

declined. Compromise could not go on forever, and we know the result.

Evidently the country is now being confronted with a problem even more vital and far reaching than the abolition of negro slavery. It is more vital and far reaching, because it involves a wider emancipation. This is the social problem of modern times, involving the various phases of the concentration of wealth, and of the growth and power of monopoly and privilege.

Now again the party at present dominant is hopelessly hampered by its connections. And so fortune points this time to the Democrats, as it once pointed to the Whigs, as the party to take up the new burden of the real abolition of privilege and of the equalizing of opportunity.

This time it happens that the new burden is but the fuller and clearer recognition and acknowledgment of the long-professed principles of the party to which fortune points. Equal rights to all, and special privilege to none, has been the professed principle of the party from its noble beginning. The supreme question now is, will it translate this principle into honest action? Will it make the applications which the times demand? Too long has it been giving a half-hearted meaning to its profession of faith.

The above remarks are introductory to a comment I wish to make upon the leading article in the North American Review for February, entitled "The Political Opportunity of the South." I cannot here outline the article, but will only say that it is an appeal to Southern Democrats to bring the party back, as the author says, to the principles which it held during the long period of its ascendancy. Now upon these principles, as proclaimed by the best leaders of the party in that period—including its strong stand for local self-government and States' rights—democratic Democrats of to-day are of course ready to stand. But the tone of the article shows that the writer intends that we shall go no farther in the application of these principles than our fathers did.

The statement of a principle may be eternal; its application grows with the times. This I take to be the essential meaning of Lowell's thought about keeping abreast of Truth:

New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.
This is the thought which some

really earnest Democrats, like the writer of the article in question, seem to fail altogether to appreciate. They seem to lose sight of the evident fact that the America of to-day is not the America of 50 years ago.

I have recently seen the statement, that whereas ten per cent. of the people then owned only about 35 per cent. of the wealth of the country, now ten per cent. own about 90 per cent. I know that such definite estimates are difficult and may be somewhat erroneous; but that such a statement could be seriously made is an indication of the tremendous change that has come over the nation. Where then were the multi-millionaires on the one hand, and on the other the terrible indications of poverty that may be seen in every city? Poverty there certainly was, but not in such hordes as city slums now hold. Where then were the numberless strikes, and the unions of laborers bent upon ever increasing concessions—an evidence, in the last analysis, of the growth as well as of the need of true democracy? Where then was there any thought in America of an open and aggressive propaganda of socialism? Add to such evidences as these the increase in the power of production and the decrease in the opportunities of self-employment, and it would seem that no one could fail to see the tremendous change of conditions within the half century.

Here therefore, to repeat, is the mistake of writers like Mr. Ryan in the North American. They do not take account of modern conditions. They ignore the modern social problem, which is annually becoming less easy of peaceful solution, and will not be much longer postponed.

If the Democratic party declines the task of attempting this solution, and has only mild-tempered conservatism to offer, according to Mr. Ryan's advice, it will quite surely go the way of the Whig party and give place to a worthier heir. The time and the opportunity call for positiveness, and an aggressive application of economic principles truly democratic. No special privilege must mean no special privilege; equal opportunity must mean equal opportunity.

J. H. DILLARD.

Why not seek our taxes (public revenue) where the speculator gathers his riches—namely, from land values?—City and State, of Philadelphia.

A TRUST THAT WAS NOT SOLD TO THE TRUSTFUL.

For The Public.

The following dialogue is reported by the man from nowhere.

Smith—I hear, Brown, that you're forming a trust in spite of the dreadful threats of the administration.

Brown—Yes; it's the spirit of the age, and it seemed to me that all the other trusts sort o' made this necessary.

Smith—Indeed?

Brown—Yes; you see all the other trusts are children of the Republican party, and all "chips o' the old block," at that. This party, you know, has a main tent, and a side show called the "Reorganized Democracy;" and a single pass from any trust admits you to both shows. Now, I propose to form a trust that is not merely Democratic for publication only, but genuinely democratic—"all wool and a yard wide," you know.

Smith—But aren't you afraid the sentiment against trusts may get you into trouble? Now if Knox should—he might, you know, the thing is thinkable—isn't it well to consider what might happen if—

Brown—If a mouse should run in here with a cat in its mouth?

Smith—Don't you think the attorney general can be trusted to—

Brown—Leave off the "to."

Smith—I accept the amendment. But what are you to monopolize?

Brown—I'm going to corner misery—

Smith—Man, you're crazy! The coal trust, oil trust, beef trust and a score of other leeches are ahead of you.

Brown—Stop a bit. You're missing a distinction. They are spreading misery broadcast, not cornering it. That is the one thing they don't produce a scarcity of. I'm going to form it into a trust—incorporate it, by hokey, under the laws of New Jersey with a regular partnership name.

Smith—What name?

Brown—Grinn & Barrett. Won't that be great on an embossed letter-head, with a coat-of-arms showing a full dinner pail rampant and an empty coalhod couchant on a field of expansion?

Smith—Won't it be a bit too realistic for good art? You know art is for art's sake, and mustn't have either use or motif. But never mind that now. Tell me, is the corporation to be limited?

Brown—Not under the present expansive administration. If the people

send anyone to the white house by and by to represent them, we may contract a bit.

Smith—Brown, I think the sentiment against trusts will cause your scheme to fail.

Brown—We've thought of that, and have a way to fix sentiment all right. We've been studying the regulation thing. You see, we corner all the misery there is. Very well. Then we permit the people—the happy public in this case who want to be miserable, instead of the miserable public who want to be happy—to purchase shares; see? This makes them behave, because they are one of us, don't you see—particeps criminis, as it were; that is to say, they occasionally get a distant smell of the viands whereon we "feed fat" three times a day. Of course that part of it is mostly sentiment, but we keep referring to them as "brother stockholders;" and when we elect ourselves to office we mention them as "our constituency," and thank them for the "distinguished honor" we permit them to think they have conferred upon us, just as if we were a senator or president, you know.

Smith—Cumulative voting, I trust?

Brown—Certainly, certainly. We accumulate whatever is necessary to elect us. Oh! the dividends—I mustn't forget the dividends. Every quarter each shareholder in good and regular standing gets a little nip of misery, and then we promise also, if his behavior is such as we approve (this is perfectly safe because we can disapprove of anything we please), to keep him miserable during his old age. Of course we may vote any moment to condemn the whole lot to everlasting happiness, but in the meantime the promise looks as big as fulfillment, and each one enjoys in advance the pangs that are to come later.

Smith—That's all very pretty, but there's one thing you have not taken into account.

Brown—What is that?

Smith—The Socialists. You'll no sooner get fairly started than they'll come along and say the government should make and distribute all the misery.

Brown—Huh! That's just what it does now through its constituents, the magnates. See here, Smith, don't you know that if we call ourselves the government's agents and the people's servants with sufficient humility and frequency, we can make the masses our slaves, and they will never know it? Why, under Socialism the government has got to have agents—even Provi-

dence, you know, has coal agents—well, we'll simply be agents, Grinn & Barrett, Government Agents, Department of Misery; "God Help Us" on the door.

Smith—But what gets me is this: Misery, you know, comes from prosperity—a "second Daniel" has said it, and the present administration has proved it. Now, the other trusts and the political organizations they support, make this misery out of materials and with machinery they exclusively control—as, for example, a miserable financial system, a miserable legislative system, untold taxing and tariff engines of misery, a whole inquisition of them, etc. Now, they can turn out misery in supplies that would horrify an American water-cure general; and their record shows that there hasn't been a single moment during the present administration when there has been the slightest shortage of this commodity, in proof of which I have only to point to the fact that the very poorest—the bottomest rungs of the social ladder, who always are the first to feel shortages—have right along had more of this commodity than they knew what to do with. I couldn't begin to tell you the number I have heard speak of the wasteful overproduction of this article, while calling attention to the fact that it is almost the only thing the poor get that is not taxed out of their reach. Now you, representing the Reformed Democracy in contradistinction to the Deformed Democracy of Cleveland, Hill & Co., while utterly destitute of the finished product in question—the monopolistic raw material, and the legislative machinery for fabricating it—and it would be long ere you could ever learn to fabricate as the Republicans do, even if you had the machinery and the "dough" to "cook" another census—even you, I say, propose to try to corner misery. Why, man, you couldn't do it under such conditions, even if the Standard Oil endowed you.

Brown—You really think so? It hadn't struck me just that way.

Smith—Think so? I know so! Why, bless you! you can't corner a thing or throttle competition without you have some monopoly—usually traceable back to land. Now, misery comes from lack of land, that is, lack of its use. Now, if it were transported by freight like kerosene, and you could bribe the roads into differential rates and rebates, you'd still have to control the Republican machinery for making your misery. It would take

the Democracy years to replace their plant, and to train so efficient a corps in its use.

Brown—You spoke of "differential rates." I know what differential calculus is, what differential thermometers are, and what a differential coefficient is; but you have me on differential rates.

Smith—I should have been more explicit. A differential rate—the word comes from the word "difference," you know, is where one man gets the rate, and the other don't know the difference—till he's ruined. I hope I have shown you the impracticability of your scheme.

Brown—Alas, yes! It looks as if my bubble were broken. I prided myself on that's being a sound proposition. It's a pretty hard blow, old man.

Smith—Upon my soul, I'm sorry for you.

Brown—By Jove, though, it isn't so bad after all! The inchoate Grinn & Barrett will—

Smith—Will what?

Brown—Save the New Jersey corporation tax!

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PROMETHEUS REBOUND.

Prometheus, the friend of man; the Titan
Who was first to pity and to lighten
The beasthood of us with his gift of fire—
Fire which he filched from Heaven, rousing
the ire

Of Jove, who bound him to a peak,
Whereto a vulture nightly came and fished
its beak

Upon the heart of him who dared the odds
Of fate, and gave his hand to man against
the gods!

Yet was Prometheus from his tortured
height

Not wholly comfortless. He saw the light
Which he had kindled on the savage earth
Bring forth the home, which grew about
the hearth.

Home wed to home and formed the tribal
state,

Whence sprung each nation, howsoever
great.

When, too, Prometheus came to die, he
laid

His Titan form beneath the mountain
shade,

Pulled down the hills upon his grave,
and by

Some subtle alchemy contrived his form
should lie

An aeon's length till blood and bone should
turn

Into strange, black stone, which yet should
burn,

Thus to achieve his constant chief desire
And still to bless his favorite, man, with
fire.

Ah, giant-hearted Titan! well for thee
The sequel of thy generous plan thou
couldst not see.

For through the centuries wherein thy
will

Labored to its fulfillment, hovered still