Columbia University
New York,N.Y.
August 26,1927

Miss Ida M.Tarbell
120 East 19 Street
New York,N.Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I am herewith enclosing the poems which you thought might be useful in your treatment of the Populist Movement. I have copied them faithfully, spelling mistakes and all. The punctuation is atrocious but that is the way it is in the original,the whole volume being only a cheaply got up pamphlet of spell-binding,heart-rending (in more than one way) verse.

Trusting that you have enjoyed your holiday (for you will probably have come back when you read this), I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Walter C. Langsam

N.B. Should you for any reason wish to write to me please address the letter to my home at 330 East 85 Street, whence it will be forwarded to me,for I expect to leave town for three or four weeks,until about September 20th.

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"Poems of Idaho" by H.F.Johnson
Publ.by R.E.Lockwood, Weiser, Idaho, 1895
"Populist Poems" Pp.116-128

'Tis Coming! Oh,'tis Coming!

'Tis coming, hark the herald's cry,
The glorious day is dawning,
The light that's shining in the sky
Foretells the coming morning;
The clouds of night shall roll away,
The darkness is receding;
Then all mankind shall brothers be,
And justice crown the meeting.
'Tis coming,oh,'tis coming!
The nations todeliver;
Then honor,justice,truth and right,
Shall reign on earth forever.

Then hate shall leave the human breast,
By love dethroned forever;
Then envy,malice,spite amd falsehood
No more the world shall sever;
The truth shall worship at love's shrine,
And falsehood leave the nation,
And justice hold the scales aloft
In high and lofty station.
'Tis coming,oh,'tis coming!
The darkest clouds are riven;
Then happiness shall reign supreme,
And life be worth the living.

Work on brave souls and falter not,
But ever keep advancing,
Nor quail before the bigot's frowns,
Or hate's malignant glances;
Though tyrant's tools with spite and lies,
Proclaim their cringing spirit,
We'll raise our bannerto the skies
And guard its glorious merit.
'Tis coming,oh,'tis coming!
It will be a glorious morning
With the light of love from heaven above
The lives of men adorning.

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Then let us work with might and main,
And every effort double,
And Freedom's sacred cause maintain,
Nor falter in the struggle;
Till tyrant's hosts shall all disband,
To never more assemble;
And Despotism lift its hand
From off our sacred temple.
'Tis coming,oh,'tis coming!
The day is near at hand
When truth and justice shall proclaim
The Brotherhood of Man.

Gp. 116-117

The Reps. and the Demos.,the Shylocks and Pops.

An old man sat in his easy chair,
About the future he had no fear;
He had feathered his nest at the Wall Street pool.
Though the weather was warm he was taking things cool,
With ice houses plenty,and lots of ice cream,
Of hunger and want he had never a dream.

And here it is proper that we should relate,
He of a great nation was chief magistrate;
Elected to office by the true and the brave,
The land from the rule of the tyrant to save.
For the despots that wielded a sceptre of gold
Were robbing the nation of millions untold.

The people loked up to their ruler with pride;
They believed that his wisdom would be on their side;
That peace and contentment the toiler would bless,
From the North to the South;from the East to the West,
For all that he asked fro,he said,was a chance
To show his great wisdom and our interests advance.

The Reps. were a race that had ruled in the land
For many long years with a tyrannous hand;
On the specious pretense our rights to maintain,
They had stolen our riches and bound us in chains;
They have robbed us of rights that our fathers maintained,
And covered the land with dishonor and shame.

But the Demos.,an honorable race,so they said,
Whose ancestors freely for freedom had bled,
Declared that the Reps. were disgracing the land
And robbing the nation at Shylock's command;
They declared that if the people would give them a show
They would down the Shylocks and the Reps, overthrow.

The

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The people had suffered for many long years;
Had toiled and struggled in sorrow and tears;
Had labored and rayed to the Reps. for relief,
That their bondage be broken from Shylock and thief;
But their prayers and entreaties the Reps. would disdain,
They'd command them to labor but never complain.

So the people concluded the Shylocks must go;
They voted and prayed for the Reps. overthrow;
The Demos. triumphant, the Reps. in their grave,
We would sound the death knell of the robber and knave;
The battle was fought, it was a glorious sight;
The Demos. victorious! the Reps. put to flight!

The people rejoiced that the nation was free;
They had conquered the tyrants from over the sea;
No more will the Shylocks the people oppress,
From the North to the South; from the East to the West;
Our laws will be fashioned for justice and right
By the Demos. who won in that glorious fight.

The Demos. declared they would give us wise laws;
The people shall prosper in every great cause;
The Shylocks and Reps. should no longer oppress,
But business should boom and the people be blest:
Our banner in triumph forever shall wave
O'er the land of the free, not the home of the slave.

But the power of the Shylocks began to unfold;
They had blinded the eyes of the Demos. with gold;
And the people have learned in sorrow and shame,
That the Demos. are Reps. with a different name;
They have bound us in chains to a villainous crew,
Done just what the Reps. had intended to do.

A They have stolen our money; have ravished our homes;
With the plunder erected to Mammon a throne;
They have fashioned a god, like the Hebrews of old,
Then bid us bow down to their image of gold.
[Only four lines to this verse]
But --- See 4 -

But hark, while triumphant shouts break from their lips,
For victory won by the Demos. amd Reps.,
A voice of defiance from mountain and vale,
From workshop and hamlet rose up on the gale;
From North to South, from East to West,
'Tis a voice that no Shylock can ever suppress.

'Tis the voice of the people the Demos. have sold;
Who refuse to bow down to their image of gold;
'Tis the voice of toilers who've long been oppressed
By the Reps. and Demos. at the Shylocks request;
But the people have risen in anger and might,
Determind to conquer the land for the right.

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They see the handwriting,'tis plain on the wall;
The Demos. and Reps. with the Shylocks must fall;
The people are waking from dreams of the past;
They're arousing from slumber to duty at last;
And the sun shall not shine on a Shylock or slave,
In the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Cp. 117-120

The Bugle Call

Hark,we hear the bugle calling
From mountain,hill,and plain;
Into line the brave are falling,
Freemen arise,your rights to maintain.

Mothers,wake the song of freedom,
Let its anthem pierce the skies
Till the toiling men and women
Slavery's galling chains despise.

Long we've groped in mental darkness,
And meekly worn the tyrant's chains;
Yielding all to fill his coffers,
Health and wealth and worldly gains.

Though many promises they've made us
Of intentions good and wise,
When they wield the power of office
They are deaf to all our cries.

Then the God of Mammon rules them;
Rules them with a rod of iron,
Till their conscience,seared,callous,
Knows no sacred rights divine.

See the trembling steps of manhood
Totter on toward the grave,
While behind his offspring lingers,
Branded as a rich man's slave.

Hear the mother's wail of anguish,
Borne upon the ~~xxxyxxix~~ evening air,
As with trembling steps they languish
On the verge of sad despair.

See your mothers,wives and daughters
Toil through life,a tyrant's slave,
Fill with wealth the rich man's coffers,
Fill themselves a pauper's grave.

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Hear the trembling voice of childhood
Plead in vain for food and care;
See the withered cheeks of famine,
Drenched with sorrow's scalding tear.

Men of toil, what are you doing?
Will you still stand idly by?
See those tyramts work your ruin,
Hear the famished children's cry?

Must we still divide our forces
While the tyrants all unite?
Weaken thus our last resources
While our foemen win the fight?

Hark! we hear the shouts of freemen,
Hearld of the toilers' might!
See the star of freedom rising
Grandly into perfect light.

Our forefathers fought for freedom,
Then bequeathed the prize to us;
We must now defend her altars
And transmit the sacred trust.

Let us then uphold our banner,
With a courage firm and true;
Scorn the men that would dishonor
Freedom's grand Red, White and Blue.

Cp. 120-121

The Seven Devil Miner's Appeal to the Farmers and Knights.

Watchman, tell us of the fight,
Is our banner waving high?
Will the friends of truth unite
In the cause to win or die?

Will they bravely face the foe
For the right on every field?
Like the guards at Waterloo,
Die if need, but never yield?

Where is Weaver? Where is Streeter?
Is Beaumont still in the van?
Powderly and many others,
Are they doing all they can?

In the gathering storm of battle,
Will they by our colors stand?
To dethrone the rob er parties
And promote the rights of man?

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We're fighting old monopoly and the gigantic trust,
They've taken all the corn and oil, left us the cob and husk,
But when we get our ballots in you'll hear their bubble burst,
As we go marching to victory.

The promises they made us not one as ever kept,
But 'round the tree of liberty the sneaking tyrants crept,
They sought to blight our heritage while quietly we slept,
But we'll go marching to victory.

They gobbled up our greenbacks then issued out their bond,
Then made us pay the interest to support the thieving throng.
And when we made objection they told us we were wrong,
But we'll go marching to victory.

They've taken all our land estate and claim it as their own,
While husbands, wives and children are left without a home,
And willing hands to foreign lands in search of work must roam.
But we'll go marching to victory.

The bankers rob the farmers, and the railroads steal the land,
And in their cursed robbing schemes they both go hand in hand.
They think our business is to obey while their's is to command,
But we'll go marching to victory.

We've trusted the Republicans and failed to take a trick;
We've leaned upon the Democrats and found a broken stick;
We'll try the Knights and Farmers now and then you'll see how quick
That we'll go marching to victory.

And now we stand united the bosses best look out;
With faith and honor plighted, we'll put them all to rout,
And with an honest ballot now we'll put the rascals out
As we go marching to victory.

Cf. 123-125

The Omaha Platform

Touch not with sacrilegious hands,
The noblest instrument of all,
The platform of the people stands
A tower of strength that cannot fall.

'Tis built of timber clear and sound,
There's not a crack or knot-hole there;
No single plank can there be found
That is not honest, just and fair.

At Omaha in Ninety-Two,
Upon our glorious natal day,
We built the platform firm and true,
And told the world we'd come to stay.

contd

The North and South together met,
Clasped hands across the bloody chasm;
Declared the past they would forget,
And every wrong should be forgiven.

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United there the true and brave,
Shoulder to shoulder in the fight;
The bloody shirt no longer waved,
But sunk forever out of sight.

Our leaders on this platform stood,
And told the world our cause was just;
Then shall we now desert the good,
And trail our banner in the dust?

To satisfy those silver braves
Who would our phalanx break,
Who find the parting of the ways,
But never know which road to take.

The most important planks of all
Is money, transportation and land;
To take one out the rest will fall,
And robber Shylocks rule the land.

Let those who wish to step aside
To listen to the goldbug's song,
To help the plutes our ranks divide,
First prove to us our cause is wrong.

Till then let us wave our banner high,
And to our cause the masses draw,
Till shouts of victory rend the sky,
And every plank becomes a law.

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Cf. 125-126

The Modern Church in Relation to the Poor

Lo, it is the Sabbath morning,
Hark, what music fills the air?
It is the sacred church bells calling
Sinners to the House of Prayer.

See the rich of lofty station,
Robed in silks and satins there,
See them kneel in adoration
While the parson offers prayer.

Hear the solemn suplication [sic]
"Give us this day our daily bread";
Oh, save this pious congregation,
Blessings pour upon each head."

The parson ceased his benediction,
From their knees the pious rise;
Then the deepstoned organ's anthems
Rise in grandeur to the skies.

Then the parson pleads for sinners,
"Come to Jesus"! is the cry;
"See, he suffered death and torture
On the cross for you and I."

Cont'd

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Still my mind kept up the query,
Where was Jesus while on earth?
Did he dwell in costly mansions
With the rich of noble birth?

Was he robed in silks and satins,
Did he scorn the toiling poor?
When he entered in the temple
On the laborers close the door?

How much they all observe the precepts
Jesus taught them while on earth;
When he cursed the rich and haughty;
Blessed the poor of lowly birth.

Jesus taught mankind were brothers;
Taught the Brotherhood of God;
Taught us justice, love and mercy,
While the paths of earth he trod.

Scourged he the robbers from the temple;
Called the place a den of thieves;
Blessed the poor, the weak and lowly;
Shunned the doubting Pharisees.

Jesus taught a noble Gospel;
Fired with love the human breast;
Taught us that the weak and weary
Through his mission would find rest.

Yet weary still and heavy laden,
Millions toil from morn till night;
Weeping, praying for the morning
That shall usher in the light.

Jesus on the cross was braver
Than the persecuting Jew,
When he prayed, "Father forgive them
For they know not what they do."

Eighteen hundred years have vanished,
Still the money changers dwell
In the sacred halls of freedom,
Changing Paradise to hell.

Crushing noble aspirations;
Planting thorns where roses fade;
Gathering in the fruits of nations,
Thus the Shylocks ply their trade.

How long must the people wander
Sad and homeless in the land?
How long must they yet be plundered
By this robber Shylock band?

Pg. 126-128

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