

has indelibly impressed his personality upon one of the most important pages of his country's history. To some of its many readers, no doubt, the change, for a little while, will be attended with a feeling of uncertainty—perhaps even of sadness, but to those of us who have known you from your youth up, and have watched your advancing footsteps to the head of your profession, and have marked your unswerving devotion to the right as you have been able to see it, we can sincerely congratulate, not only you, but the readers of *The Independent*. I know of no contemplated changes in policy, in politics, or in name, of the paper, but knowing yourself as I do and knowing your views upon all the issues of the day, as expressed by you in private talks, as well as upon public platforms, I can assure your readers that if changes come they will be by your approval and will meet with the approval of all conservative readers. I have great respect for radicalism. It initiates all reforms, but it is conservatism that finally must execute. I sometimes think that a little more conservatism on the part of a portion of the reform press is necessary to the full and speedy realization of what once were almost exclusively populist principles, but which are now being accepted in whole or in part by all parties. The world is everywhere moving onward and upward. We have passed, or are rapidly passing the political grades and are entering the high school of political science. A genuine revival of the old maxim, "vox populi vox Dei," is going on. The inalienable rights of man as man is again being considered by at least a portion of all political parties. Government by the consent of the governed is almost a universal demand. Equality of taxation and equality of rates of transportation, whether of person or of property, can but a little longer be denied; and the sun of the political party boss is well nigh set. It is generally thought that the older men grow the more pessimistic they become, but having passed my three score and ten years I deny the charge. I have never seen the prospects for the toiler of this and other lands brighter than they are today. The common people are weighing political parties in the balance as they never did before. The party yoke no longer galls the political neck. The Bryans of Nebraska, the Folks of Missouri, the Cummins and Larrabees of Iowa, the La Follettes of Wisconsin, and the Deneens and Comfords and Dunnes of Illinois, are mightily on the increase all over the country and are found in all political parties. And with no intention, and in no spirit of flattery, but without apology I wish to add to this splendid galaxy, but by no means a dim star in the constellation, the new editor of *The Independent*. It is true he lost out in the race for governor last fall, but any other man in the state would have lost by a much larger majority. While Mr. Berge was beaten by 9,143 votes, Mr. Roosevelt carried the state by 56,164 votes over both Mr. Parker and Mr. Watson, and Mr. Berge's vote was 30,404 more than the combined vote of Parker and Watson. In his race for congress in 1900 he made a similar record, running away ahead of his ticket. But to Mr. Berge personal or party defeat has no terrors. He keeps right on, believing the poet was right when he said: "When beaten to earth—well, well, what's that?"

Come up with a smiling face,
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there—that's disgrace.
The harder you're thrown, why the higher you'll
bounce,

Be proud of your blackened eye,
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts,
It's how did you fight and why?
And though you be done to the death, what then?
If you battled the best you could,
If you played your part in the world of men,
Why the Critic will call it good.
Death comes with a crawl or comes with a
pounce,

And whether he's slow or spry,
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
But only how did you die?"

So here is success to *The Independent* and its new editor and proprietor. Wishing you entire success, I am yours for reform.

J. V. WOLFE.

A PROPHET.

Mr. Morning Foretells the Work of The Independent.

To the Editor of *The Independent*:

The people of this state are to be congratulated upon the entry of such a man as Mr. Berge into the field of journalism. Those who know Mr. Berge well enough to know his position upon public questions, and the tenacity with which he clings to them, and the courage with which he fights for them, and his ability to make himself understood, and his very unusual power of making a success of whatever he undertakes will anticipate nothing but the most decided success in the enterprise. This paper will not only live and continue to grow, but it will be a pronounced success as a business enterprise, and it is destined to be a power in this state and nation which no man in public life can afford to ignore. Being independent in its politics, it will be free to attack and expose dishonesty and grafting wherever found. Honest men in public life will find in it a friend and champion, but the grafter, and political boss will find in it an uncompromising enemy. There never was a more opportune time for a man like Mr. Berge to enter the field of independent journalism. The recent session of the state legislature demonstrated to the people of this state how completely the state government is in the hands of the railroads. The individual members of the legislature were perhaps as good, if not better than the average, in point of ability and honesty. Most of the members, doubtless, intended, when elected, to be true to their constituents. But they fell into the trap which is constantly set for the representatives of the people by the railroads and other corporate interests, and they soon lost their political virtue. Most of them accepted free passes from the railroads before they came here. They accepted the "courtesy" of the telephone company in placing a long distance phone in the hotels to enable them to talk to distant points over the state free of charge. They permitted the numerous paid lobbyists, who infest the state house when the legislature is in session, to become "chummy" with them, and call them by their first names, and to show them all kinds of "courtesies" to which they were not accustomed at home. The result was as the railroads and other special interests desired, and nothing was done by the legislature to relieve the people from railroad discriminations. The people are now ready for the fight. The free pass must go. No matter who has used passes or who has not, that is not the question. The system is wrong. This nuisance must be abated. No progress can be made in cleaning up public life, and in taking the government out of the hands of the railroads, until this free pass system is exterminated. It has poisoned the fountains and sources of public opinion. It has converted the ablest and best men in every community into apologists for the existing order of things. Men who ought to be the leaders of public sentiment and who ought to be moulding public opinion in favor of reform, have either had their mouths entirely closed by this free pass system, or they have become the open champions of railroad interests. The time has come, and the people are now ready to end this system. The free pass is doomed. No one can now say which party will be the instrumentality through which this will be brought about. But it is safe to say that the time is now here when the party which undertakes to straddle or dodge this issue will go down in ignominious defeat. Public sentiment will do the work through the instrumentality of one party or the other. Public sentiment will enter the party conventions and insist upon nominating men for the legislature who will not only say that they favor the abolition of the free pass, but who are known to stand right on this question, and who can be trusted when elected. Public sentiment will force party conventions to take a decided stand on this question. It is now looked upon as a disgrace for a man to clean spittoons around a saloon for free drinks, and the time will come when public opinion will make it just as much of a disgrace to do the bidding of the railroad companies for free transportation. This paper will be a potent factor in creating this public sentiment, and you need have no fear about the people. They will loyally back you and the many other courageous papers of this state in the fight. Hammer away at the pass

grabber no matter who he is. Make him tired, make him uncomfortable, make him cross the street to keep from meeting any one connected with your paper.

The trouble with us has been that we have been hampered by party politics. Party lines are fading away. Your paper will be read, and what you say as an independent, non-partisan organ will influence men on public questions and public conditions, where partisan papers would have no influence whatever. And in the very nature of things you can do better work as a weekly paper than as a daily. You will have time to prepare what is to appear in your columns with due deliberation and reflection. The daily papers must give the people the news on short notice and the editorial work must be more or less hasty. Your paper will give your readers the essence of the news after the exact truth has come to light, but your chief work will be pointing out to the people the conditions in public life and public institutions, and moulding and directing public sentiment with a view to correcting evils and abuses as they are found to exist.

The Independent being an established paper will enable the new management to go about the main work at once, without the necessity of wasting time in laying the foundation. It is to be hoped that this enterprise will receive the loyal support of all persons interested in good government, no matter whether they live in this state or not. Respectfully,

W. M. MORNING.

A Valued Send-Off

The Teller of York, Neb., last week editorially had the following:

Let us say a word for Mr. Berge. It is not necessary to say anything to any one who has heard George W. Berge. He was our candidate for governor last fall and had it not been for Roosevelt's popularity, Mr. Mickey would not have known that he was in the race. Men of all parties voted for Berge. He is the Old Abe of Nebraska; those who know Berge say that he looks, acts and talks like the great commoner. We want York county to be in the front ranks in supporting Mr. Berge's paper. The man does not have it in mind but it means a Berge party in Nebraska the same as the people have a La Follette party in Wisconsin, and a Folk party in Missouri. There is no commission or any kind of a rake off in it for us. We want to see York county rally around George W. Berge and let him feel that we are with him with our dollars. He spent his own money in the campaign last fall, now let us pay part of it back and at the same time get one of the best papers in the state. Your dollar will help to print the paper but your name on the list will do more good than will the cash. Bring your dollar to the Teller office, except any one who request their names left out of the list. Publishing the list shows where you stand and does more good than the amount you pay. Send him your greetings by being a subscriber to his paper from Vol. 1 No. 1.

GOOD CHEER

Chicago, Ill., April 24, 1905.

To *The Nebraska Independent*:

With the sale of *The Independent* to Mr. Berge it is clearly to be seen that another Tom Watson has entered the field of reform journalism. While Mr. Berge is not a total stranger to the readers of *The Independent* (as his writings have appeared in its columns) he is a new power in a position to aid the cause of reform. His position of candidate for governor last fall outlined his course as to the future, and the old guard can join hands with him in the struggles in the future.

He is young, active and full of hope, the very elements that are needed to fight the political battles of the future. *The Independent* under Mr. Berge's control will lose none of its usefulness as a reform paper. We are glad to see him in the editorial harness and shall see much good come out of it. With Watson in the east and Berge in the middle west the cause of reform has two stalwart champions fully equipped for future campaigns. Let the friends of reform everywhere enroll themselves as patrons of these reform papers.

Yours respectfully,

W. T. KIMSEY.