

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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NEW POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

More than one year ago, an article appeared in the columns of the News under the above caption. At that time, indications existed of a disruption in both old political parties which, this paper then predicted would lead to a new political alignment. This was before the progressive Republican congressmen had begun to insurge, or that Democratic congressmen had voted with the Cannon Aldrich crowd to revise the tariff schedules upward.

Since then, a division of each party has arisen and the tariff revision given to the people and which has been pronounced by President Taft to be "the best tariff measure ever written by the Republican party," the people have been considering the tariff and other questions as never before. The rank and file of the Republican party have, at last, awakened to the fact that the destinies of their party has been and is now under the absolute control of Speaker Cannon and Chairman Aldrich and their underlings, all of whom are subservient to Wall street interests; and that the people, because of an abnormally high protective tariff, have finally ascertained that fully one-third of the cost of the products they consume, go into the coffers of the tariff beneficiaries and not one cent of the same ever finds its way to the public treasury. This extra cost is paid as a sort of tribute to the trusts and manufacturers, or combines.

As rapidly as possible, the people are manifesting their displeasure with the present order of things political and are determined to, in some manner, cause a change. But just how and in what manner to make the change is the question? Certain it is, that the Cannon-Aldrich crowd will be retired as rapidly as their terms of office expire; but to whom can the people turn and feel that their interests will be safely conserved? When Democratic congressmen join the extreme high protective crowd, they are no longer safe to intrust the interests of the consumer with, no more than to leave the same in the hands of the present protection crowd. Indeed, the tariff barons and other selfish financial interests, seem to hold a controlling influence in both old parties. Therefore, the people must look elsewhere for relief.

Political parties are usually formed to promote one great central idea. Thus, the old federal party, of whom Alexander Hamilton was the great exponent had, as its chief idea or corner stone, the centralization of political power and a disposition to blend a government by kingcraft with a government by the people. The old national Republican party, of whom Thomas Jefferson was the chief spokesman, held just the reverse ideas of government to that of the federalists. Jefferson's teachings were, largely, responsible for the doctrine of state rights which was carried, later on, to the extreme by Calhoun and other southern statesmen. The present Democratic party, successor to the old national Republican, has held as its central idea, free trade or tariff for revenue only, until the party became completely dominated by the politicians of the South, when protection of and for the extension of human slavery became the leading feature. A protective tariff was the central thought of the old whig party as lead and expounded by Henry Clay. This party went down in the 50s, because of a split on the slavery question. The Republican party, of the present time came into power in 1860. The cause of the organization of this party, was to prevent the spread of slavery and its gradual extinction.

As a rule, new and important public issues, generally, either bring out new leaders for the old, or cause the organization of a new party. Old party leaders, as a rule, are satisfied with the conditions which exist, so long as they remain in power. A condition now confronts the American people, which requires either new leaders for the old, or the organization of a new party. Heretofore, the Democratic party has, usually, advocated a tariff for revenue only; but at the last special session of congress, it was developed that there was a strong protection tariff element in that party. On the other hand, Republican insurgency demonstrated that there was an equally strong reduction element among the Republicans. So here we have a decided split upon the tariff, in the ranks of the congressmen of both parties. And this division of our congressmen has caused the people to discuss the tariff as never before. It is also, becoming an established fact, that we can look to neither party as now constructed, for relief from the enormous tariff burdens, the highest average of any time in the history of our government. All progressive congressmen know that party lines must be abandoned, if a reduction is accomplished. The people know it and for this reason, party lines are becoming of little consequence to them.

Why cannot the people get together for the correction of this, the most important matter before the people today? And there are numerous indications that the people will get together, upon this matter, before another two years passes.

Should the insurgent Republicans and progressive or Bryan Democrats conclude to act together in this matter and under a name free of the political prejudices of the past, they would sweep the nation from stem to stern. There is but little difference in the political sentiment of such men as Cummings and Deliver, of Iowa, LaFollette of Wisconsin, Beveridge, of Indiana, Bristow, of Kansas, Folk, of Missouri, Harmon, of Ohio, and Bryan, of Nebraska. All are American citizens. All are politically honest. All desire the greatest good for the greatest number of the people. All want, practically, the same legislation. The people want this legislation, irrespective of party. Then why should we not all act together? Why cannot we drop the old time prejudice, which ought never to have existed, and work, patriotically, for the good of our common country.

The News is ready to support any man for public office, who stands honestly and fearlessly for the good of all the people. Nor will we question him very closely about his previous party affiliations. All we desire to know is that he is honest and stands for the people's interests.

AGAIN THE NORMAL QUESTION

Just as we went to press last week, we received a letter from Hon. T. B. V. Butler, of Monmouth, explanatory of the pronormal school side of the question. Mr. Butler gives the News credit of being honest in the views it entertains about this matter, but thinks it is mistaken in the conclusions it reaches. Perhaps so. But we are very sure we are not mistaken, if the normals are to be reinstated upon the old basis.

Mr. Butler seems to think that the towns of Monmouth, Ashland and Weston, have a sort of vested right to a state supported college and bases the claim upon the fact that the state, several years ago, in violation of its written constitution, erected in each of those towns, expensive college buildings and maintained schools therein for a number of years. He also states that normal schools can now only be maintained by a demand of the majority of the voters of the state and that politics are to be eliminated from the schools. This is a confession that politics did figure in them in the old days and that the people had just right to cut them off.

Mr. Butler, evidently, wishes to convey the idea that the schools at Monmouth, Ashland and Weston, should be reinstated, but that normals should not be established elsewhere.

Certainly, to take a selfish view of the matter, his contention can be maintained. But if we take a broader view, Polk county should not ask a favor from the state which she is unwilling should be granted to any other county of the state. It is manifestly unjust, for two or five counties of the state to draw from the state treasury as much or more money than it pays thereto, while other counties get back but a trifle. To illustrate this injustice: Lane and Linn counties pay about the same amount of taxes to the state treasury, each about \$90,000. Linn gets back a small appropriation of \$1000 annually, or one dollar for every sixty she pays to the state. Lane gets back from \$125,000 to \$175,000 each year, or two or three times what she pays the state. A similar condition exists with Benton county. Now we are asked to create the same condition for three more normal school counties. So much for the financial feature of the question.

It is, also, urged as a reason for the reinstatement of the normals, that they are of vital necessity to the welfare of our public school system. Unless they should be far superior to the old normals, we should take issue with this contention. We know that there were a number of excellent teachers turned out from Monmouth in the old days. We know, also, that there are a larger number turned out from the Eugene college or from Corvallis or from the private colleges of Salem, Forest Grove, Albany or Portland. Also, the training of teachers at the numerous summer normals, we believe, is equal to that furnished at Monmouth, in the past. We doubt if our public schools are injured materially by the silence of the Monmouth school.

Suppose we grant the requests of the three normals and reinstate them? Can we justly refuse a like request, if asked by any other county? If Polk is granted this favor, can we justly refuse a like favor to Crook or Clackamas or any other county? And if a normal should be established in each county, even if only \$27,000 is asked for each, can the state afford the expense?

As a matter of fact, the county wherein a state college is located, reaps ten times the benefit, which is received by any other county. It is benefited by the increase of people who move to the college town to enjoy the benefit of the school and the consequent increased values for property. It is benefited by the \$400 or \$500 which each student spends in the town in the course of the year.

Again, unless the normal school law should be general in its provisions, so that any county desiring could participate in its benefits, it would be special class legislation, something to which all fairminded American citizens object. Also, we know that Monmouth is as justly entitled to have her school maintained as is Corvallis. But we have Corvallis fastened upon us, while we are clear of Monmouth. The News will always oppose special class legislation, either in state or nation.

Still the Oregonian keeps yelling for the assembly. Wonder who is putting up the coin for the forlorn hope for which that paper has been putting up a gallant fight. A newspaper, as a rule, does not put up a fight for nothing which, from its nature, must render that paper unpopular. A newspaper is a business enterprise. Its space is its capital. It is nonsense to expect a city newspaper to work for nothing. Country newspapers frequently work for nothing; but they do not amount to much, in the estimation of the big dailies.

Senators Bourne and Chamberlain, both Statement No. 1 senators, seem to be doing fairly well for Oregon. If Congressman Hawley does his part equally well, the state will soon be relieved from the tribute being paid to private owners of the locks at Oregon City.

Mr. Pinchot has met his friend, T. R. over in Italy. As neither of these gentlemen have disclosed what transpired, during the interview, the world is yet expectant. It is said the meeting was most cordial, akin to the meeting of brothers.

Strange as it may seem, President Taft has not cabled congratulations to T. R. upon his safe resurrection from the African jungles.

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