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New Competition for the Power Companies

ELECTRIC power rates have been somewhat reduced throughout the country generally and to a very considerable extent in the states of Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi since the Tennessee Valley Authority was brought into being. This lowering of rates, strange to say, has resulted in greater profits for many power companies because rate reductions have been followed by increased consumption.

The whole policy of the big power companies, however, is still all wrong as far as economical production and distribution of electric energy. They still must levy rates not only to cover actual production and distribution costs plus a fair margin of profit but also to defray a vast speculative expense. Power companies, at least the larger ones, work on a monopolistic basis in their own areas. To do this they frequently find it necessary to buy and hold undeveloped potential hydro-electric power sites, either to keep out competition or with view to possible expansion in the distant future. The bondholders and stockholders in the power companies must be paid their dividends, but idle properties held for speculative or monopolistic purposes, do not earn money. So the money must come from the consumers.

TVA and other power developments directly or indirectly financed and operated by the government are doing much to correct this situation and will, in all likelihood, continue to exercise their beneficent influence for many years to come. Not even a Republican administration, we venture, would attempt to junk TVA or Boulder Dam. The inexcusable waste the Republicans permitted at Muscle Shoals is still remembered by Democrats and Republicans alike.

The point we are arriving at, however, has nothing to do with TVA or any other governmental means of providing competition for the power companies. A new type of competition is slowly but surely developing—the Diesel engine. Already many large industrial plants and some communities are obtaining electricity from dynamos powered by Diesel engines. Hitherto, this source of power has been impractical for the very large or the very small industrial plants and communities. But the manufacturers of Diesels are making significant strides in the perfection of their product. They are building both larger and smaller engines, engines which burn a crude oil which can be bought for far less than gasoline.

Writing in the October issue of the Rotarian magazine, C. L. Cummins, president of the Cummins Engine company, ventures this prediction:

"My own guess is that the Diesel is a greater threat to their own (power company's) continuance than was anything proposed during the last session of Congress. The fact is, we can produce electrical power from Diesels at as low a cost as the largest, most efficient steam or water-power plant, and do it right on the spot, thus saving the capital costs and the transmission losses inherent in super-power lines."

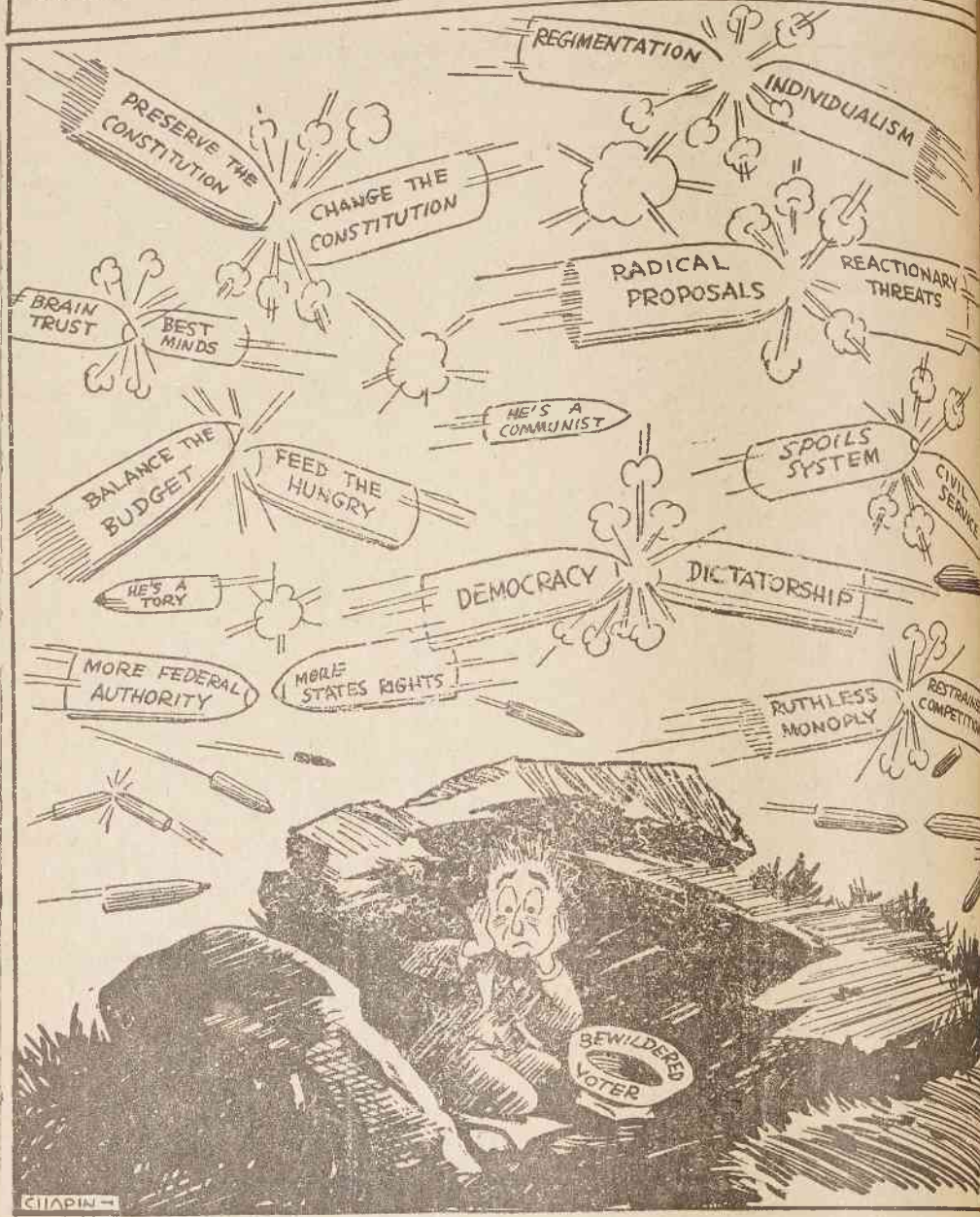
This is an established fact which some industrialists already have made use of to combat arbitrary power rates and demand service contracts which power companies have tried to impose upon them.

Now even the small manufacturer need not submit humbly to exorbitant power rates, for Diesel engines are now made in five and ten-horsepower sizes, and under fairly steady loads, can produce electric power for a cent or less per Kilowatt hour,

Hydro-electric power properties, both privately owned and publicly owned, will continue to do business for many years to come; but it is becoming increasingly evident that the Diesel engine will accomplish far more than the government in squeezing water out of power company stocks and in forcing the hydro electric barons either to develop or to turn loose their expensive superstructures of speculative and monopolistic holdings.

In the Thick of the Fray

By A. B. Chapman



"Uncle" Jess Coleman A TRIBUTE

"When I was a young man I lifted a thousand pounds. I'm about 74 or 75 now, near as I can reckon, but I'm still a good man on the muscles," "Uncle" Jess said to me last Summer, his seamed, black face shining in honest pride.

Strong in body, he was equally strong in loyalty. Thirty years ago he promised his "Ol' Miss" that he would look after her grave and those of her loved ones should she precede him in death. For more than a quarter of a century he kept that promise. Through the seasons, but particularly at Easter, he weeded, sodded and cut the grass on his "white folks" graves in the old Methodist cemetery.

Some years ago he was working in an adjoining county just before Easter. He went to his employer and said, "Boss, I've got to get off one day this week to keep a promise I made to my dead Mistress."

The foreman, struck by the strange request, asked for further details, and so learned about "Miss Alice" Robinson, "the lady of the flowers," her family and lattice house, "Dixie Hall." Then to test the old man, he said, "Uncle, I'm working day and night to complete this job. I don't see how I can possibly spare you."

Before he could say any more "Uncle" Jess replied, "Boss, I hate to lose my job, but if I have to, I can quit it. But I can't break my promise to Ol' Miss."

Taking the old man by the hand, the foreman declared, "No, Uncle, you won't lose your job. It's unusual enough for anyone to keep a promise to the living, much less to the dead. You'll get full pay for your day off."

A year ago "Uncle" Jess walked

two miles in a pouring rain to carry flowers from "Dixie Hall" to the burial plot. When reminded that he had had pneumonia only a short time before and might catch cold again, he said, "I never turns back. I believe Ol' Massa will take care of the ol' darky who's tried his best to live right and keep his promise to the dead."

Born in South Carolina in slavery days, "Uncle" Jess came to Macon County about 1874. Ever since he was virtually a member of the Robinson family at "Dixie Hall" and a respected member of this community. Black and white respected him for his honesty, for his constant and careful industry, and for his tender care in nursing the sick. Many are the houses throughout the county to which he went to minister with skilful hands, and to prepare the dead for burial. For decades he waited patiently on his invalid wife because, "When I married Lou I swore before God and man to care for her in sickness and in health."

Young and old in Macon county loved "Uncle" Jess for his merry heart and homely philosophy. Because he was a simple soul, it took little to send him into deep, gurgling laughter. To hear it was a golden tonic.

In his long and useful life he exemplified the finest traditions of the Old South. Kindly, gentle, sweet-natured, with pride in his workmanship, he was in the fullest sense a credit to his race—or to any race. There is a special place in the Green Pastures where this "good and faithful servant" can take his rest.

Such at least is the confident belief of one of his "chilluns."

—James Robinson Daniels

with the sun and stars around it. Darwin shocked his "Descend of Man" people have been taught that was created perfect and by Darwin proved that man up. He is not yet up to the which the continuing evolution may make possible.

The astronomers shocked they peered through the scopes beyond the clouds and neither the streets of gold pearly gates we once supposed there.

But nothing has happened voice inside that speaks in nor the sense of awe that under the stars, nor to conviction that somehow the purpose and a plan that significant and duty were. They even dared to affirm this purpose and plan beyond the grave and no can ever produce any of their faith is unfounded.

Bewildered and broken, a man still has some which he believes and even that something be only one of what he once was taught one hundred per cent better than as though he believed ing.

LET'S DO LESS GENERALLY SPEAKING

The advertising manager corporation had an idea company could gather some will for itself by broadcast hour of dinner music. The selected was from six The plan met with the various department the board of directors chairman of the board a vigorous objection.

"I never knew anything absurd in my life," he said "Dinner music from six to Why, nobody sits down before 7:30."

No argument would Indeed, he burst into his couple of days later very ant.

"I told you so," he explained came in on my yacht from port and I had twenty asked each one of them your regular dinner hour said 7:30, some said 8 o'clock body eats from six to seven He had talked to twenty on a yacht and he thought getting a cross section American people. Much of judgment and trouble in originates from this habit ing isolated bits of information proceeding forthwith to general statement.

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BRUCE BARTON Says:



THERE IS PURPOSE AND PLAN

In a remarkable book called "Black Reconstruction" W. E. Burghardt du Boise says, "No American now believes in his religion. Its facts are mere symbolism; its revelations generalities; its ethics a matter of carefully balanced gain."

This is one of those sweeping generalities that take in too much territory.

It is a fact that religion has been subjected to a series of shocks that have pretty nearly wrecked its traditional structure. Gallileo shocked it with his discovery that the earth is not the center of the universe