



Devoted to The Interests of The Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union and other Kindred Organizations.

VOL. I.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1890.

NO. 23.

THE REFORM PRESS.

IT IS THE LAST AND ONLY HOPE FOR THE PEOPLE.

We Must Support It, and Loyally Too, or We Shall be Stranded in a Brief Time—It May Cost Us Great Effort, But the Effort Must be Made—Knights of Industry.

Written for The Chicago Express.

The hope of the country is the reform press. We must instill this truth in the minds of the people. It daily becomes more and more apparent. The people must be educated and our only means to that end is the reform press. No matter how many noble speeches are made, or articles written, if the masses do not hear or read they can have no influence upon the public mind. It daily grows clearer to all who observe, the minions of greed and class legislation have the absolute control of the old party, secular, and, nearly all, the religious press. The usurers and extortioners who eat their bread in the sweat of other men's faces, the devourers of widow's houses, who lay burdens on other men's shoulders grievous to be borne, hold strict surveillance over the old party and nearly all of the church press. I have been since my majority a member of the Methodist Episcopal church; my father and mother died in the faith. Have now two brothers in the ministry and firmly believe in the principles of Christianity. But in shame and sorrow am compelled to admit that in the great impending conflict between incorporate wealth and greed, with a very few exceptions, the church press is either silent or in actual sympathy with, and advocates the cruel measures used to grind the spirit, nobler life and independent livings out of the people.

In the Methodist Episcopal church I do not know of one paper that comes out boldly and champions the cause of the people against the bankers, the bondholders, the usurers, the extortioners. If one, I will gladly accept the information and subscribe for it. They are silent or defenders of the men who "devour widows' houses" and for a pretense make long prayers, and any truth to expose the methods of oppression is carefully excluded from their columns. If they are so ignorant they cannot see the signs of the times, they are unfit to be teachers; they must be taught and they ought to be open to the truth and conviction. If they do know the situation and will not expose or rebuke the measures of the extortion practiced in open day, to condone such crimes is to be guilty of them. If they as observing men must, and

account of the "respectability" of the pressors shut their eyes, they put themselves in the class of men to whom Christ said, when here, "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky but not the signs of the times."

We hear much said about an independent judiciary. Nearly all the states have enacted laws to prevent the bribery of their officers by railroad corporations, carrying them on half or no fare. There is just as much need of an independent clergy and church press as of any other class of public men. These corporations, insurance companies and banks are making a specialty of an attempt to influence and bribe the clergy and church press, as they have every class of public men. If what we see, or rather do not see, is to be accounted for by the usual reckoning on human nature, they are in a great measure succeeding. The most brazen shameless advocates they have had for ten years are among a class of clergy who sing psalms at the back doors of usurers for pay. Now we observe the usurers wage slave holder' press commence to tack on the "right reverend" before the D. D. and LL. D. Until recently only a small per cent were "right reverend" that is, we suppose, a little more so than anybody else; that is to say, the church of the millionaires, John Bull's church amity in this country. Now, the secular press that reports the purchase of American trusts, breweries, mills and industries by English capital, with a smirk of satisfaction, tacks the right reverend and a long string of Ds. and Ls. at the other end of the names of the Methodist bishops.

There is another matter that has caused me to think much along this line, that is, with what unanimity the church press and clergy jump on the saloon and liquor traffic with both feet and with what sycophantic whining, sickening platitudes and glittering generalities, they bow and scrape before the twin sister of the saloon and elder brother of the traffic, the usurer and extortioner. Is it because the traffic is not so "respectable"? If we read right, Christ never but once in his sorrowful, painful life of love and poverty was so outraged in His feelings and such indignation kindled in His breast, against any class of scoundrels on earth as to resort to actual force, only when He took a "scourge of small cords", overthrew the tables of the money-changers and drove them out of the temple, saying they had made His "Father's house a den of thieves."

Brethren, how many of you have paid up policies on your lives? How many of you have half fare or free passage on the

railroads? How many of you have sons in the employ of the railroads? How many of you have usurers in your churches who dictate to you and your congregation nearly all your measures? Do not all speak at once. If the readers of our reform papers, who take these church and secular ones, who ignore your afflictions and give aid and comfort to your oppressors, would write to your editors, ask them why they have nothing to say; and if they have nothing to say for your cause tell them to send their papers to, and get their pay from the classes they serve, it would have good effect. Tell them you will not assist directly or indirectly any map or organization that gives aid or comfort to the classes taking from you and your class your very livings. And stop their papers; the church papers are the most expensive. In this great contest against organized greed and legal robbery they hang around the opposition and give it aid and comfort. Then go to work with a hearty good will to circulate and get readers for our reform press. It is our only hope of speedy relief; in it we have a well-grounded hope. Get clubs, send your old papers to your friends; the seed will grow, it has grown, it is growing, thank God.

Sow the seed as you do the seed for the harvest and it will come. The tyrants are helping you; they are plowing the ground for you with the plow of bankruptcy and poverty. They water the seed you sow with mortgage, tax and sheriff sale. Tell the fat, sleek, well-fed editors whose eyes stick out with fatness to send their papers to the men who feed them. Let them try it one year, they will soon both grow tired. Why should you feed such men voluntarily? You feed them enough through compulsion. And the same of the old party press. It has, and does now, insult you and your cause, boycotts you and your press, slanders the men who plead your cause. Let it get its living at the shambles where it sells itself. If you ever succeed in regaining your independence you will do it in spite of that class of press. They expunge the truth to fill their pages with lies and sophistries. Let them go to their masters, crib to feed. You must be wise as serpents and harmless as doves to regain your liberties. This would be the most effective and yet harmless mode of warfare. If it were practised soon their lies and sophistries would die on their lips. The usurer is today the curse of Christendom, as he has been of every civilization; he has been the vulture who devoured its vitals while it was chained with class laws to the rocks of poverty. He is a pious, respectable rogue who steals the livery of the

church, if not of Heaven, to serve the devil in. He is the man who has bribed the legislatures and the courts for twenty years to serve his purposes. The National Bankers association is the organ of this conspiracy of vandals in this country. See how it attempted, ten years ago, to seduce your church press with a circular. Read it;

"Dear Sir:—It is in your power to sustain such daily and prominent weekly newspapers, especially the agricultural and religious press, as will oppose the issuing of greenback paper money, and that you also withhold your patronage or favors from all applicants who are not willing to oppose the government issue of money. Let the government issue the coin, and the banks issue the paper money of the country, for then we can better protect each other. To repeal the law creating national banks or to restore to circulation the government issue of money will be to provide the people with money, and will therefore seriously effect your individual profits as bankers and lenders. See your member of congress at once and engage him to support our interest that we may control legislation.

"Signed by the Secretaries."

These scoundrels have been sowing tares while you, the husbandmen, were asleep. The harvest has come, and it is poverty for you, millions for the civilized, pious(?) vandals. And the "watchmen on the walls" of your Zion either give no sound or give an uncertain one; in a word, the watchman watches for the usurers, let them pay him.

O. D. JONES.

A Congressman's Salary.

Atchison Patriot; Congressman S. R. Peters, in announcing his determination not to be a candidate again for congress, gives as his reason, "I can't afford it" in other words the \$5,000 a year received by him is not a sufficient amount to pay his living as a congressman. The salary of Mr. Peters aggregates the product of a dozen Kansas farms and yet he cannot live on it. And he is right in one sense of the word. A false system of living in vogue in Washington. Wealth aristocracy have captured the cap and that representative whose string is the longest stands to the front. The poor man must imitate him in his extravagant manner of living, must receive and entertain, must wine and dine, must be arrayed in purple and fine lines, or drop out of sight and into insignificance. It is a remarkable state of things that a Kansas congressman cannot live on all Washington what a dozen Kansas farmers and their wives and children and poor kin do live on out on Kansas prairie.