

committee by the lobbyists stirred the hot blood of indignation within me and I resolved that as long as God would give me breath I would denounce such treachery and battle for its overthrow.

Extent of Railway Rule

The railroads dominated not only that legislative committee in that way, but they dominate in the same way our city councils, our mayors, our judges, our legislators, and state officers who belong to this railroad machine. And always you will find their pockets full of passes. And while they have these evidences of their bargain and sale to the corporations in their pockets, and while deception and trickery is in their hearts, they sit with brazen dignity before us and want us to believe that they are fair and impartial on all questions in dispute between us and the railroads. The railroads although they give away passes every year of the value of millions of dollars say that they give them only as courtesies and expect nothing in return. My friends, let us have done with this twaddle. I say that every railroad that distributes free passes among the office-holders and politicians intends to bribe thereby. The purpose of the bribe is to get control of the state government to protect the railroads in their freight and passenger extortion and discrimination and low taxation of their property. I say that every public official who accepts a pass is guilty of taking a bribe and thereby either consciously or unconsciously enters into a conspiracy with the railroads to defeat the spirit of popular government. The railroads and public officials so offending are bribe-givers and bribe-takers and should be made to feel the condemnation of their guilty business. Who will claim that these shameful conditions are the will of the people? The wonder is that the long smouldering indignation of the people of Nebraska against these corrupt politicians and this railroad domination did not come to a head before this.

Battle on in Earnest

But now the battle is on in earnest. The real issue in Nebraska is to get men who will be true to the people. Railroad domination must be completely overthrown from one end of the state to the other and it must be done through men who cannot be bribed nor corrupted. The people want no more sham battles with half-hearted generals; they want no more lip service; they want real men who can be trusted and who will lead them out of the mire and quicksands of corporate domination and corporate debauchery out to the hills of common decency and self government.

We need two things in this state. We need true men and good laws. The laws that we need I would divide into two classes. First, we need some laws that will help us to get control of our state government and to keep control of it, and second, we need laws to give us relief from extortion and discrimination in rates and burdensome taxation. Under the first head we want:

Anti-Pass Law Essential

First—A law to destroy the free pass bribery system, root and branch. Second—A law to drive professional lobbyists out of business at the state capital. Corporations have a right to be heard on all measures affecting their interests but the professional lobbyist has no more right to tamper with the legislature when the people are at home, and asleep than a litigant has to tamper with a jury.

Third—A law requiring the disclosure under oath of every contribution of money and every promise of money from every person and corporation in every campaign. And in case of evasion or refusal to provide a severe penalty. The profligate use of money in campaigns by the corporations enables them to control nominations and elections. Let the sunlight of publicity shine upon it.

Fourth—A direct primary law. Let us get the government as near back to the people as we can. A direct pri-

mary will put the corporations at arm's length and give the people a better chance at their government.

All these laws have more or less to do with the political control of the state government. When we have them well under way we can then better legislate for the people. We need at once and there should be passed:

First—A law reducing passenger rates to two cents per mile.

Second—A law reducing freight rates and generally to control the railroads with respect to transportation facilities, charges and discriminations.

Railway Taxation

Third—Then we need some legislation to make the railroads pay their just share of taxes. All the good features of the present law should be retained, but the county assessor feature should be repealed. The state board of equalization and assessment assesses the property of the railroads. The county assessors are supposed to assess the property of the people. But the county assessors are absolutely under the control of the state board and the state board may oust from office every county assessor in the state if he does not do the board's bidding. This means that under that law the taxing power of the state is in those five men constituting the state board of equalization and assessment. This board generally is under the control of the railroads. Let us repeal the county assessor feature of that law and give the people back their own assessors.

Republican Failure

But who shall do this work? The republican party, not only in this state, but in the nation, is the party through which the corporations have outraged the people and robbed them of their rights. It could not divorce itself from the railroads even if it wanted to. Look at the government at Washington. The only thing that gives popularity to the administration there is the advocacy by President Roosevelt of democratic measures advocated by Mr. Bryan in 1896 and 1900. In the light of subsequent events it has been shown that Mr. Bryan was not only right in his struggles all these years, but it looks now as though the people will have to make him president before we can stay the plutocratic tendency of the times. I am glad, however, that President Roosevelt has taken up the fight for rate regulation even though he does have to get upon democratic ground to do it. But more significant still is the fact that democrats in the senate are united in standing back of the president while a majority of the republicans on the committee are against the rate bill. Without the democrats the rate bill would not have been reported without amendment and the bill itself now is committed into the hands of a democratic senator. If any effective railroad measure will be passed at all by congress the people will owe their gratitude to the democrats for it.

Protector of Corporations

In Nebraska the republican party has always been the defender and protector of the railroads and an apologist for public thievery and corruption. While the rank and file of the party have chafed under this domination, the railroads and party bosses have always been able to control and silence them. The republican party in Nebraska has always been controlled by the railroads and the people can hope for no relief from it. It is true there are some flurries on the surface just now indicating that there is fever and discontent within its ranks, but can the leopard change its spots? Can the republican party change from a fighter for the corporations to a fighter against the corporations?

Have Forfeited Confidence

If the people will consider they will find this anti-corporation talk is mere lip service and republican politicians always engage in it just before an

election. Two years ago when you honored me with the nomination for governor, I made my campaign upon these identical issues. I demanded that the free pass bribery system and the professional lobby be destroyed. I demanded a reduction of freight and passenger rates. I said that the real issue in Nebraska was the overthrow of railway domination and the restoration of the state government into the hands of the people. The people gave me 30,000 more votes than Parker and Watson combined. This vote spoke in no uncertain language. Yet when the legislature convened Governor Mickey, in his message and recommendations to the legislature, was as silent as the grave touching every question relating to the railroads. Neither the governor nor the legislature did what the people wanted them to do. They did the bidding of the railroads. With the governor and both branches of the legislature overwhelmingly republican why did they not do something for the people? That was the time to talk; that was the time to act. They did not do anything when they had the opportunity and have consequently forfeited the confidence of the people.

No, my friends, the people look to us for relief. Shall we rise to the occasion? I call you to witness the Waterloo of boss and machine rule on last November's elections. In New York District Attorney Jerome won single handed and alone. Both old parties and party bosses were against him, but the people were with him. Tammany, Murphy, and Odell received a jolting from which they will not recover in years. Hearst, although a democrat, ran upon a municipal ownership platform for mayor and was nearly elected. In Philadelphia the people went to the polls, independent of all parties, and repudiated a corrupt republican machine. In Maryland Boss Gorman was violently thrown down and the people won. In Ohio the Cox machine was smashed and ring rule was defeated by 40,000 votes. If this year in Nebraska we will unfurl the peoples' banner and champion their cause in dead earnest then on next November's election day the prairies of Nebraska will be strewn with the wrecks of corrupt bosses and railway machines and the people will have won a glorious victory.

Kansas Oil Rates Stand

The railroad companies represented in the meeting of the traffic men in Kansas City at which it was decided to raise the freight rates on crude and refined oil despite the Kansas maximum rate law have, it is stated, given up the plan and will follow the lead of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe. Judge W. R. Smith, general solicitor for the road, has announced that the Santa Fe will not increase oil rates, but that it will go before the legislature next winter and show that the rates are confiscatory.

Laborers Are Being Deceived

Omaha employment agencies are flooding North Platte with laborers, sending them there with the promise that they can secure work on the new steel bridge, which the Union Pacific railroad is building across the North Platte river east of that town, when the fact is that but few men in addition to those now employed are needed on the bridge.

Wants Farm Statistics

Secretary Wilson of the department of agriculture, appeared before the house committee on census in support of the Burlison bill for the compilation of farm statistics by the government every five years instead of every ten years. Secretary Tomlinson of the stockraisers' association also urged favorable action on the bill.

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FORBIDS COAL STRIKE

STEEL TRUST COMMANDS OPERATORS TO RAISE WAGES.

Has One Year's Solid Work Ahead and Cannot Afford to Have Its Mills Shut Down for a Day for Lack of Fuel.

"No coal strike" was a positive command issued by the Steel Trust to President Francis L. Robbins of the Pittsburg Coal company, while the latter was in New York negotiating with President Mitchell of the United Mine Workers of America. Mr. Robbins went to Pittsburgh to carry out the instructions he had received from W. Ellis Corey, president of the United States Steel Corporation, in substantially the following language:

Corey's Command

"The United States Steel Corporation will not stand for any strike at present in the bituminous coal regions, at least in that portion from which we draw our coal. We have a twenty-five year contract with the Pittsburg Coal company, which must be taken care of or given up."

"Give those miners their advance and keep them working, for the United States Steel Corporation will not grant the advance where it will do good. We have one year's solid work ahead and cannot afford to have our mills shut down even for one day for lack of coal."

George Gould, as head of immense coal-carrying and coal-producing railway interests in the west and southwest, has declared himself to the same purpose to the leading bituminous operators in his territory.

Peace Must Be Assured

It is positively announced that there will be no strike, that whatever advance the miners insist upon, peace must be assured. This places the bituminous operators in the attitude of supplicants, when they meet the miners in joint convention at Indianapolis on March 15. Last month at Indianapolis, they were on the offensive, saying to Mitchell:

"Go ahead and strike, we'll wreck your union and whip you!"

Good News for the Husbands

Women's dress will be less expensive this year than ever before in the opinion of Miss Elizabeth A. C. White, president of the Dressmakers' National Protective association. As to colors, Miss White said white and gray will be stylish, but the plain black run-about dresses, trimmed with white lace, will be the "proper thing" for this season. White silk gloves must be worn invariably.

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