

I remember when I was a young buck, and used to go into executive session under a chicken roost, that something had to drap." One of the some-things that has "drapped" in the executive sessions of the Big Business school board of Chicago (steel trust, railway combine, beef trust, etc., etc.) seems to be a "roosting chicken" of a contract for the coal trust. Although the coal trust was the highest bidder and its samples of lower efficiency than those of its competitors, as it now transpires through the Tribune of the 24th, it got the contract. The excuse is that the trust alone complied with a certain condition; but this condition, shrewdly prearranged to suit the coal trust, was as unmeritorious as it was arbitrary. However, the trusts must stand together; and for this purpose executive sessions do have their advantages—they certainly do.

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TOM L. JOHNSON'S VICTORY.

Tom L. Johnson used to accept one article in the creed of a democrat: he believed in the people.

The people of Cleveland may have shaken his faith. I doubt it.

They may have made him sick, as they have me. But they have not disturbed my confidence—nor his either, as I verily believe—that in the long run the people will go right more surely than any individual or set of individuals.

I believe, for example, that they will re-elect him at the next election.

Oh, I know that isn't the point.

I know that it is a vision that is at stake; that he cares not to be mayor, except to realize that dream.

And I know that the recent battles lost must make him feel that he himself may never be able to achieve for Cleveland all his hopes. I never believed that he, personally, could carry out his plans; not by half. But I always have felt, and I feel now, that Cleveland will go on, and will herself realize in every essential the vision that Mayor Johnson gave her.

And she will know, through all the generations, that she is following her leader.

I believe, in other words, that Tom L. Johnson has won.

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I don't know how he feels about the situation.

It has always seemed to me that he was free from one trouble that besets all the other leaders of men that I know and read about. They saw big. Most of them, being blessed with imagination, have seen far enough ahead only to be filled

with bitterness or despair at the sight of slow-creeching Man,—the mass.

They wanted to win.

They suffered, when it came home finally to them that they might see but never could go over into the Land of Promise.

Perhaps Henry George felt the tragedy of it. I doubt it, however. He knew Johnson was here, and others after his own heart. He had that assurance that his vision would be worked for.

And Johnson has that assurance as to *his* dream. He has disciples, fine ones—good men, well drilled. His ideal can never die.

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But the thought that I must out with is this: From Moses down through Jesus to Henry George and Johnson himself, no great leader has ever realized the dream that inspired him. What is more, the greater, the truer, the more inspired the vision, the more generations it has taken to achieve it.

And since this is true, such men as Tom L. Johnson—but especially their friends—should daily think of his work as seed-sowing, as planning and pioneering; that it is not at all to be finished, but only well begun.

And so I think of Cleveland.

No such foundation for democracy was ever laid; no people ever were so well instructed. They don't all understand it all. But they have made fewer blunders than any one individual among us all,—you, the Mayor or I.

Even that isn't the point, however. The truth is that Johnson's vision is in the minds of enough men in Cleveland, and the road to the goal is so well marked in the public consciousness, that it is bound to be realized.

As long as he lives he should carry on the slow work of the approach to it; but I think it is but the part of wisdom to hold himself, and to urge his friends to hold him and the people of his city, responsible only for reasonable progress.

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Maybe there is no call for me to say these things. But I have long felt the need of saying something expressive of my sure faith in our common cause; and in him.

But I have never yet ventured to say to any man where I rank him, among the men not only of our day but of all time. It might sound exaggerated to our contemporaries. And I could not prove my estimate. I could use only actual achievement; and big as that is, it is only a бага-

telle compared with the consequences thereof, the harvest that will grow from his sowing.

He has made a leading people. The people of Cleveland and their children will prove his case, execute his plans, and be what he has tried himself to be—the creator of the City on a Hill.

And that view is not only comforting, it is democratic.

LINCOLN STEFFENS.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE POLITICAL MELTING POT.

Sioux City, Ia., Sept. 27.

To my mind the present "insurgent" or "progressive" movement in the Republican party is fraught with greater promise for the future than any development of American politics since the Civil War. Iowa is the storm center of this awakening; but it has radiated until "insurgency" is now the accepted political gospel in all the prairie States.

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To one who has lived where the high protective idea is accepted as a matter of course, it is refreshing to come into this section and hear men who would fight at the first challenge of their loyalty to Republican principles, condemning in intelligent fashion, and with measured and moderate phrase, the iniquities of a tariff bill enacted by their own party—a bill that differs not a whit in principle, and very little in detail, from half a dozen bills which the same party has passed before.

When seven Republican Senators voted against the Aldrich-Taft bill, they represented a sentiment that was and is practically unanimous among their Republican constituents. One has but to live among these Republicans awhile to appreciate the magnitude of President Taft's self-assumed task of reading the insurgent Senators and their adherents out of the Republican party.

The worst luck which could befall the President would be the success of this "reading out" movement which he began in his speech at Winona. Success would simply mean the wrecking of the Republican party in the nation; for the Republicans can't elect a President without the electoral votes of Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Wisconsin, Indiana and Nebraska. Mr. Taft's effort to make acceptance of the Aldrich bill a test of party fealty, seems fatuous in the extreme.

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As yet this insurgent movement is largely a groping in the dark. To use a slang phrase, these insurgents "don't know where they're going, but they're on their way." They still claim to be protectionists. They resent with indignation the "standpatters'" charge that they are free traders. The term "free trader," now as always, is a bugaboo to them.

But they have begun to question the sanctity of the schedules; they acknowledge without blinking that tariff legislation, enacted by their own party

this year and in past years, has fostered monopoly; they admit that the leaders of the dominant faction of their party are mere creatures of predatory interests, which are fattening at the expense of the American consumer.

Most important of all, your western "insurgent" knows at last that the American manufacturer, as a rule, produces his article more cheaply, per unit of production, than any other manufacturer in the world. It has taken a long time for the average voter to realize that relative cost of production is not to be determined by comparison of day's wages in different countries; but the genus Iowan has waked up to it now, and boldly challenges the claim of the big manufacturer that he needs protection "for the sake of American labor."

And so, while these "insurgents" still assert their belief in the protective principle, they would not grant protection to well-established industries, but only to industries that are in fact "infant industries." This, of course, is not the free trade position; it is the real principle of the American fathers of protection, but it is far removed from the gospel of Republicanism as preached by Nelson W. Aldrich.

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There are two most decidedly hopeful features of this situation, to my way of thinking. The first is the fact that this questioning of the schedules is practically unanimous with the rank and file; the second is that the votes of this rank and file are absolutely essential to the future control of the nation by the Republican party.

It is only necessary to point out that once the rank and file begin to question and doubt on the subject of protection, the battle is half won, and protection is doomed. Your "standpatter" comprehends this. Hence his alarming cry of "treason" at the first sign of wavering. Protection is one of those things upon which, after candid investigation, there is not the slightest room for honest difference of opinion, and now that the middle West has begun to investigate, it is only necessary to await the result in patience.

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On the second point, it is apparent that one of two things will happen; either the element in control of the Republican party will concede on the tariff question, or ultimately these States will turn the Republican party out of power. They hold the balance of power in the nation—no question about that.

Moderate concessions at first would probably hold them, for the time being, to their Republican allegiance; but as knowledge of how they are being "grafted" by protected interests increases, and feeling intensifies, they will demand more and more as the consideration for voting the Republican ticket.

Incidentally, it may be pointed out, they have no industry, great or small, which they are interested in having "protected." Protective duties on agricultural products are a joke to these people; they were openly flouted on the floor of the senate by Senators Cummins and Nelson.

It is the history of the world that the Bourbon won't concede much. Because of that trait, the organization of a new party, beginning here in the