

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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THOUGHTS GLEANED FROM THE ELECTION

EVER SINCE the republican congress enacted a farce revision of the tariff, there has been a growing political unrest throughout the nation. And this unrest seems to have increased and gathered strength, since the revision, in about the same ratio that the cost of living has increased. The people of the Pacific coast states have not felt the rigor of the increasing cost of food stuffs, as severely as those of the Mississippi valley and the Atlantic coast states have. This is probably due to the fact that we have a less proportion of wage earners to those whose business is that of producing food. Hence the political revolt at the late election has been less severe on this coast than in the eastern states. The republican party at its last national convention, pledged itself to tariff revision. Delegates to that convention knew that a vast majority of their constituents were not only demanding tariff revision, but tariff reduction, as well, and the convention, knowing this fact, pledged revision. Doubtless, most of the delegates and all of the people, expected that this word "revision" meant "reduction." This idea prevailed during the campaign and, believing that the republican leaders made the promise in good faith, the people gave that party the usual heavy majorities at the election following, resulting in the election of a republican president and a republican congress.

Yes, congress revised the tariff at a congress, called especially for that purpose, by President Taft. But the people have learned to their chagrine and cost, that revision could be made to read upward, as well as downward as they had been led to believe by the Chicago convention. When the revised tariff became a law, which President Taft pronounced "the best tariff measure ever enacted by the republican party," the people soon found that they were the victims of the most colossal bunco game ever perpetrated upon them. It was worse than any previous tariff measure, in that the schedules averaged higher.

The election of November 8, was the first opportunity given the people to express their opinions upon how they had been treated. The result is

that the country has been turned over to the management of insurgent republicans and progressive democrats. The people have revolted against a continuation of governmental favoring of classes and special interests. No other interpretation of the election results is tenable.

The agitation begun by the Farmers Alliance in the eighties and carried forward by the Populists until the old parties commenced taking up the reforms and then carried forward by the Bryans and the LaFolletts, is now commencing to bear an abundant fruitage. The prospect now seems brighter to bring about "a government of the people, by the people, for the people," than at any other time in our political history.

During the early nineties, the people revolted in a similar manner and turned the entire government over to the management of the democratic party. That party revised the tariff and the revision it made, suited nobody. Even President Cleveland pronounced it "a measure of perfidy and dishonor" and allowed the bill to become a law without his signature. The people were the victims of a bunco game then and turned the control of government back to the republicans as quickly as possible. The enactment of the McKinley tariff followed which proved another bunco. Then the education of the masses of the people began as never before. Men who had taught Populism were in great demand as educators. The people, many of them, found that they were victimized, no matter which party was in power. Every revision of the tariff had resulted in an increase of indirect taxation. The people determined to study the question for themselves and to not accept the dictation of leaders who had deceived them so often, unquestioned, any longer. That study has resulted in insurgent republicanism and progressive democracy and these elements of the two old parties will control the next congress.

Having tried both the republican and democratic parties to enact a just and equitable tariff law and being buncoes first, last and all the time, it is no wonder that the people are distrustful of both old parties. But when certain republican and democratic congressmen at the special session had the courage to stand up and contend for the rights of the great mass of the common people—the consumers, hope revived and the courage of the people increased. They became convinced that if the tariff should be revised by the progressive elements of both parties, the welfare of the consumer as well as that of the manufacturer would be considered. So at every election, special or general, since the enactment of the Payne-Aldrich tariff law, the ranks of that portion of congress who think that the people have rights as well as the manufacturers, have been increased until a majority of both branches of congress, a little more than one year hence, will be composed of insurgents and progressives.

When that body meets, if tariff legislation is taken up in a spirit of patriotism and justice, and blind partisanship is stored away in some dark congressional closet, a tariff bill will be enacted which will be alike just to the consumer and manufacturer. The people expected and trusted that this action would be taken, when they rendered their verdict on November 8.

Unless the sixty-second congress cuts away from the congressional habit of legislating for special interests instead of for all the people, especially in the adjustment of the tariff, we are likely to see the greatest political upheaval in November, 1912 that our country has ever beheld. If congress is wise, not only will the inequality of our tariff system be corrected, but all other measures effecting the welfare of the people, will receive its most profound and just consideration.

GOOD ROADS

It goes without saying that everybody, no matter whom it may be, desires good roads. To say nothing of the cost of bad roads in the way of wear and tear upon teams and vehicles and the increased cost of transporting freight, because of the smaller loads a team can draw, the strain upon the patience and good nature of humanity which must travel over the bad road, is sufficient to warrant the expense of the construction of good, servicable roads.

There is but one way to secure good roads and that is to build them. To do this, money is required and the only people who can or will furnish the money, are the people who are directly interested—who use the roads. To attempt to obtain this money through voluntary contribution is, manifestly, unjust; for the liberal and public spirited citizen will contribute more than his just share, while the niggardly and selfish citizen will give, generally, nothing at all. For this reason, the only equitable method is through taxation.

Petitions are now out for a meeting of the taxpayers of North Scio pre-

dict to levy a tax of such an amount as they may think best, for the building and repairing of roads in said precinct; but, mainly, to construct a scientific hard surface road between this city and West Scio. Everybody who has an occasion to travel over this road, realizes what a deplorable condition it is in, and what a tremendous handicap it is upon the development of our entire community. A first-class road over this stretch of only two miles, would enhance the value of property in Scio and vicinity much more than the cost of the road would be.

It is estimated that a special levy of one per cent, on the property of the precinct, will be ample to construct this two miles of road; and when this road is completed, then some other road in the precinct or road district can be considered. South Scio is, also, interested about as deeply in this particular piece of road as is North Scio. But a tax upon the property of South Scio precinct cannot be levied to build roads in North Scio precinct. Hence, the only way that aid from South Scio can be obtained for this enterprise, is through donations and we believe that these would be quite

liberal, for everybody wants this road improved.

It will be far better if our citizens will burden themselves for one or two years, than it will be if they dribble along for the next ten years. They will have the good road to travel over, almost, at once and save in hauling the amount which they may tax themselves. Also, many of our citizens are now old men. If they are taxed to build this road, unless the road is built at once, they will not enjoy much if any of the improvement.

Everyone knows the great importance of this enterprise and the pleasure and profit it will bring. The only question is: Are we willing to tax ourselves, that we may have the enjoyment and profit before another twelve months are past.

On December 17, it is proposed to hold an election to determine this question. The petitions above referred to have been liberally signed, which is an evidence that the people are very much interested in the matter. Let us hope that there will be such a unanimity of feeling on December 17, that the vote for a sufficient tax to build the road will be, practically, unanimous.

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