

WHAT'S THE MATTER IN IOWA

Some Reasons Given for the Slump Shown by the State Census.

A CASE OF TOO MUCH PROSPERITY

Gains in Industries and Loss in Number of Farms—High Priced Land Prevents Immigration—Some Interesting Figures.

John Brigham, state librarian of Iowa, presents in the Boston Transcript several explanatory reasons for the decrease in the population of Iowa as shown by the state census. Replying to the question, "What's the matter with Iowa?" Mr. Brigham says: "With scarcely a break in its record for abundant crops and with comparatively good prices for its products, with a steady increase in the area of its land under cultivation, with an annual increase in the aggregate of its trade and manufacture and an undiminished output from its coal and gypsum mines and quarries, with fast accumulating deposits in its banks and a phenomenal reduction of late years in the number and aggregate of its farms, on the real and personal property of its citizens, why should there be this falling off in its population?"

"In the first place it must be remembered that Iowa is an old settled state; that its free lands disappeared many years ago; that it is still very heavily agricultural, and in the nature of things its population would not vastly increase as is the case in the newer or more industrially developed states around it. The census figures for the last decades plainly show this. In the period from 1860 to 1870, just after the civil war, the growth was from 1,134,000 to 1,318,000. But since 1870 progress has been comparatively slow. The year 1870 showed 1,314,000; 1880, 1,624,615; 1890, 1,911,890; 1900, 2,231,862. Now comes the state census of this year with 2,216,068. It will thus be seen that the percentage of gain in each decade from 1870 has steadily declined, and for the whole period from 1870 to 1900, thirty years, it was only about 100 per cent. Curiously enough, that is almost the same as the percentage of gain of the entire nation for that period, that gain being from 38,000,000 to 76,000,000, showing Iowa to be, what its people have always claimed, the typical American state. But, as the census figures hardly expected by any except those who had watched matters very closely.

"Not Much of a Surprise. "Had these figures been sprung upon us in 1885 we might have charged them up to prohibition. Had they confronted us in 1895 we might have attributed them to the return of the saloon. The unwelcome result cannot be traced to either of these conditions, for under prohibition liquor was sold regardless of law in the counties favoring the sale of liquor; under the mule law, now in operation, prohibition obtains in a majority of the counties of the state.

"To those of us who have been in a position to watch the current of other of these conditions, for under prohibition liquor was sold regardless of law in the counties favoring the sale of liquor; under the mule law, now in operation, prohibition obtains in a majority of the counties of the state.

"Let me give the readers of the Transcript a picture which has been reproduced many times in the pages of Iowa's ninety-nine counties—often, naturally, in the older counties of the state:

"Two farmers, whose farms adjoin, having long since recovered from the hard times following the crucial year, 1893, find themselves with several thousand dollars in the bank and with new and costly labor-saving machinery standing idle, calling loudly for more worlds to conquer. Naturally both farmers develop ambition for more land. They 'got together.' The result is that the richer, or the more home-loving, buys his neighbor's land and said neighbor joins the first landseeker's excursion to northern Minnesota, Manitoba, Alberta, Oklahoma or Texas, where cheap lands woo those in whose breasts burns strongly the pioneer instinct coupled with the ambition to enjoy large holdings of land.

"Take another instance, reproduced in hundreds of cases all about us. A farmer has several sons comfortably settled on small farms about him. A subtle land agent enters this modern Eden, or a land company's colored and pictured folders find their way therein through the postoffice. To the young farmer comes the belated thought of old Westaway in Phillip's latest novel—the thought of and-a-bit of the face of the solid earth—spread for your service to do what you please with. To know 'tis yours—field after field—to be a duke of the kingdom an' own more than you can see from the top of a hill! 'Tis a most majestic picture! Our young farmers have their bit of land, but it is not a kingdom large enough to satisfy their newly-fed ambition. And so the new thought develops into a veritable lust for land—the result of which is the sale of several farms to the rich, land-lustful farmer, or farmers, of the neighborhood, or to the city capitalist seeking safe investment in the country.

"Decrease in Number of Farms. "Here let me fall back upon the state census of 1905 and the United States census of 1903 as a substantial basis for my illustration. (Thanks to Mr. A. H. Davidson, director, and Dr. R. H. Patterson, editor, of the state census, for my access to the still incomplete census of 1905.) Taking five of the first six on the list of Iowa counties, I find that in 1900 there were 2,387 farms in Adair, and in 1905 there are 2,258. In Adams five years ago there were 1,969 farms, now there are but 1,825. In Appanoose in 1900 there were 2,536, now there are 2,059. In Audubon in 1900 there were 1,988, now there are 1,837. In Benton in 1900 there were 2,774, now there are 2,099.

"While these figures are not conclusive from the statistician's standpoint to the general readers and the superficial student of affairs, they indicate with sufficient clearness a tendency growing out of our new prosperity and of the new ambition which it has aroused.

"But another condition goes far to explain the falling off in our population. In times past, Iowa has been the El Dorado of the young and ambitious farmer of Sweden, Norway, Russia, Germany, Bohemia and Holland. What immigration was greatest Iowa land was selling at from \$5 to \$15 an acre. Now is readily commands from \$15 to \$30 an acre. Our new prosperity has been the ambitious home-seekers of Europe—and to the ambi-

tious young men of the eastern states as well—an almost prohibitive wall, turning the tide of immigration round us and into well-advertised northern Minnesota, Dakota, Manitoba and Alberta. It is self-evident that the poor young farmer of Sweden or Norway, with \$500 saved or borrowed for investment in land, will naturally prefer 100 acres in Minnesota or elsewhere at \$5 an acre to five acres in Iowa at \$30 an acre.

"Let me partially verify these figures by a glance at the state census of 1880 in comparison with that of 1860.

"Twenty years ago Adair county, Iowa, with a population of 14,192 had 1,523 foreign-born. In 1880 it has a population of 15,111, with 1,170 foreign-born. "Adams county: Population in 1880, 12,140; foreign-born, 1,165. In 1900, population, 12,302; foreign-born, 79. "Allamakee: Population in 1880, 18,555; foreign-born, 1,150. In 1900, population, 18,221; foreign-born, 2,086. "Benton: Population in 1880, 23,902; foreign-born, 4,225. In 1900, population, 24,117; foreign-born, 2,857.

"It will thus be seen that while Iowa's losses in native-born citizens in, fifteen and twenty years ago, by emigration to the Dakotas, Louisiana, northern California and other regions, inviting immigration, were made good by emigration from Scandinavia, Germany, etc., the increased price of land in Iowa of late years has in a large measure shut off this new supply of population, turning aside to other fields the thousands who, by reason of individual and family associations, coupled with the many material advantages offered by the state, would naturally be drawn to Iowa.

"Railroad Discrimination. "I am aware that some would attribute this falling off in population to freight discriminations against our state. That there are and for years have been unjust discriminations against Iowa farmers, stockmen and farmers has been proved over and over again. While in some measure the injustice has been lessened, the fact of unjust discrimination yet remains. At the present time our stockmen are aroused as they never have been, before the termination in obtain relief, their purpose being to unite with aggrieved stockmen in other states in carrying to congress their demand for relief. That this condition has hindered the general prosperity of the state can scarcely be denied; but the fact remains that in the face of this long-standing discrimination our farm property has steadily advanced in value, our manufacturers have increased in number and in volume of business and all the principal shipping points of the state show an increase in population—the principal shipping point, Des Moines, having an increase of 12,239 in five years.

"There are those who account for the falling off by attributing it to the greater thoroughness of the national census of 1900, owing to the larger compensation per capita paid the nation's census enumerators over that paid by the state. There may be something in this; but, in the judgment of those who know most about it, there never has been a state census quite as exhaustive as the one now nearing completion. In many instances those having it in charge have not been content with first returns, but have followed them with thorough local investigation, fully satisfying themselves that their final figures are close approximations to actual facts.

"No search where you will for the cause of our decrease in population, or, if you choose to put it that way, the reason of our failure to increase in population, at the end of your search you will find the conclusion forced upon you that the general cause is more and no less than 'too much prosperity at home; too much cheap land elsewhere.'"

ANTIS WILL WAIT FOR COWELL
Decide Not to Try to Force Meeting of Committee in Chairman's Absence.

Falling down badly in their attempt to get a majority of the republican county committee to call a meeting regardless of the amenities due the chairman, leaders in the Fontanelle movement have decided to let it drop at least until after a conference is held with Chairman Cowell. The latter is expected back from New York Saturday and as soon as he arrives a delegation of antis will meet him. Besides asking for a committee meeting as soon as possible they will say frankly that they want the committee to call a primary election for the sole purpose of choosing delegates to the state convention, September 14. They admit that what they want is to make a fight to gain control of the state committee memberships from this county. To this end they insist that an expensive primary be held, but do not advance any method for meeting the expense. The antis are in such minority in the county committee that their demand for the places on the state committee is regarded as hopeless if directed there.

BABY PRAYS FOR THE ICEMAN
Juvenile Citizen with a Hunch for Coolness Includes Daily Visitor in His Prayer.

A young American living with his parents on North Twenty-fourth street, between Ames avenue and Cuming street, broke up a rather solemn occasion Thursday evening by invoking the divine blessing on the iceman, who makes daily visits to the home in question. The parents of the young hopeful have been trying to raise him in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by having him say his prayers every evening just before bedtime. During the recent heated term the boy has given particular attention to the iceman. Thursday evening he began his prayer by saying: "Dod bless papa, Dod bless mamma, Dod bless gran'ma, Dod bless me and Dod bless the iceman." "Why, Arthur, what do you mean by saying 'Dod bless the iceman,'" interposed his fond mother. "Well, I mean it," replied the boy, his little face full of seriousness.

DEMOCRATS HAVE A MEETING
County Committee is to Hold Session Saturday to Name Delegates to State Convention.

Principally to endorse the selection by a committee of delegates to the state convention the democratic county committee will meet Saturday afternoon at 4 o'clock at the Paxton hotel. No fight is on and the only difficulty in choosing delegates is to get men who will half promise that they will go to Lincoln. The indications are that the Douglas county delegation will favor Judge Silas A. Holcomb as a candidate to succeed himself on the supreme bench. Some apprehension is felt that perhaps Judge Holcomb may not accept another nomination. He has been reduced almost to an invalid state by rheumatism and his friends are inclined to think he would welcome retirement. So far as known there will be no aspirants for the place on the ticket from Douglas and no candidates for regents of the state university have put themselves forward.

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