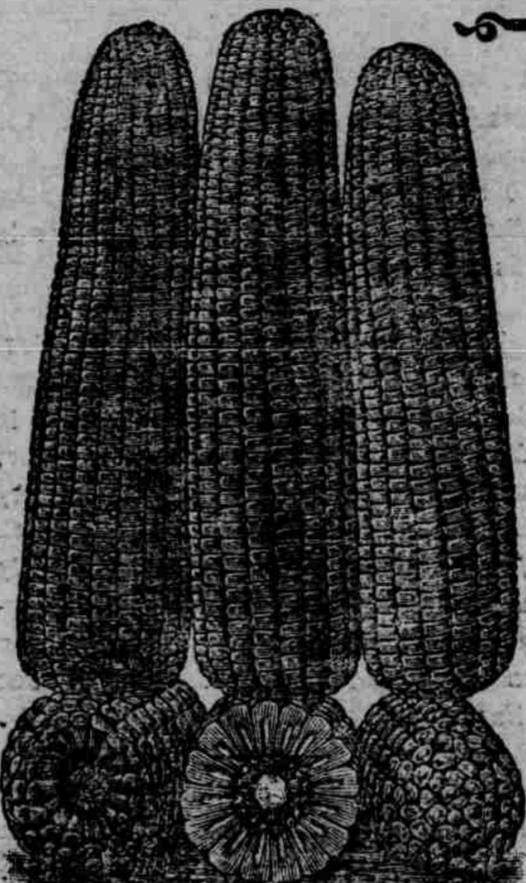
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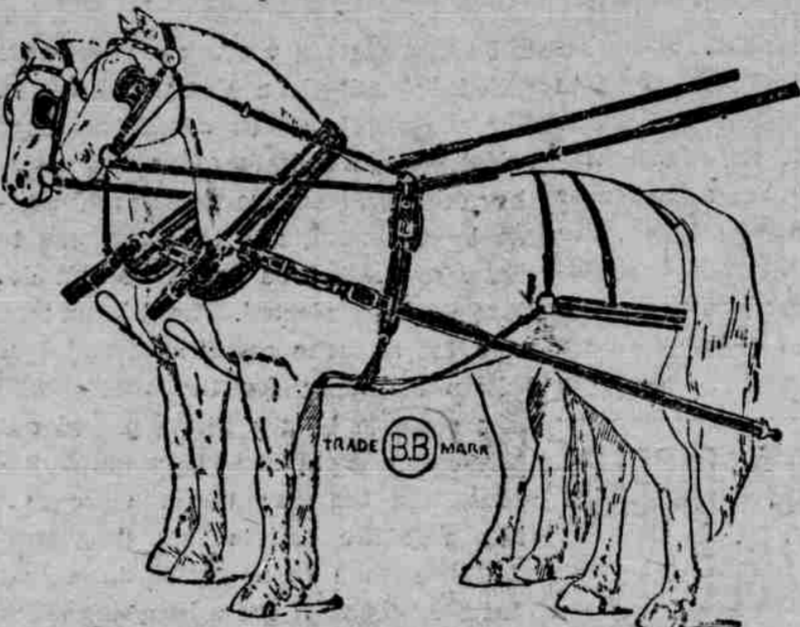
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