

# THE NONPARTISAN LEADER

Official Organ of the Nonpartisan League of North Dakota.

H. E. Behrens ..... Editor and Manager

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### THAT OUGHT TO HELP SOME

**A** News despatch from New York affirms that the government at Washington may "frown" upon the move now on foot to organize a combination of steel companies.

That would be a becoming modification of the government's attitude towards combinations.

A frown don't hurt very much, you know.

In the past the government has been in the habit of bringing these gigantic trusts up and giving them a good sound slap on the wrists.

But now it is only going to frown, and probably say, "Now Johnny, don't do that."

And Johnny will procede to do it.

### A NEW STORY COMING

**W**E have made arrangements with the publishers to begin very soon the publication in The Leader of the greatest story ever written by an American.

It will be a Story of Wheat. It will be a story of the struggles of the farmers in another state to emancipate themselves from conditions of wrong and injustice. All critics have without hesitation called it the highest achievement in American fiction. But it is not really fiction; it is fact.

Publication in serial form will begin as soon as the present story, "The Tinder Box," is completed.

At the end of the Story of Wheat we shall print a remarkable verification by another writer of all the conditions set forth therein. This will amaze and intensely interest you.

### OUR NEWS SERVICE

**W**E present our compliments to our esteemed contemporaries, the other newspapers of North Dakota, and invite them to help themselves to the exclusive news on which we have beaten them this week.

They will learn through us for the first time of the most important and sensational legal action that has been had in North Dakota for many years. They will learn how the Governor of the State has been brought into the case. They will learn for the first time the exact inside facts concerning the school house scandal in Fargo, which threatens to become a state issue. They will learn other things that will instruct and astonish them and that they have not yet had the pleasure to give to their readers.

We have no disposition because of these achievements to gloat over our less fortunate brethren. Some of them are so busy gathering the money to be paid on Governor Hanna's mortgages that they naturally cannot think of anything else, and some of them have not had any news for so long that they do not know it when they see it.

Let them all come to the Leader and help themselves. They will find in these columns every week not only the first news of many interesting events but a wide variety of other matter to charm and to instruct.

Having the largest circulation in the State we have naturally the best newspaper.

### FARMERS CAN ORGANIZE

**F**ARMERS have been told so many hundreds of thousands of times that they cannot organize, that they will not stick together, that they are hopelessly divided and there is no use to try, that they have come to believe it.

This advice is first made by those who do not want the farmers to organize. Then the farmers get to saying it themselves.

Then they carry out the advice by NOT organizing.

The only reason why farmers cannot organize is because they will not. The reason they do not organize is because they do not try. They are afraid to try. They listen to the soothing voice of the farmer-loving politicians who tell them they cannot stick together.

It is strange that wheat buyers can organize and wheat growers cannot.

It is strange that cattle buyers can organize and cattle raisers cannot.

It is strange all the way down.

Politicians can organize. No one denies that.

Lawyers have great success in maintaining organizations.

Bankers have most perfect organizations.

So do other businessmen.

Doctors, dentists, photographers, plumbers, carpenters, stone masons and preachers organize, yes and even the undertakers organize.

And most all these classes are at a unit in saying that farmers cannot organize.

The reason the farmer has not organized is because he has believed all this bunk. He has failed to see the reason that he has failed to organize is because he has believed that he could not and has believed that he could not because he was told that he could not.

But the farmer can organize. He can organize just as effectively as any other class can. He will organize when he comes to believe that he can and see the absolute necessity of it.

He need not organize because he loves his fellow farmer. He should organize for self protection. Bankers do not, necessarily love each other. But they organize as a matter of self preservation, as a matter of self-protection—not only against others but against their fellow bankers.

The farmer is producing a plenty now. But he is not getting his proportionate share—because he is not organized. All he needs to do is to organize and stay organized and use his organization in his own interest.

The farmer raises the wheat; but the grain manipulator raises the long green.

### SOME CO-OPERATION, THIS

**A**N Exchange states that a new movement, which will ring the death knell to the little backwoods school house on the hill and be the dawn of the era of rock roads, is now on the ways down in Missouri.

This is very interesting.

It is more interesting to note the identity of the interests that are sponsoring this new movemnt.

The report asserts that the Missouri Bankers' Association is making the first definite step. As a close ally comes the state board of agriculture. Following close on the heels of these come the railroads.

The plan as outlined is that the Bankers' Association in co-operation with the state board of agriculture will "work up sentiment" in every county in the state in the interest of good roads, farm advisers, better schools and more scientific methods of agriculture.

Men representing the bankers' association in each county will be charged with the duty of organizing each county. Then the state board will step in and send out speakers and workers to aid.

Then will follow—

Well, now what will follow?

In the first place it may be set down as a foregone conclusion that if the bankers, association, the railroads and their allies do anything for the country the farmers will pay for it.

Not only so, but the farmers will pay interest on the money expended and the time spent by these good samaritans in "working up the sentiment" and preparing for the harvest.

And when the harvest does come these gentlemen will get the bulk of that.

The indications are that the farmer is becoming sick and disgusted with all these mushy platitudes of advice and these proffers of free help. This practice of having "experts" (?) who have learned farming from books forever dinning advice into the farmer on how to farm so as to produce more is getting on the nerves of the farmer.

He has discovered that when businessmen, bankers and professional farmers seek closer relations with the farmer that it usually results in some advantage to someone besides the farmer.

It is the silliest nonsense to talk of co-operation between these men and institutions and the farmer. There is no ground upon which they can meet in common. What is to the interest of one is not to the interest of the other. The farmer wants to get a high price for his products and the businessman wants to get those products cheaply. Harmonize those conflicting interests and you can mix fire and gun cotton without getting an explosion.

### FIGURES AND JUST TALK

**S**OME of our state daily papers have been indulging in serious verbal eruptions on the alleged grounds that certain reports have been sent "broad cast" over the land to the effect that North Dakota is heavily mortgaged. Indeed one report is alleged to have stated the per centage of mortgaged land in the state.

From the vehement denials that have issued forth one is led to believe that these reports may have been exaggerated. At all events, in order to be fair one should suspend judgment until some tangible facts are submitted. Unsupported charges prove nothing. Neither do unsupported and vociferous denials disprove anything.

The Nonpartisan Leader has no desire to misrepresent these matters either one way or the other. It is non-partisan on the question. It sees no need of plunging into a maze of vituperative verbiage and venting spleen against an imaginary foe—if indeed it be imaginary.

If the charges made are true then the quicker we find it out and rectify the conditions the better. The sane and fair thing to do would be to get the facts. Having determined the facts, then we can proceed to remove the cause.

Nothing will be gained by smearing things over with a lot of platitudinal booster-mush. Shutting our eyes and deceiving our neighbors will not remove the actual facts nor remedy the actual conditions.

There is no necessity of remaining in the dark. It is possible to determine the facts. The various Court House records will reveal the conditions that exist in every county in the state. Need we shy at them? Need we be afraid to face the truth? Should we try to cover up the facts?

At present the Nonpartisan Leader takes no posi-

### THE BANKS AND INTEREST CHARGES

**D**O banks take extortionate interest rates? It has been charged that they do. Borrowers have made the charge.

The banks have denied it.

Now comes John Skelton Williams, Comptroller of the Currency, and in a speech before the Kentucky Bankers' Association at Frankfort, charges that national banks do take an extortionate interest rate.

Mr. Williams says he has the reports, so we take it for granted that he knows.

He says that some banks take as high as 40 to 60 per cent and that one bank took, from a washerwoman, 2,400 per cent interest.

And our mother's bible forbids usury!

Banks in the cotton and wheat sections are the worst offenders.

Texas leads off with 315.

Oklahoma is a close second, with 300.

NORTH DAKOTA COMES IN THIRD WITH 90.

NINETY BANKS IN NORTH DAKOTA THAT TAKE AN EXTORTIONATE RATE OF INTEREST.

This list includes national banks only.

If, as Mr. Williams says, these facts are "blood-curdling and reads like a story from "Darkest Africa," what would the story read like if we had the FACTS regarding private banks and state banks and miscellaneous money lenders?

In face of these facts it is hard to believe that the bankers have at heart the best interests of the farmers—unless "best interests" means big interest.

tion of an intensely interested spectator. It occupies the position of an impartial judge.

But it is not going to remain this way long. If some facts are not forthcoming soon the Leader will see to it that they are. Whatever these facts are the Leader will give them to the public.

If the farmers of this state are unreasonably heavily mortgaged The Leader wants to know it. If they are not it wants to know it.

Let's cut out the "talk" and have some figures.

## MY PHILOSOFY

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

**I** ain't, ner don't p'tend to be,  
Much posted on philofosy;  
But there is times, when all alone  
I work out idees of my own.  
And of these same there is a few  
I'd like to jest refer to you  
Pervidin' that you don't object  
To listen clos't and rickollect.

I allus argy that a man  
Who does about the best he can  
Is plenty good enough to suit  
This lower mundane institute.  
No matter of his daily walk  
Is subject fer his neighbors talk,  
And critic-minds of evry whim  
Jest all git up and go fer him!

My doctern is to lay aside  
Contentions, and be satisfied;  
Jest do your best, and praise er blame  
That follers that counts jest the same.

### A BIT OF PHILOSOPHY FROM NEVER TALK BACK

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

**N**ever talk back to a feller  
that's abusin' you—  
des' let him carry on, and rip,  
and snort, and swear,  
And when he finds his blamin' and defamin'  
's Jes' amusin' you,  
You've got him clean kaflummixed,  
and you want to hold him there!

Never talk back, and wake up the whole  
community  
And call a man a liar over law, er  
Politics.—  
You can lift and land him furder and  
with grace fuller impunity  
With one good Jolt of silence than a  
half a dozen kicks!