in the state legislature but a Republican governor was elected. Minnesota elected an Alliance Congressman but in Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota the Democratic Party in every case got the benefit of the defection in ranks from the Republican Party to the Independent. In South Carolina the Alliance was successful, controlling the Democratic Party, of course. The legislatures of South Dakota and Kansas also sent Alliance men to the United States Senate, in the persons of Rev. Kyle and Judge Wm. A. Peffer respectively.

THE POPULIST PARTY. *

"The successes won by the farmers in the various States in November, 1890, made almost certain an attempt to form a national party which would be ready to take a hand in the next presidential campaign." (Haynes, Third Party Movements, P.245) And in December a call was actually sent out, inviting the "Independents, the People's and Union Labor Parties, Federal and Confederate soldiers, the Farmers' Alliance, the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association, the Citizens' Alliance, the Knights of Labor and the Colored Alliance" to send delegates to a conference to be held in Cincinnati in 1891. (The Clinton Weekly Age of Iowa, December 19, 1890, quoted by Haynes, P.246)

This Cincinnati conference was attended by over 1400 delegates, three-fourths of whom were from Kansas, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Nebraska. They formed the "People's Party of the United States of America." A committee was also designated to arrange ~~for~~ for a nominating convention for the presidential election of 1892. And this convention did meet at Omaha on July 2, 1892, with an attendance of 1,366 delegates to select candidates for President and Vice-President and to adopt a party platform.

At first the leaders of the new party had contemplated extending the nomiation to Judge Walter Q. Gresham, a prominent Republican who was rather popular out West because of some decisions that he had rendered affecting the Wabash railway system. This news struck fear in the hearts of Republican and Democratic leaders throughout the country, but they were soon relieved when the Judge announced that he would decline the nomination in any event. (At first he had stipulated unanimous nomination but then he withdrew altogether.) Most of the delegates then turned to General Weaver of Greenback fame and he was nominated by an overwhelming majority with Gen. James G. Fidd of Virginia as candidate for Vice-President. Weaver's nomination has generally been considered a mistake. In the words of the editor of the Review of Reviews: "if a man of Judge Gresham's record and standing could have been induced to leave his old party and assume the rôle of a Moses for the new movement, there would have been a great stirring up of dry bones. The People's party would have carried several States, and would have upset all calculations in a number of others.--As a matter of policy, Mr. Weaver's nomination was a mistake. A new party can only rise to strength by leading away masses of men from ~~their~~ other parties. But the masses will not readily flock to new standards, except under the

* On page 40, the last paragraph should have been put in here.

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generalship of some trusted leader who goes with them.--But Mr.Weaver has belonged to the group of third-party 'come-outers' for so many years that his name is not one to conjure with in either of the old camps. He is a public speaker of great force and ability,but his nomination suggests too strongly the abortive third-party movements of the past to excite much hope or enthusiasm.--The wicked politicians of the Republican and Democratic parties breathed easier and ate with better appetites when the Gresham bogie disappeared and they found their familiar old ~~foe~~ enemy,General Weaver,in the lead of the People's movement." (Review of Reviews,Vol.VI,P.9)

The platform adopted at this Convention was remarkable. "We meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot box, the legislatures,the Congress,and touches even the ermine of the Bench. The people are demoralized; most of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters and the polling places to prevent universal intimidation or bribery. The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled,public opinion silenced,business prostrated,our homes covered with mortgages,labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of the capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right of organization for self-protection; imported pauperized labor beats down their wages; a hireling standing army,unrecognized by our laws,is established to shoot them down,and they are rapidly degenerating into European conditions. The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few,unprecedented in the history of mankind,and the possessors of these in turn despise the Republic and endanger liberty.----------We declare:

"1.That the union of the labor forces of the United States this day consummated shall be permanent and perpetual.

2.Wealth belongs to him who creates it,and every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery. 'If any will not work,neither shall he eat.' The interests of rural and civic labor are the same; their enemies are identical.

3.We believe that the time has come when the railroad corporations will either own the people,or the people must own the railroads." The usual "Demands" were then repeated.

The extent to which the Populists scared the Republicans and Democrats,despite the nomination of Weaver,can be seen from some of the statements included in the platforms of these parties. Thus,the Democrats declared: "We hold to the use of both gold and silver without discriminating against either metal or charge for mintage.---We insist upon this policy as especially necessary for the protection of the farmers and laboring classes." Again, "We pledge ourselves to continue this policy [of reclaiming the public domain 'from corporations and syndicates,alien and domestic'] until every acre of land so unlawfully held shall be reclaimed and restored to the people." The Republicans,on the other hand,declared: "The American people,from tradition and interest,favor bimetallism,and the Republican party demands the use of both gold and silver as standard money." Further," we

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reaffirm our opposition---to all combinations of capital organized in trust or otherwise, to control arbitrarily the condition of trade among our citizens." The Republicans also favored cession of the arid lands to the respective States and Territories, and their reclamation and sale to settlers. To draw labor votes, they added: "We favor the enactment of more stringent laws and regulations for the restriction of criminal, pauper and contract immigration," as well as federal and state legislation to protect employees in dangerous occupations.

See 25

Weaver and Fields were very active in touring the country and making speeches to large audiences in most of the States. The Populists adopted the policy of attempting fusion with the Republicans in the South and with the Democrats in the West, although they were not always successful. In some cases as in South Carolina they controlled the Democratic Party. The distribution of popular votes as a result of the election was as follows: Cleveland 5,554,226; Harrison 5,175,202; and Weaver 1,041,577. Cleveland got 227 electoral votes, while Harrison got 145 and Weaver 22, the latter carrying the States of Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Nevada, North Dakota, and Oregon (gave him one vote each.) This was the first time that a third party had gotten any electoral votes since 1860. Small wonder, then, that Weaver was happy over the results, and that he wrote: "Unaided by money our grand young party has made an enviable record and achieved surprising success at the polls. We are but little behind the Republican party in number of States carried--we will doubtless hold the balance of power in the Senate of the United States, have doubled the number of our adherents in the House of Representatives, secured control of a number of state governments, hold the balance of power in a majority of the States in the Union, and have succeeded in arousing a spirit of political independence among the people of the Northwest which cannot be disregarded in the future." (Weekly Iowa State Register, November 18, 1892, quoted in Haynes, P.270). In 1893 the Populists scored another triumph in the election to the United States Senate of Judge William Vincent Allen of Nebraska, who ran against Algernon S. Paddock the general solicitor of the Union Pacific Railway, who was backed by the big corporations. (Incidentally this election cost Mr. Allen just $74.25).

Allen, who was "a giant in stature," and whose "mental calibre was consistent with his physical make-up," was born in Ohio in 1847, in a house which in days gone by, had been a station on the famous "underground railway" which had helped so many negroes from bondage to freedom. In 1856 he went to Iowa, and at the age of fifteen enlisted in an Iowa regiment, serving with the Northern armies till the end of the war. Then he studied law in the office of L.L. Ainsworth in West Union, Iowa, and in 1884, moved to Madison, Nebraska. He had been a Republican but became a Populist after 1890 believing that a political party was "simply a means to an end." "I think", he said, "a party should be held no more sacred than a man's shoes

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or garments,and that whenever it fails to subserve the progress of good Government,a man should abandon it as cheerfully as he dispenses with his worn-out clothes." Frank B.Tracy,who had but little faith in the Populist movement,conceded that one of the "excellent results of the organization of this party in the Western States," was the election to the Senate of "an honest man,William V.Allen,----a conservative,pure,incorruptible man." And another observer advised "the people of Nebraska,regardless of party affiliations,not to apologize to anybody for Senator Wm.V.Allen. If Populism can produce men of Senator Allen's mould, and lift them into positions of the highest responsibility, one might be tempted to suggest that an epidemic of this Western malady would prove beneficial to some Eastern communities and have salutary results for the nation at large." (Tracy,in the Forum,Vol.16,P.247 and Review of Reviews,Vol.10,P.30

The years 1893 and 1894 were probably the worst of the "heart-breaking 'nineties." The industrial depression was terrible,and the Panic of 1893 was called "one of the most disastrous panics of the century." (Annual Cycl.,1893,294.) The failure of the National Cordage Company in May 1893,although it had declared 100% dividends on common stock,only four months before,precipitated the panic which had been approaching since the failure of Baring Brothers in England,and the failure of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad in 1890. The number of failures excluding banks and railroads numbered "16,115 involving $346,779,889 liabilities,as against 10,344 invovling $114,044,157 in 1892.--The number of national,State,and savings banks and private bankers failed,was 613 and the Comptroller of the Currency reported that 158 national banks suspended,of which, however,86 subsequently resumed. Of the 200 State banks which failed only 48 resumed; and of the 202 private bankers who suspended,only 30 had resumed at the end of the year." (Ibid,302) So bad were conditions that Henry Adams wrote: "Men died like flies under the strain,and Boston grew suddenly old,haggard and thin." (Education of H.Adams,295) In the South and West conditions were even worse. Moreover Cleveland had made the administration very unpopular in certain quarters by his action in the Pullman Strike in Chicago in 1894. Naturally all this reacted on the Populist Party,made up of farmers and laborers as it was,and the elections of 1894 were expected to show the extent of the unrest. (The Panic of 1893 and the Pullman Strike are to be treated in detail under separate headings.)

The elections of 1894,however,were rather disappointing to the Populists. As a matter of fact the numerical strength of the Populist vote increased by about 42% rising from 1,041,577 in 1892 to 1,471,590 in 1894,but the effect of the votes was less marked. They were defeated in many of the States in which they had been successful in 1892. The chief cause for this was probably the fact that there was less fusion,due sometimes to Populist,and sometimes to Democrat hostility. The Populists,however,were not strong enough to stand on their own

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