

**ALTBRYANGELDISM.**

There are evidences that the compound disease, Altbryangeldism, has run its course in this country. It was an epidemic of political immorality. The symptoms were a quickened pulse, upward rolling eye, a vocal tremolo, a loud voice and itching palm.

**Where it Flourished.**

The disease appeared in 1890, and many prominent public men caught it. So threatening was it that the people ordered a quarantine that year, which confined it to part of the Southern States and a few Northern States west of the Missouri river. In other parts of the Union it was prevalent in sporadic form, and seemed to have become endemic in Nebraska and Missouri. As the sufferers from hay fever have a national organization and convention, so these victims of Altbryangeldism had theirs. It was a peculiarity of the disease that its victims were spitefully inimical to all who did not catch it. The Gold Democracy in 1896 were immune, and passed through the epidemic of that year untouched. On the other hand, a large number of Republicans were infected, and had the misery in an acute and exaggerated form.

**Peculiarities of the Disease.**

A careful isolation of the microbe, which caused it, proved that it was first introduced into this country by the Populists. It incapacitated the patients for distinguishing between a \$20 gold piece and a leather medal. They chewed a rag and then offered it in payment of debts. They denied the existence of the law of gravity, and insisted that if it were not for a class they called "gold bugs," things would fall up, instead of down. The disease derived its name from its two most prominent victims, Mr. Altgeld and Mr. Bryan. It was very acute in each. It affected Altgeld's sight, so that when he looked at the constitution of the United States, it seemed like a blank piece of paper. When there was a conflict between the law and its violator, he had a strabismic trouble, which, to his vision, made the law criminal and the criminal innocent. Unfortunately, in the height of the attack he was governor of Illinois, and when visiting the penitentiary, would marvel that certain desperate characters, murderers and anarchists, were there, and would pardon them. When several of these victims of his diseased clemency immediately committed other murders and lesser crimes, he believed that these crimes were actually committed by a great criminal, seen in his imagination, and called by him "society." Thereupon, he sought to destroy society. The disease caused him to believe that crime existed, only, because the law defined and punished it, and, therefore, crime

could be abolished by the simple process of striking down the law.

He aroused the fear of his neighbors, and the apprehension of the whole country, and the people of his state were compelled twice to isolate him.

But in him the disease seems to have run its course, and the first sign of his convalescence was his active support of the Republican candidate for mayor of Chicago.

**Spreading the Disease.**

In Mr. Bryan, the disease was equally acute, with the same symptoms as Altgeld's, reinforced by others that were probably due to his environment. His head swelled terribly. He was abnormally loquacious, and talked incessantly. Among his hallucinations he thought that he was Thomas Jefferson, and again, that he was Abraham Lincoln. He was very restless, and traveled all over the country, spreading the disease, by shaking hands, as the itch used to be propagated, in that far-off period, when it was called "the prairie digs."

Another peculiarity of the disease in Mr. Bryan, was that it made him avaricious. He raved without ceasing, and the infection made other victims of the trouble believe that he spoke as a prophet, seer and revelator, and he made them pay for listening, and then they went away, and pawed dust on themselves and bellowed, like cattle. Believing that he was like primitive man, in the fable of Plato, combining both genders in himself, he would be seized with an active fit, in what he believed to be his female side, and would insist upon talking to audiences com-

posed of women only. This spread the disease, to some extent, among their sex, in which, it was attended by violent hysteria, and an effort to wear trousers and short hair.

It is feared that the trouble has permanently affected Mr. Bryan, having passed into the tertiary stage. In that stage, he is now found denying that there is anybody in the world, but himself. When his attention is called, sharply, to any other public man in the country, he immediately challenges him to come forward, and show proofs of his existence.

His neighbors maintained such a rigid quarantine against him in 1896 and 1900, that the disease has disappeared from Nebraska. It is believed—and indeed hoped—in Lincoln, that Mr. Bryan may remain, to become a permanent asset of the town, that he may attract political pathologists, who desire to make a study of morbid morality. By adding a few pickle jars of morbid anatomy, double-headed rats, and five-legged calves, tumors, and another jaw-bone of an ass, to Mr. Bryan, it is believed that the capital of Nebraska may have a museum of abnormal products, that will draw visitors.—San Francisco Call, April 12.

**COMBINATION OFFER.**

Attention is called to an advertisement on the last page of this issue, which gives in detail the splendid combination offer, of THE CONSERVATIVE, with fifteen volumes by Theodore Roosevelt. There never was a better opportunity to get so much good reading for so small a sum of money.

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