

# The Democratic Sentinel.

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## THE DEMOCRATIC SENTINEL

DEMOCRATIC NEWSPAPER.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY.

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## THE TEXT-BOOK QUESTION.

A FEW OPINIONS.

Rensselaer Republican: Last Monday the State Board of Education met to receive bids for the second time under the new school book law. The only bid from responsible and reputable parties, that complied with the law, was Bowen, Merrell & Co., for a series of writing books. A ring of Democratic politicians, the chief of whom is ex-marshal Hawkins and Warden Murdock, submitted a plan for an organized and protracted Democratic steal, under the guise of a bid. They have obtained from various second rate publishing houses, the copyrights of some old series of discarded text-books and propose to put them in new covers and force them upon the schools of the state as something new and meritorious. The Readers they offer, for instance, are the old Bancroft series, first issued in California in 1874, and which the schools of that state rejected after trying them fully and finding them worthless. The other books which they offer, it is fair to presume, are all of the same general character as the readers. This bid is, beyond a doubt, simply a huge scheme to fasten a democratic school book ring on the people, with the expectation that the next Legislature will be another Gerrymander band of brigands which will sustain and perpetuate their robbery.

In consideration for the above Brother Marshall should receive very favorable recognition at the hands of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. But in exceeding strong contrast with the above is the following from the Evansville Journal, republican:

There is no more important question before the people of Indiana, so far as dollars and cents are concerned than that of the supply of school books. For a great many years there has been in this business a heartless monopoly that has speculated on the necessities of the poor people of the state and made fortunes for the favored school-book combination. The name of the monopoly has been Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., but its beneficiaries have been numerous. It has had in its pay superintendents of public instruction, county superintendents of schools, township trustees, county commissioners and even state elective officers. Money has been furnished to send out "missionaries" to corrupt officials, and even legislators have been manipulated through oyster suppers and other worse means of influence. State conventions have been honey-combed by corrupt influences, the object of which was to nominate tools of the school book trust for superintendents of public instruction. In this way the ring gained an influence that could not fail to play into its hands. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the school book octopus has everything its own way?

Recent developments are alarming. They indicate that the octopus is moving heaven and earth to continue its power. That money is used, and plenty of it, is evident. And there is good reason to believe that the tentacles of the octopus have been wound around the press.

Beside a lot of bids made by irresponsible and vagrant parties in the interest of the octopus, the Indiana school book company offered a definite proposal that guaranteed a complete series of school-books at about half-price. The extra price that has heretofore gone into the pockets of sundry persons in the forms of bribes and corruption funds, is under this arrangement saved to the people. The new company is composed of eight solid men of Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, Evansville and one or two other Indiana cities. They mean business and are amply able to give bond for their good faith.

We have before us some of the specimen books that they propose to furnish under their bid if accepted. They compare favorably with anything ever sold under the old regime. The books are of approved contents, print and binding. They are not printed from old plates, as the Indianapolis Journal has charged, but are fresh and modern in their compilation and arrangement. Consequently, all this talk about the books of the octopus being better than the older ones is foolishness, inspired by money and influence.

Next week the state board meets again to consider the proposal of the Indiana school book company. There is no good reason why it should not be accepted. The men composing this company are highly responsible; they are business men accustomed to do as they agree and to carry out their contracts; they are intelligent men who know the force of the obligations that they assume. The books that they submit as samples are fully up to the standard required in the public schools. The prices prescribed are far below those of the monopoly. Old books are taken in exchange for new ones at definite prices that materially lessen the cost of the new ones supplied in their places. Altogether the terms offered by the new company will save a large aggregate to the school patrons of the state, and the state board of school-book commissioners will be expected to give favorable consideration to its proposal.

Again the republican Evansville Journal says:

The Indianapolis Journal continues to characterize Messrs. Mackey, Heilman, Huston, Fleming, Bell, et al. as swindlers, altho' it knows that they are amply able to carry out all their agreements. This is the height of folly. The Indianapolis Journal hurts itself by such charges more than it can possibly injure the above named gentlemen.

That paper seems to have lost its head since John C. New went abroad. Consider its fearful blunders in the case of the Brazil coal miners. It misrepresented the situation—to use a mild term—and then had to take the back track. The report is that level-headed John C. New cabled to the Journal's manager to change the paper's course. But that as it may, the manager retracted—retracted as it were—and wrote himself down a blunderer. The reporter that he sent to the Clay county mines interviewed only the bosses and ignored the miners. The manager of the Journal hadn't political and business sense enough to correct the mistakes of the fool reporter, and the consequence is, the republican party has to suffer the consequences. The whole state is amazed at this blunder of the republican organ.

But this is not the worst of its mistakes. Its defense of the thieving school-book monopoly that has been swindling the poor people of the state for years is unpardonable. Its abuse of the responsible Fort Wayne, Terre Haute and Evansville gentlemen composing the Indiana school book company is either idiocy, insanity or worse. Can it be possible that the octopus has fastened its tentacles on that paper, as it has on officials in high places? Its extortionate exactions from the people have been used to corrupt the sources of influence. Of this there is no doubt, but it has been hoped that the press was innocent.

No wonder that Mr. Huston wants to resign the chairmanship of the republican state central committee. With an organ that antagonizes the labor of the state and is an unblushing defender of the school-book ring, what encouragement is there for a responsible and laborious organizer like J. N. Huston?

The best thing that John C. New can do is to resign and come home and attend to his valuable newspaper interests.

Here, then, by republican auth-

ority, is set at rest the unfounded clamor of the Republican in relation to the financial standing of the gentlemen composing the company, and the excellence of the books submitted by them. The following from the Evansville Courier squelches the puerile charge of the Republican that the Indiana school-book company is "A ring of Democratic politicians" and its bid "a plan for an organized and protracted Democratic steal".

As an instance of the Indianapolis Journal's caliber as a newspaper and unprejudiced chronicler of current events, attention is called to its treatment, editorially, of the Indiana school book company, which has just been formed for the purpose of furnishing school books to the state at the prices offered by the state board of education. The company is composed equally of democrats and republicans; to be exact, there are four of each party in the organization. In a number of editorial paragraphs, the Journal refers to this company as if there were none but democrats in it.

Nowhere are the names of Messrs. Mackey, Heilman, Huston and Collett mentioned as members of the company, the intention of the Journal clearly being to make it appear that a lot of prominent democrats have banded themselves together with the deliberate purpose of swindling the state. Nevertheless Messrs. Mackey, Heilman, Huston and Collett are members of this company, and three of the four probably own three-fourths of the stock. At all events their combined wealth would probably be at least that proportion of the aggregate wealth of the entire company.

We should like to hear from Messrs. Mackey, Heilman, Huston and Collett on this subject. Is it true, gentlemen, as the state organ of the party of which you are members says, that the Indiana school book company, of which you are members, was organized for the deliberate purpose of perpetrating a bare-faced swindle on the state?

Of course the Journal's charge is prompted by its disappointment at the overthrow of the Van Antwerp-Bragg school-book ring that had been swindling the state at pleasure for years, and of which the Journal was the special champion. Nobody is surprised at its chagrin, because its present opposition to any legislation that would check the Van Antwerp-Bragg monopoly could only be accounted for on the theory that it was sharing in the spoils. Even Governor Hovey recommended the overthrow of the monopoly in his first message to the legislature, and the law was one of the few of importance that he did not veto.

It is hardly necessary to explain who the republican members of the school book company are. Mr. Mackey is the president of the E. & T. H. system, and stands among the first railroad magnates of the country. Mr. Heilman is a large manufacturer of this city, and an ex-member of congress, and has frequently been spoken of as the republican candidate for governor and U. S. senator. Mr. Collett is also a prominent railroad man and capitalist; Mr. Huston is a reputable citizen and business man of Evansville.

The exposure of an utter lack of principle like this is not an uncommon thing on the part of the republican state organ. It has no scruples about slandering political opponents, or lying to shield political friends. But the foolhardiness of trying to make it appear that this school book company is purely a democratic swindling machine, on the very day on which every daily paper that circulates in the state published the fact sent by telegraph from Indianapolis, that such a company had been organized and given a full list of its members—the foolhardiness of

such a display of petty dishonesty is so puerile as to be pitiable.

We leave the Journal, and its party friends, Messrs. Mackey, Heilman, Huston and Collett, to settle among themselves the question as to whether these gentlemen are common swindlers or whether the Journal is a slanderer.

Evidently the Republican took its cue from the Indianapolis Journal, and didn't know what it was talking about.

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Sick Headache, Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Constipation. 25c per Box, 6 boxes for \$1. For sale by Long & Eger.

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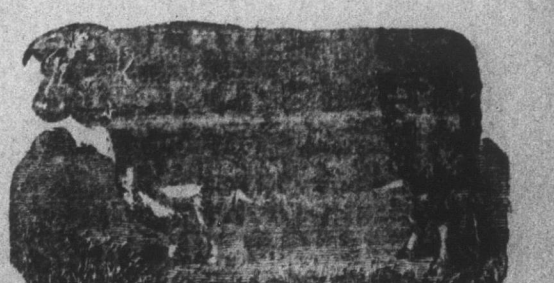
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