

The Army Worm Peril

Wriggling along through the grass, finding their way blindly amid the stubble of grain and hay fields; drawing their sinuous trails in dust of the beaten roads, dragging themselves through the oil that covers the highway, and eating their way through every bit of green vegetation that confronts them, the army worm goes marching on. Worse than a fire demon in its destruction of the fields and gardens and orchards; worse than the plagues of Egypt in their fetid, purifying state where they have at last succumbed to their fate; worse than a pestilence while they remain in sight either alive or dead they leave a horrid nightmare of memory when they are gone.

This year they have come only in spots; that is, they are to be found only in a few places so far, but they may yet become a dreaded pest in many more. The locality spoken of last week, down on the Sandy road a few miles west of Fairview, is the worst afflicted and the people there are at their wits' end to rid themselves of the curse. A large area has been devastated by the creepy, crawling things, leaving nothing green in their ruthless journey.

So numerous are they that they invade the dwellings, and no place is too private or sacred for them to enter. Into the parlor, pantry or bedroom they crawl making themselves the disgusting companions of the people and all but driving them from their homes. A continual warfare is being waged and millions of them are offered up as wriggling, seething masses of living bodies in the destroying flames that have sent forth their fierce, red, forked tongues to receive them. Other millions have found a martyrdom in shallow ditches, smothered with earth or eaten alive by strong concoctions that would eat the very soul of an immortal. They have died by millions but there are countless millions surviving, who will leave their shining black lengths strewn along the surface of the earth when they have donned the bright plumage of the butterfly and soared away into the empyrean blue; beautiful winged creatures of the air, to deposit more millions of fertile eggs, from which will again come the larvae of the plague when the cycle of time has marked their appearance once more among the living things of earth.

Numerous stories are told of the infliction as it is seen and felt by the human victims of the army worm down on the Sandy road. One, which is horrible and could only be surpassed by a tale of having eaten some of them, is the story of the invasion of a bed room.

In the worst infected district a woman was awakened from a feverish sleep by a stinging sensation on her arm. She knew it to be the bite of an army worm and brushed it off. Then she lit the lamp and made a search of the bed for her tormentor.

She found eight of them which were sacrificed in the kitchen stove.

Think of it! Living, eating and sleeping with a pestilential curse—tramping them under foot at every step—guarding every crevice against them and praying for their disappearance.

Science cannot guard against them nor exterminate them. They come at great intervals, the most horrible, nauseating and fearsome pest that a fertile brain can imagine.—Gresham Outlook.

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A NATION OF SLAVES

LESS THAN ONE PER CENT OF POPULATION OWNS SEVENTY PER CENT OF WEALTH.

Public Ownership and Asset Currency Necessary to Break Strangle Hold of Money Power, Says Congressman.

The wealth of the United States is estimated at \$120,000,000,000. That is \$1200 for every man, woman and child. No other country in the world has so much wealth. But how is it divided? Seventy per cent of this wealth is owned by 200,000 men, leaving only 30 per cent for the remaining 98,000,000 people. In other words, seventy per cent of the population owns only 30 per cent of the wealth. The plain arithmetic of the situation is that we are a nation of slaves. Our necessities make us such. Two things make slaves, necessity and fear. The "money power" is now pulling out all the stops to keep us in this condition. The agents of this money power, the agents of plutocracy, told me before I left Washington that my fellow citizens would this year yield to the "bread-and-butter" argument, and return them to the control of the legislative machinery of the government. I did not believe them then. I do not believe them yet.

There are 436 congressional districts in this Union. The members from the other districts are watching the contest in this district. If we win here this year it will be a tremendous victory. It will be a demonstration that a congressman can serve the public, and still retain the authority of the people to vote and speak for them in the national legislature. It will mean that complete victory for the people is in sight. It will mean that the government that our fathers suffered for at Valley Forge and fought for at Brandywine is going to be put back into the hands of their descendants.

We have been made a nation of serfs and paupers in two ways: First, by over-capitalization of public utilities, corporations and the collection of millions annually from the people to pay dividends on this inflated capitalization. Second, by a system of duplicitous banking, and the loaning of billions of dollars that do not exist to farmers and business men, and by the collection of millions of interest annually on these loans. These are the methods by which the money changers have robbed those who toil and gotten all the wealth into the hands of a few.

What is the remedy? It is simple enough. If the facts can be made public before the people and they will put men in Congress who will serve the public. Let the government and the municipalities take over the public utilities at their physical value, and thereafter furnish the service to the country at cost, and let the government issue heretofore asset currency, and loan it to the farmers at a very small rate of interest on first mortgages upon their farms, not exceeding 5 per cent of the unimproved value thereof, and the "money power" will no longer be able to rob our people.

The total amount of money in the United States today is \$2,500,000,000, or \$35 per capita. Yet the farmers alone have borrowed \$3,500,000,000. In other words, the farmers alone have borrowed nearly three times as much money as there is in existence in the United States. How is it possible? The money power is simply loaning the farmers "asset" currency, then more that is not in existence and collecting a per cent interest on it. The farmers are paying interest annually amounting to \$250,000,000, or more than the cost of the Panama canal.

Give the country an honest congress and one that is not afraid, and every man who works will be able to make a good living, take a vacation each year, and lay by something for his old age. The idea of an able-bodied man in a country like this, being compelled to work for his board and clothes all his life, as a consequence of us being in this condition, is ridiculous and absurd. It is an outrage. The voters of this district stand for it in this district. I have a bill pending for agricultural asset currency. I also have a bill pending for public ownership in the District of Columbia, the only city that Congress has jurisdiction over. My bill was the first ever introduced for public ownership of the street railways in Washington. Since it was first introduced a similar bill, introduced by Robert Crozier of Cleveland, Ohio,



A. W. Zeffery.

has been favorably reported to the house and will be voted on this winter. The city of Cleveland has a sort of half-way city ownership of her street railways now, and the plan has proved an immense success. It is argued that complete city ownership, the acquisition of title being made at actual physical value of the property, would be even more profitable than the Cleveland experiment has been for the city of Cleveland has undertaken to run the streetcar system upon the basis of the full value claimed by the streetcar company.

When the franchises of the Cleveland Railway company expired in 1907, five years ago—the city council granted a new franchise for 21 years, but only upon the condition that all profits above expenses, taxes, interest on bonded indebtedness, and a 5 per cent profit to the stockholders, should go to the reduction of fares and the betterment of the service. That plan has been in operation five years. The city had the right to prescribe the fares and the service, and to keep an auditor in the office of the company, with a corps of assistants, to check receipts and expenditures.

The result has been as follows: First, a fare of 2 cents was required, and 1 cent for transfer, to now 1 cent and 1/2 cent for the required revenue. It not only produced all the money required, but in one year put a surplus in the treasury of \$100,000. Then the fare was reduced to 1 cent and 1/2 cent, and the transfer to 1 cent. And now two tickets are furnished for 1 cent, and any one doubting this statement cut out this article and send it to the mayor of Cleveland for verification.

The Portland Railway, Light & Power company last year took in \$2,722,712. The total expenses and taxes were only \$2,292,212, so that over 50 per cent of its revenues were profits. If the city would take this utility over at its physical value, as it ought to do, fares would not be over 2 cents in Portland. The Pacific Power & Light company of Portland and the Portland Gas & Coke company are both owned by the American Power & Light company of Maine. These two Portland utilities last year took in over \$1,250,000 each, while their operating expenses and taxes were less than half that amount each. Telephone service, under city ownership, would be less than half what it is today.

Government and municipal ownership of public utilities would reduce the cost of living to each person at least 25 per cent, and to each family of five at least \$250. Government ownership and operation of ocean ships such as I have proposed, would keep in the United States the \$150,000,000 which now goes annually to the ocean steamship trust, would further reduce the cost of living at least \$1 per capita per year, would give us the greatest auxiliary navy and greatest force of trained sailors in the world, and would enable American to travel around the world in safety and comfort under their own flag, and at less than one half the present cost. Senator Lewis of Illinois has introduced a bill for 100 government owned and operated ships since I first advocated the idea in the house a year ago. Government ownership and agricultural asset currency combined would eliminate the dishonest profits of the money power and give to every citizen an equal opportunity to make his fortune. That is what the people of this country are entitled to. Such will they receive if they stand by their guns when the forthcoming battle rages. Respectfully,
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