

PAYING THE FIDDLER

Republican Victory Followed by a General Advance of Freight Rates

Since the "winning of the west," which cost the railroads a pretty penny in the way of advertising tax bulletins, and campaign contributions of money and passes to the republican machine, the railroads have decided that the time is ripe to increase freight rates. The following Associated press dispatch from Chicago, under date of November 20, tells the tale:

"A meeting was held today of the general freight agents of all western roads with a view to restoring the rates which were in effect January 1, 1902. Instructions to restore all such rates as could possibly be restored were issued by the executive officials and it is stated that they will be carried out to the letter.

"Independent of this meeting the Colorado lines met and began the work of restoring conditions to Colorado common points.

"The plan is to go on the old basis of rates the first of the year, which will necessitate the withdrawal of all the reduced tariffs placed in effect since January 1, 1902.

"Since the issuing of the injunctions by the United States courts fully 1,200 reduced tariffs have been filed with the interstate commerce commission at Washington and are in effect today. If it is found possible to take out the majority of these tariffs, the western roads will enjoy an increased revenue next year amounting to several million dollars. Whether the rate raising will go beyond the restoration of the old tariffs remains to be seen.

"Several reasons are assigned by railroad officials for a readjustment of freight schedules, the most important being the increased cost of material which is used in railroad construction. Another is the general raise in wages. Most railroad officials cannot see why the cost of every other commodity which is for sale is increased and freight rates stay down. It is expected that so long as the present plethora of freight traffic keeps up the railroads will be able to maintain higher tariffs without serious rate cutting."

This simply means that the producers of Nebraska must pay an additional million or two in freight rates, without any recourse whatever. Had the fusion state ticket been elected, half a million dollars of additional railroad taxes would have been collected, thus relieving the other taxpayers of that much burden; but, although the issue was squarely presented, the people who took sufficient interest to vote at all decided that they care more for a sham battle over the liquor question than anything else.

The election of the fusion state ticket would not have prevented this raise in interstate rates, but an increase in railroad taxes would have nullified its effect to a great extent. But the republican victories were essentially railroad victories, and this gives the managers encouragement to take a little more than the traffic will bear—if such a thing is possible. The Independent has sympathy for the 91,000 men who voted for Thompson, because they are the unwilling victims of this railroad robbery, without any hope of recovering any portion of the amount stolen; but it has none whatever for those who voted the republican ticket or stayed in the cornfields on election day: they are getting what they asked for.

At present, while the immense crops of Nebraska must be to a great extent marketed, this increase of rates will mean a decrease of probably 5 cents a bushel on corn and 10 cents a bushel on wheat, and the "traffic will bear" the higher rate. But after the major portion of the crop is in the hands of the grain combine, rate-cutting will begin. That will not help the farmer who sold a thousand bushels of corn at a loss of \$50. But, as a great many of the farmers seemed anxious to lose in this way, let them "grin and bear it." They must pay the fiddler.

A Olish Usury

Editor Independent: Your request to spread the light to save the cause of justice is at hand, and am sorry to say that the common people are dead to the vital issues that alone will save a free people. My heart bleeds for them as I write.

God said to His favored people, "Thou shalt not loan with usury, neither money nor victual nor anything thou shalt loan with usury." To say that man can annul this law by a fixed standard of interest, differing to suit the money manipulation, is false in the extreme. Does God's law change to suit the will of man, or does man to have salvation alter

God's law?

Right here I want to say that our local republican paper, the Calvert Gazette, a few weeks since published a piece stating that J. Pierpont Morgan and his firm control six billion dollars, and at the same time said that all the gold coin in the entire world is only four billions of dollars. Now, suppose Mr. Morgan & Co. should demand payment in gold—the entire world could only pay two-thirds of his claim, for they must pay in gold if it is demanded. Do you know that at 6 per cent interest, the bogus bondholders in sixteen years and a few months and days would have passing through their hands the entire wealth of the United States?

Another law in the same Book, by the same God, reads that each of his people should have a portion in the land of promise. Has not this been termed the "land of promise," where we could have civil and religious liberty? The United States stated that a portion was 160 acres—why not let this be the limit, if it is to be between government and man, why not between man and man? God certainly intended for man to live somewhere in this world or He never in His wisdom would have created man.

Here is where the burden lies, and not in what money is made out of, but how money can be used. I would say that law alone makes money, and it is good only when there is something to tax and the power to tax and the power to collect. By way of conclusion, remember the King Nabob.

JOSHUA JONES.

Broom's Island, Md.

How Long, Oh How Long!

Editor Independent: Yours of the 12th inst. received. Enclosed please find 10 cents for three months' subscription to The Independent.

The Pennsylvania railroad has just raised the price of wages 10 per cent all along the line. They make a great hurrah all over about this; you will see it in every paper you pick up, while the national banks get the whole dollar for nothing—and lots of them—and they are exempt from taxation besides. The manufacturer, trusts and combines are protected by tariff laws that keep out competition from all other countries by these tariff duties and are enabled to restrict output to a point whence they can obtain their own prices for home consumption of their wares.

While the government protects the manufacturer from competition, the same government is giving away hundreds of thousands of acres of government land to alien immigrants to make competitors for the American farmer.

The protection given to manufacturers enables him to double his prices on the farmer, while they are making competitors for the farmer that is cutting the price of farm products in two by overproduction.

Manufacturers fix the prices of wages largely on what it costs the wage-earner to live and by keeping up the competition among the farmers they are enabled to fix wages at about one-half price in this unequal deal (or discrimination) against the American farmer. Roosevelt's irrigation scheme will make many thousands more competitors for the farmer. All working in favor of the trusts, combinations, bankers, etc., and against the farmer and wage-earner who dig all this wealth out of the ground.

How long, oh, how long, is this unequal deal to go on?

JOHN T. MARTIN.

Pittsfield, Pa.

(The Independent can agree with Mr. Martin that alien ownership of American land should be stopped. None but American citizens, either by birth or naturalization, should be permitted to own a foot of American soil. But it cannot agree with him regarding "overproduction" of farm crops. The world is scarcely ever a year ahead of starvation at best, and the idea that it would be made poorer because a few million acres of arid land should be made to produce bountiful crops is not tenable. Perhaps the Pennsylvania farmer might have more competitors—but there would be more mouths to feed.—Ed. Ind.)

A Kind Invitation

Editor Independent: Some time ago I received a letter from you in which you write to me as though I had not been taking your paper. The facts are I have taken it for some time and expect to take it for some time to come.

I do not take it because I exactly or at all agree with the ideas your paper represents, but because your paper ably represents the principles taught by the once great people's party. And although the party is dead, dead, dead, its teachings live on. The party was given up as a sacrifice on the altar of

The Man Inside

A Maver suit and overcoat don't care which way



the wind blows. He knows he is proof against north winds and zero mercury. It don't cost much either to have this weather proof protection, \$5.50 to \$13.50 pays for suits most dealers get \$8.00 to \$20.00 for.

If you want us to show you the proof of our statement send us your address by first mail and we will place the evidence in your hands for your consideration. Our mail order trade is rapidly growing and you owe it to yourself to get our prices and examine our samples. You will simply be out a postal card and you may be ahead many dollars. Let us hear from you.

MAYER BROS.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

our country for the benefit of humanity.

I did believe in the teachings of the people's party, but I can't say that I do any longer. My term of school in the populist party graduated me in the teachings of its great representatives, but to advance me to the primer of socialism.

We no longer have any people's party. We must seek a new home. I could not—I would not go back to my old home in the republican party. I believe the house that provides a roof for the democratic party is in a worse dilapidated condition than even the republican roof. The teachings of the people's party here advanced me to the idea of living in the best home provided and I believe the socialist room and house is far superior to any yet provided and for the first time in my life I feel fully satisfied with my political home.

I believe the future political contests are going to be waged between the wealth producing classes under the lead of socialism and the non-wealth producers, but wealth consumers under the head of the republican party. I shall accept any position allotted me under the flag of socialism, no matter how low, rather than the most exalted position under the flag of exploitation.

Excuse me for writing you these rambling sentences, but I could not neglect the opportunity of attempting to sow a little seed for the spreading of the cause of humanity.

I ask you to join your efforts with the socialist party. You have got to select a home. You can't think of going back to the old party you renounced and left. Come go along with us. Go with the party that says let all the people own all of the means of production, distribution and communication in the name of Uncle Sam for the benefit of all of the people.

You can do columns of good with us. You can do no more good as a populist. Get the gallant leader, Bryan, with whom you seem to be closely associated to lead the democratic part of the democratic party into the fold of the greatest democratic party on the face of the earth—the socialist party.

Read! Think!! Act!!!

J. C. HARKNESS.

Northport, Wash.

(The Independent has no quarrel with Mr. Harkness or the socialists, but it has not been convinced that the collective ownership of all the means of production is necessary to a reasonably complete solution of the problem; and it cannot advocate things it does not firmly and conscientiously believe in.

As a mere abstract theory a beautiful picture can be drawn of socialism. But the ideal anarchists, going to

the extreme opposite, can paint one equally beautiful. Human nature is a factor that must be dealt with in this great problem, and nothing practical can be accomplished which neglects the passions and prejudices of mankind. The Independent believes it can see a sufficiently clear line of demarcation between some kinds of business and other kinds, and while naturally individualistic in its leanings, can see no permanent remedy for existing evils which does not go to the length of collective ownership of such businesses as require special if not exclusive privileges. The Independent can join hands with the socialists in securing municipal ownership of water works, electric lights, street railroads, etc. It can go with them in securing state insurance and state stock yards. It will go with them in securing national ownership of railroads, telegraphs, etc., for thus far both populist and socialist travel the same road.

The methods employed to bring about these things, although they ought not to if honorable, will nevertheless cut a great deal of figure. Here is where human nature, where passion and prejudice come in. Millions of republicans, democrats, populists, socialists, prohibitionists, and independents believe in municipal ownership, using that in its generic sense, of what are termed public utilities or public services. But party prejudice prevents—or at least has thus far prevented—them from "getting together." The republican will have none of these unless they come through his party. The populist will not go with the socialist because the latter wants to go so far. The socialist will not go with the populist, because the populist is so "milk and watery" that he will not go far enough.

Undoubtedly fusion has cast the people's party into the shadow—it is not dead, but sleeping. Perhaps not in this generation will more of the socialist demands be secured than what the populists ask for. Is not it the part of wisdom for socialists to help awaken the people's party? Step by step one goes a long journey; it cannot be accomplished by a single bound.—Ed. Ind.)

The Lincoln Daily Star, in common with all other republican papers, is industriously preaching the gospel of "let well enough alone," while at the same time pretending that the republican party is a party of progress. The "stone age" would never have been passed if man had been content to let well enough alone.

Readers of The Independent should examine the advertisements in its columns. It will pay you to read them and take advantage of the bargains offered. Always mention The Independent.