

worked regularly at his county council and parliamentary business 12 hours a day, and he always rides into town on a bicycle. Although he has lived sparingly and often found it difficult to exist within his small and occasionally fluctuating income, he has never been financially beholden to anybody.

Furthermore, year after year he has refused tempting offers of journalistic employment and lecture tours because he prized his absolute independence of all pecuniary interests above any monetary reward. Of course all his county council and parliamentary work is unpaid, and as he has contributed to the press only in furtherance of some public object he had at heart, he has never accepted payment for such work.

Now suddenly he has jumped into an income of \$10,000 a year, but his mode of life remains absolutely unchanged. He went to Buckingham palace to be sworn in as a member of the king's privy council and to kiss the royal hand on acceptance of the cabinet office of president of the local government board dressed in his invariable dark-blue serge reefer suit, black derby hat and gloveless hands, carrying neither cane nor umbrella.

The king welcomed him with especial cordiality, and told him he hoped his objection to wearing court costume would never prevent him from obeying royal commands to court entertainments. That night the premier, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, gave a cabinet dinner, and John Burns, who never possessed, or had any ambition to possess, an evening suit, sat down in his usual reefer.

He has always maintained that municipal life was the basis of a state's greatness, and under his guidance Battersea has become a model of municipal government, with the prettiest park in London for its recreations. As president of the local government board he has administrative and parliamentary supervision of municipal government throughout Great Britain.

He arrives at his office in Whitehall on foot or on a bicycle at nine o'clock in the morning, to the great consternation of officials who are accustomed to beginning work at 10:30. His energy is causing a panic in his department, for he is going systematically through each branch ascertaining its duties and methods of work, of which he has had some trying experiences from the outside.—Chicago Chronicle, of December 17.

A FARMER'S COMMENT ON THE REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

For The Public.

Our secretary of agriculture is out with an array of figures, and he says:

Another year of prosperity the greatest ever known, which makes bankers out of farmers. Production has been unequalled, reaching the highest figure yet, \$6,415,000,000. Every day farms are increasing in value at the rate of \$3,400,000.

That means nothing to the farmer, since the greater part of it went to middlemen, the farmer getting a bare living only.

The increase in the value of farms is a curse instead of a benefit. They are taxed higher and will produce no more on account of such increase. And again, it takes as much capital today to own 40 acres as it did a decade ago to own 80 acres.

King Cotton has been dethroned by the hay crop.

The boll weevil and excessive rains so reduced the cotton crop as to make that.

"Twenty billion eggs," were produced, for which he says the farmers received \$500,000,000. That would be 25 cents per dozen. Now we received 12 and 14 cents per dozen, when we had any amount to sell, so we received not over one-half that amount. Who got the other half?

And again, he says that since 1900 1,754 small national banks have been established to take care of this money. Bank deposits have risen in South Dakota 356 per cent., and in Arkansas 506 per cent. Why does he cite two States so far apart?

Some farmers have bank accounts, but they are those who inherited their lands or secured them from the government. They are few, and most of them draw pensions. Queer, is it not, that all this prosperity argument emanates from some Republican office holder or Republican politician who could not tell a gopher knoll from a potato hill?

No such statements come from farmers, because such are not the facts.

I am a farmer, practically all my life having been spent on the farm. Owing to ill health I have traveled extensively over the greater portion of the Northwest, and the same conditions obtain everywhere.

With barley at 27 to 33 cents, oats 21 cents, beef and nearly all other products of the farm below the cost of production, the farmer is far from contented. He knows something is wrong, but he has kept his face so

close to the soil that he cannot see the octopus though he feels his tentacles.

And I warn you Republican politicians that such roseate statements will not always do; you exact so great a tribute, and give altogether too little in return.

HIRAM PETTEY.

Stewartville, Minn., Dec. 11, 1905.

FOR LACK OF TEN DOLLARS.

"The romances of life may hinge on love," said Miss Annette C. Fiske, attorney of the bureau of legal advice in the Charities building, "but the tragedies of life, I believe, more often hinge on money. And among the poor, even the thrifty, hard-working poor, pitifully small amounts are sometimes enough to change the whole current of a life.

"The bureau has a case on the docket now, whose history includes the loss of a life position, the loss of a child's education, four years of poverty and hardship for a whole family, and the degeneration of a man to almost the status of a tramp, all through the want of a ten-dollar bill.

"Four years ago a conductor for the Manhattan Railway company was living in a little village on Long Island. He had held his place for 15 years, which argues that he was a man of good habits.

"His two-year-old child was taken ill and died. He had only \$25 to provide for the funeral. There was only one undertaker in the place, and he demanded a deposit of \$35.

"A funeral is a thing on which people feel themselves justified in spending money. The conductor went to a loan company down town and borrowed ten dollars. He was to pay it back at the rate of four dollars a week for three weeks, the company charging him two dollars for the use of ten dollars for three weeks. To secure the loan he assigned his salary.

"During the following week, he was ill himself, and lost some time, and with the unusual expenses of illness and death to which he had been subjected, he had only two dollars, instead of four dollars, to take to the loan company. The loan company refused to accept the two dollars, but, instead, went immediately to the railway company and demanded the man's salary.

"The company responded by discharging the man instantly. 'There,' they said, 'the man is no longer an