

This dissertation has been 62-3955
microfilmed exactly as received

HENDRICKSON, Jr., Kenneth Elton, 1936-
THE PUBLIC CAREER OF RICHARD F. PETTI-
GREW OF SOUTH DAKOTA, 1848-1926.

The University of Oklahoma, Ph.D., 1962
History, general

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

Copyright

by

Kenneth Elton Hendrickson, Jr.

1962

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE PUBLIC CAREER OF RICHARD F. PETTIGREW
OF SOUTH DAKOTA, 1848 - 1926

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
KENNETH ELTON HENDRICKSON, JR.

Norman, Oklahoma

1962

THE PUBLIC CAREER OF RICHARD F. PETTIGREW
OF SOUTH DAKOTA, 1848 - 1926

APPROVED BY

Richard C. Fite
Samuel M. Owings
Alfred Cox Sears
Walter L. Markham
Rufus L. Hall, Jr.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Professor Gilbert C. Fite who directed this dissertation and whose encouragement made possible its completion. Thanks are also due the members of the reading committee: Professors Rufus G. Hall, Max L. Moorhead, Donnell M. Owings, and Alfred B. Sears, for their valuable suggestions. A special vote of thanks must be tendered to Professor Herbert S. Schell of the State University of South Dakota who introduced me to Pettigrew, and whose invaluable assistance speeded the completion of the manuscript. Further thanks go to the staffs of the Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; the State University of South Dakota Library; the South Dakota State Historical Society; the Library of Congress Manuscripts Division; and the National Archives for their assistance in research. To my wife, Dianne, I am deeply indebted for her preparation of the final copy of the manuscript, and for her patience and understanding during the years it was in progress.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter	
I. THE PIONEER POLITICO	1
II. PETTIGREW AND GOVERNOR ORDWAY.	34
III. SENATOR PETTIGREW AND THE AGRARIAN UPRISING.	62
IV. THE WESTERN PROMOTER	91
V. A WESTERN SENATOR AND REPUBLICAN PARTY POLITICS	107
VI. SENATOR PETTIGREW AND THE SILVER QUESTION	152
VII. A SILVER REPUBLICAN	181
VIII. THE "ANTI-IMPERIALIST".	214
IX. THE BEGINNING OF THE END; AND THE END.	248
X. THE "HAS BEEN" POLITICO	275
EPILOGUE	309
BIBLIOGRAPHY	313

THE PUBLIC CAREER OF RICHARD F. PETTIGREW OF SOUTH DAKOTA

1848 - 1926

CHAPTER I

THE PIONEER POLITICO

Dakota Territory in 1870 was a raw frontier country, inhabited by roaming bands of Indians and dotted with sparse settlements of whites. Into this land one April day came a young man whose rugged spirit and vitality matched that of the land he now claimed as his own. His name was Richard F. Pettigrew. He was a pioneer.

The youth was well suited to the tasks which awaited him. Full six feet tall, his shoulders were broad and his back straight. But equally important, his physical prowess was matched with a keen intellect, an engaging personality and boundless energy. Moreover, Pettigrew had supreme confidence in himself. He was aware from the outset of the limitless opportunities offered by Dakota, and he determined at once to exploit them for all of their worth.¹ As he gazed across

¹Doane Robinson, History of Dakota Territory and South Dakota (New York: American Historical Society, 1930), II, 640.

the prairies of eastern Dakota that day, Pettigrew must have envisioned in his mind's eye the wealth which was there for the taking. Penniless, with no alternative but success, there could be no turning back for him. He must push on.

Richard Pettigrew was born in 1848 in the village of Ludlow, Vermont. Through his mother he could trace his lineage back to the Puritan band which followed John Winthrop to Watertown. Both of his grandfathers fought in the Revolution and later settled permanently in Vermont; and there his parents spent their early years, were married and began their family. Richard's life might well have run its course in Vermont had events not forced his father to flee New England and seek a new home further west.

Andrew Pettigrew was a devoted admirer of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. He circulated the Liberator and other unpopular literature, and his store in Ludlow served as a way station for the "underground railroad." By 1850, unfortunately, his fervor began to cost him friends and customers, and soon he was faced with financial ruin. In 1854, his savings gone and his very life in danger, he made the final decision to leave. Drawn by glowing reports of the West which he read in railroad advertising, Andrew gathered his family and set out for Wisconsin.²

²R.O. Parkinson, "The Early Career of Richard Franklin Pettigrew," (Iowa City, Iowa: State University of Iowa, unpublished Master's thesis, 1938), 1-2.

The Pettigrews settled on a farm in Rock County near the hamlet of Union.³ Here the family worked and played, and the children continued their education at a country school. By 1860, however, the desire to give his brood the best schooling available prompted Andrew to move once more. This time he settled near Evansville, the location of a respectable academy. Richard graduated from Evansville Academy in 1864 and that fall enrolled at Beloit College.⁴ Since the family had no money for college expenses, he took a job as a janitor. This provided enough for room, board and tuition, and he was able to complete two full years of study before fate intervened to cut short his college career.

Soon after the beginning of the term in 1866 Andrew Pettigrew became seriously ill. Richard hurried home from school to help manage the farm and when his father died in December, he decided to stay on as long as he might be needed. It was not until the late summer of 1867 that he felt free to leave. He had heard of a job in a dry goods store in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, which sounded attractive, and he decided to go there. When he arrived, however, the job had been taken and he was forced to pick corn in order to earn enough money to eat. A few days later he learned of a position as a

³Dumas Malone (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, "Richard Franklin Pettigrew" (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), XIV, 516-517.

⁴Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 3-5.

teacher in a country school near Marion Junction. He applied, passed the required examination, and was hired.

Teaching did not appeal to young Pettigrew. Nevertheless, he threw himself into his work with his characteristic vigor. Shortly, however, he decided to return to college and thus spent most of his leisure time reading law in preparation. When the year of teaching was completed, he went directly to Madison and enrolled in the Law School of the University of Wisconsin. There he met and studied under William F. Vilas and John C. Spooner, who were later to be his colleagues in the United States Senate.

At the end of the school year 1869, Pettigrew, penniless once again, joined a surveying party which was headed for Dakota Territory.⁵ The group arrived in eastern Dakota in June and worked through the summer and fall. Pettigrew was impressed with the immensity of the land and the opportunities which awaited the enterprising pioneer. Before he started home in November, he staked a claim to 160 acres near the village of Sioux Falls on the Big Sioux River. Then he returned to Madison to read law under the direction of Spooner. Little time elapsed, however, before Pettigrew again became restless. He feared that he might lose his claim to

⁵R.F. Pettigrew, "Autobiographical Manuscript," Pettigrew Papers, Loose File, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 1.

a squatter, so in April 1870, he again set out for Dakota, and this time he stayed.⁶

The "village" of Sioux Falls which Pettigrew viewed across the Big Sioux River that spring day in 1870 consisted of three log buildings, barracks, officers quarters, and a hospital. These buildings were constructed by the army in 1863 after an Indian uprising had frightened most of the original settlers away. In 1869 the soldiers departed, but the buildings were left standing.⁷ Since the land was now a military reservation and in theory not open to settlement, only a few people had returned. The buildings were inhabited by three traders, and a few farmers lived along the wooded banks of the Big Sioux River. The day he arrived, Pettigrew met Dr. Nyrum Phillips, a trader and one of the original settlers who had remained. The young man moved into the vermin-infested barracks with the doctor and this became his home during his first year in Dakota.⁸

Since he knew something of the business because of his experience in 1869, Pettigrew decided to support himself by surveying the public domain. Shortly after his arrival in Dakota, he called upon the Surveyor General, William H. H.

⁶R.F. Pettigrew, "The Scroll of Time" (Unpublished Article, 1916), Pettigrew Papers, Loose File, 4.

⁷Ibid., 2.

⁸Ibid., 4.

Beadle, and was granted a contract for the survey of a portion of Lincoln County south of Sioux Falls.⁹

Meanwhile, young Pettigrew continued to broaden his acquaintanceship in the Big Sioux Valley, and he soon came to know most of the white settlers and Indians who inhabited the area. Pettigrew was a man who made friends quickly and impressed others with his attitude of assurance and self confidence,¹⁰ and he undertook to promise everyone living on the Sioux Falls Military Reservation that they would be allowed to prove up on their claims without interference as soon as the lands were surveyed. But a problem soon developed. Pettigrew and Phillips discovered that a syndicate had been formed in the East to buy the Sioux Falls Reservation from the government. This was customary procedure in those days, but since it would prevent Pettigrew and many of his new friends from making valid claims under the Homestead law, they decided to enter a protest. A petition was prepared to send to Congress, but when it was completed there were only twelve names attached. Pettigrew did not believe this would be sufficient so he and Phillips added the names of several more persons they thought might "show up pretty soon."

⁹Beadle to J.S. Wilson, Commissioner of the General Land Office, July 8, 1870, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 11-12.

Satisfied with this, they sent their petition to Pettigrew's friend, Senator Matthew Carpenter of Wisconsin and he used his influence to protect their rights.¹¹

In the summer of 1870 the army sent a few soldiers over from Fort Randall to auction off the buildings. Since they rested on the quarter section claimed by Phillips, the other settlers did not bid against him. He purchased the structures for a small price and allowed everyone to stay on free of rent. Pettigrew planned to live with Phillips that winter and build his own quarters the next spring. He hoped to practice law if he could drum up enough business, but meanwhile he kept busy with his surveying.¹²

Surveyor General Beadle was pleased with Pettigrew's work in Lincoln County. Therefore, in August 1870, he granted the young man a new contract for the survey of a portion of Minnehaha County along the river north of Sioux Falls. Pettigrew was paid \$1800 for his services and granted the title, Deputy Surveyor.¹³ Shortly after the contract was signed, however, Beadle requested the General

¹¹R.F. Pettigrew, "Remarks Before the Minnehaha History Club of Sioux Falls," Pettigrew Papers, Loose File, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 4.

¹²Ibid., 5-6.

¹³Contract and Bond No. 48, Richard Pettigrew and W.H.H. Beadle, Contract Book III, 15, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 49, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Land Office that it be suspended so that he might investigate a complaint which had been lodged against Pettigrew.¹⁴

Three weeks later, having satisfied himself as to Pettigrew's integrity, Beadle wrote Commissioner Joseph S. Wilson that the complaint had originated with only one person and was prompted by a "misunderstanding." The complaint was that Pettigrew had been granted a \$5,000 surveying contract while a friend of the complainant had no work at all. When the size of the contract was disclosed to be only \$1800, the complaint was withdrawn and the complainant joined in commending Pettigrew. Moreover, declared Beadle, Pettigrew was "warmly commended by distinguished gentlemen in Wisconsin." So the surveying contract was granted.¹⁵

This episode and the petition incident constituted Pettigrew's introduction to territorial politics. As he examined political conditions further, he discovered that the key factors in territorial political relationships were factionalism and jealousy between federally appointed officers and their local allies; and the local politicians making their own bids for leadership. The federal faction, he discovered, usually revolved around the Governor, while the most important elective office, was that of Delegate to Congress. The man

¹⁴Beadle to Wilson, August 14, 1870, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁵Beadle to Wilson, September 16, 1870, in ibid.

who held this position was head of his party, or at least his faction, and his ability to distribute patronage adequately among his followers was the measure of his success. His most dangerous enemies in this business were the appointive federal officials.

Pettigrew found that in 1861, after the passage of the Organic Act for Dakota Territory, President Lincoln had appointed the first federal officials from among the various groups which made up the young Republican party.¹⁶ The Republicans thus dominated territorial politics from the outset and only relinquished their control on a few occasions. When this happened it was usually caused by fights within the party which gave the Democrats an opportunity to elect a Delegate.¹⁷ At the very time that Pettigrew arrived in the Territory such a split was developing and he wasted no time in entering the fray. With the help of his new friends in Sioux Falls he became a member of the Minnehaha County delegation to the Republican Territorial Convention of 1870,¹⁸ a gathering which portrayed admirably the bitter hostility that existed between the factions of the party. Since 1866

¹⁶Howard R. Lamar, Dakota Territory (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1956), 67-71.

¹⁷Herbert S. Schell, History of South Dakota (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), 93-108.

¹⁸George W. Kingsbury, History of Dakota Territory (Chicago: J.S. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915), I, 546.

a breach had been widening between the pro- and anti-Johnson Republicans. The former, under the leadership of Dr. Walter A. Burleigh, controlled the Territory until 1868. After that the faction led by Solomon L. Spink was in power. Now, in 1870, the two factions were again battling for control of delegates to the territorial convention which would enable one of them to elect its leader to Congress. Neither side, however, felt secure after the county conventions had met, so separate conventions were held and both men were nominated.¹⁹

Pettigrew was a delegate to the Burleigh faction conventions which met in Vermillion on September 6, 1870. Along with his fellows he voted to nominate the doctor for Delegate. He also voted to encourage railroads to enter the Territory and to seek a more lenient government policy in dealing with pre-emptors on public lands.²⁰ He was disappointed, however, in the election. The split in the party cost both candidates their chances, and the Democrat, Moses K. Armstrong, was elected.²¹

When the political maneuvering was over, Pettigrew returned to Sioux Falls. Since he had not yet fulfilled his

¹⁹Lamar, Dakota Territory, 100-126.

²⁰Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, I, 542-547.

²¹Ibid., 551.

surveying contract, he soon moved out once again and spent the remaining warm months working for the government.²² He finished his survey before the December 1, deadline and Beadle submitted his account to the General Land Office for payment.²³

Returning to Sioux Falls in November, Pettigrew lived in the barracks until the completion of his office in the spring.

During cold weather he spent most of his time indoors practicing law or playing poker, but when summer came in 1871 he went surveying once more.²⁴ Again he worked north along the Sioux River in what is now Brookings County. His contract was the same size as before, amounting to about \$1800.²⁵

As he travelled the length and breadth of the Big Sioux Valley, Pettigrew was impressed with the possibilities which existed for the man who owned strategic lots in newly organized counties. Whoever was in possession of land where county seats might be established would be likely to make a fortune. The thought intrigued him and he decided to make

²² Pettigrew, "The Scroll of Time," 6.

²³ Beadle to Wilson, November 21, 1870, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory Miscellaneous Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²⁴ Pettigrew, "The Scroll of Time," 7.

²⁵ Beadle to Willis Drummond, July 8, 1871, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

certain that his land would be within the county seat of Minnehaha County. He already owned a tract of land in Sioux Falls, but he wanted to strengthen his position. To accomplish this he gave money to two homesteaders to help them prove up their claims in exchange for their promises to sell the land to him as soon as title was clear. While he was out surveying, however, both of these individuals sold their options to other speculators and Pettigrew was left with nothing. Thereafter, he decided to proceed by means of direct political action. He became a candidate for the Territorial Legislature of 1872.²⁶ Once elected, his plan was to have the vast Minnehaha County divided into three smaller counties. He called upon his brother, Fred, and his sister, Hannah, to file claims on the land where the seats of the new counties were likely to be placed; and having attended to this, turned his attention to the campaign.²⁷

The district which Pettigrew was to represent stretched for two hundred miles along the eastern edge of Dakota from Elk Point on the south to Big Stone Lake on the north. There were very few people in the area and not all of them were eligible voters. There were some railroad surveyors in the area however, and Pettigrew solicited their votes. Although the railroad men were not legal residents of Dakota,

²⁶ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 25.

²⁷ Pettigrew, "Remarks Before the Minnehaha History Club," 9.

they promised to give Pettigrew their support in the election. Their ballots were counted and with the majority the railroad vote gave him, Pettigrew was declared the winner. Shortly afterward, he set out for Yankton, the territorial capital, where he soon became involved in a factional dispute which cost him his chair in the legislature.²⁸

Like most of its predecessors, this dispute was precipitated during the campaign when two prominent Republicans both claimed the office of Delegate. Judge W.W. Brookings had the support of Governor Burbank and most of the federal officials, while the other candidate, Col. Gideon C. Moody of Yankton, led what formerly had been the Burleigh faction. As a result of this split in the party both men failed and Delegate Armstrong was re-elected. Furthermore, while there were far more Republicans than Democrats elected to the legislature, their effectiveness was deterred by the fact that the breach had not healed by January, but seemed wider than ever.²⁹

The fight in which Pettigrew soon became involved centered around the question of public printing. With the aid of the Democrats, Moody and his group passed a bill granting the contract for territorial printing to the

²⁸Pettigrew, "Autobiographical Manuscript," 1-2.

²⁹Schell, South Dakota, 190-191.

Yankton Dakotan. Trouble arose when Moody discovered that Territorial Secretary Edward S. McCook had already granted a printing contract to the other Yankton newspaper, the Press. McCook declared that since the federal government paid the bills, its representatives had the right to choose the printer. Col. Moody countered that this right belonged solely to the representatives of the people. Pettigrew joined with Moody in denouncing the federal faction by declaring in his maiden speech that Governor Burbank's opening address was so bad, and such a disgrace to the Territory, that it should not be printed by anyone. Unfortunately for the young politico, McCook won the fight and immediately afterward Pettigrew's election was contested. Even so, he might have remained in the legislature if Moody had not suddenly decided to contest the election of Delegate Armstrong. When the Democrats heard of this, they immediately defected and without them the Moody faction was a minority in the assembly.³⁰ Thus, Pettigrew lost his seat in the assembly.

From his experience in the legislature of 1872 Pettigrew developed a hatred for federal control of territorial affairs which he never lost. He also gained the personal enmity of McCook which soon erupted into violence. The incident occurred one night shortly after the beginning of the session. Pettigrew had already made his speech on the

³⁰Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, I, 674-675. The Press and Dakotan were combined late in 1872.

printing bill, but had not yet been unseated. That evening the members of the legislature were to be entertained by a troupe of Swiss bell ringers. Pettigrew attended with Silas Roar of Union County, another member of the Moody faction. When they arrived at the legislative hall, where the show was to be held, they found that all the desks had been pushed back to make room for the entertainers, and since the hall was already crowded, they climbed up on the pile of desks to watch. At the end of the bell ringing, McCook made his way toward them and ordered them off the desks with the words, "Sons-of-bitches like you cannot sit on government property."

Roar and Pettigrew walked away, but when McCook continued to badger them, Pettigrew turned and climbed back up on the pile of desks. With that the Secretary exploded with rage and pulled him down. Pettigrew swung and the fight was on. It was not an even match. Even though McCook was an extremely large and powerful man, he was so clumsy that the agile Pettigrew had no trouble avoiding his blows. While the Secretary continued to swing and miss, Pettigrew got in enough punches to knock him down. Then he jumped on the big man and began to flail away, determined to do as much damage as possible. At this point some friends of the Secretary pulled Pettigrew to his feet and pinned his arms behind him. He struggled frantically to escape as McCook lunged toward him, and at the last moment wrenched one arm free and whirled around pulling the man who held him

between himself and McCook. His captor caught the full force of a tremendous blow flush on the jaw and collapsed in a heap. Pettigrew then turned on McCook again, but at this point the town marshall arrived and the bout was ended.³¹

In later years Pettigrew delighted in telling this story, and also the story of McCook's untimely death. This occurred on the night of September 11, 1873, in Yankton where a large number of politicians had gathered to discuss the solvency of the Dakota Southern Railroad. Peter P. Wintermute, an anti-administration banker, moved a vote of no confidence in the company, after which he left the meeting hall to have a drink in a nearby saloon. There he was accosted by McCook and a fight broke out between them. Wintermute was a tiny man and the Secretary easily beat him and then pushed his face into the contents of a spittoon. While the banker sat on the floor, blood and rotten spittle dripping from his face, he screamed hysterically that he would kill McCook when next they met. Unabashed, the Secretary left to address the railroad meeting.

A few moments later while McCook was speaking, Wintermute walked quietly into the room and before he was noticed, emptied a pistol into the Secretary's chest at point blank range. McCook, who was not killed outright, lunged toward his assailant, knocked him to the floor, and was about to

³¹Pettigrew, "Autobiographical Manuscript," 3-4. Although there is no available substantiary evidence to prove it, relatives and friends testified to R.O. Parkinson that Pettigrew was known for his prowess at fisticuffs.

throw him out the window before he was finally restrained. Unfortunately, McCook's wounds were fatal and he died the next day. Wintermute was indicted for manslaughter and found guilty, but the Territorial Supreme Court later reversed the decision and he went free.³²

The hatreds engendered by this episode had a telling effect on the Republican party. For the next two years the Democrats continued to control the office of Delegate and had more than their usual power in the legislature. Although Pettigrew continued to be interested in politics during this period, he was not again elected to public office until 1877. Thus he spent most of his time in Sioux Falls attending to his growing business interests, selling real estate and surveying.³³

In early July, 1872, two County Commissioners of Brookings County complained to the Surveyor General that Pettigrew's work in 1871 had been inaccurate. Beadle demanded that evidence be submitted and he discovered that the commissioners had confused Pettigrew's work with that of another surveyor who was clearly incompetent. It was further discovered that those who complained against Pettigrew had a personal grudge against him since they were unsuccessful

³² Schell, South Dakota, 191; Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, I, 720-740; Pettigrew, "Autobiographical Manuscript," 4-5. Also see Lamar, Dakota Territory, 141-142.

³³ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 27.

applicants for surveying contracts. Convinced of Pettigrew's integrity, Beadle ignored the complaints and made a new contract with the young surveyor and his partner, Ole Iverson.³⁴ The new contract was a larger one than before, amounting to \$4,096.07. The work was completed successfully and Beadle transmitted Pettigrew's account to the General Land Office in December.³⁵ Subsequently, Pettigrew fulfilled two more large surveying contracts in eastern Dakota, during the summers of 1873 and 1875. The first of these netted \$4,886.52,³⁶ and the second brought \$3,053.92.³⁷ The records indicate that Pettigrew's work continued to be entirely satisfactory with the government.

Meanwhile, the population of Dakota continued to grow. When Pettigrew arrived in 1870, the population of the entire Territory was only about 14,000.³⁸ It increased rapidly after that, however, and the need for more adequate transportation facilities soon became apparent. Pettigrew

³⁴Beadle to Willis Drummond, August 17, 1872, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 49, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

³⁵Beadle to Drummond, December 13, 1872, in ibid.

³⁶William P. Dewey, Surveyor General of Dakota Territory, to Drummond, December 27, 1873, in ibid.

³⁷Dewey to S.S. Burnett, October 9, 1875, in ibid.

³⁸Ninth Census of the United States, Population, 1870 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), I, 3.

was very much interested in attracting railroads to southeastern Dakota. During the 'seventies he made more than a dozen trips to New York and Chicago attempting to promote Dakota among eastern capitalists. He wanted to bring more railroads to the Territory and at the same time make Sioux Falls a city which would be the hub of the territorial system. His dream was to bring all the lines in the southern section of Dakota through Sioux Falls and then connect the city with two international shipping centers, Chicago and a port on the West Coast.³⁹ He also wanted direct rail service for the farmers of southeastern Dakota so that they could compete more adequately with Sioux City shippers in the markets of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth.⁴⁰

In 1875 a citizens committee for the promotion of railroads in Dakota was formed. Pettigrew became a member and was soon recognized by everyone as the "ramrod."⁴¹ He had the unique capacity of the salesman in that he could stimulate interest where none existed. Moreover, he was tireless in his activities in behalf of Sioux Falls, pursuing his objectives with an almost demonic zeal, and as a result of his work the railroads came.⁴² The first line into the

³⁹Pettigrew, "Remarks Before the Minnehaha History Club," 17.

⁴⁰Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 65.

⁴¹D.R. Bailey, History of Minnehaha County (Sioux Falls: Brown and Saenger, 1899), 146.

⁴²Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 89.

village was the Saint Paul-Sioux City, which began construction of a spur from Worthington, Minnesota, in 1876. Pettigrew made himself personally responsible for its rapid completion. He assisted in the selection of the roadbed and aided in surveying and construction activities. When the first engine chugged into town on August 1, 1878, Pettigrew was there beaming with pride. His dream was beginning to come true.⁴³

At the same time, Pettigrew attempted to strengthen his political position. He ran for the Territorial Council in 1874, but was defeated.⁴⁴ Two years later he served once again as a representative of his county at the Republican Territorial Convention. Eighteen-seventy-six was a presidential election year and the Republicans held two sessions. The first met in Yankton in May. Pettigrew attended along with seven others from Minnehaha County, and helped select delegates to the national convention. He also appeared at the second session which met in Vermillion in August. Pettigrew was the only returning member of the Minnehaha County delegation and was elevated to a seat on the resolutions committee. The report of that committee which was adopted by the convention reflected admirably his own position:

⁴³Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 23, 1926.

⁴⁴Yankton Press and Dakotan, January 14, 1875.

We renew our allegiance to the principles of the Republican party. . . .

We cordially endorse the selection of Hayes. . . .

We acknowledge with pride the valuable services of our Delegate to Congress, J.P. Kidder. . . .

The interests of the people of Dakota demand the creation of a separate territorial government for the northern portion. . . .

We believe the Black Hills should be opened to settlement. . . .

When the convention ended Pettigrew went home to begin his campaign for the legislature. This time he won and took his seat in Yankton on January 27, 1877.⁴⁵

During his term on the Territorial Council Pettigrew adhered strictly to the party line. The legislators were primarily concerned with the organization of the Black Hills, in which a population increase had occurred since the discovery of gold two years before. The federal government had not yet ratified a treaty with the Indians, and thus refused to take jurisdiction in the area. But the residents had established provisional governments which were operating de facto, and in anticipation of the ratification of an Indian treaty the legislature established a mining code which was incorporated into the laws of the Territory. The lawmakers also created three new counties in the Black Hills, Custer, Lawrence and Pennington, and made these a separate judicial district.

⁴⁵Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1011.

Party factionalism was in the background during this period, but was kept alive by severe criticism which was levelled at the administration by the Democrats. Governor John L. Pennington appointed a number of officials to administer the newly organized counties. Of course all of them were Republicans and most came from outside the Hills. The result was inevitable. The majority of the people in the Black Hills were Democrats and a great outcry of partisanship arose. Moreover, when the county seats were created, those who were disappointed charged that the Governor and his "friends" had formed a "ring" for the promotion of new townsites.

The unrest continued after the adjournment of the legislature as agitation for special elections to rid the Hills of the Pennington appointees began in earnest. The county clerks, however, refused to act and nothing was done until fall. Then, the clerks were overruled by the new judge of the district, Granville G. Bennett, and the elections were called. On November 15, 1877, the voters elected their own officials and new county seats, and the "Yankton Ring" was beaten.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, Pettigrew was in Sioux Falls attending to his business affairs. The community was growing along with the entire territory, and he was even more certain than before

⁴⁶ Schell, South Dakota, 194-195.

that he sat on a potential gold mine. Pettigrew believed there was virtually no limit to the heights he could reach if he maintained his popularity among the people and expanded his role in the Republican party. To accomplish these objectives simultaneously he hit upon a formula which was ready-made for him and which was almost certain of success. He would continue to work for the economic development of the Territory, level his political attacks primarily against the federal officials and their allies, and take up the growing cry for division of the Territory and statehood for South Dakota.

His drive for supremacy began in 1878. Once again he served on the delegation which represented Minnehaha County at the Territorial Republican convention. As usual, the most important bit of business was the selection of a candidate for the office of Delegate. Since the time was not yet ripe for him to push his own candidacy, Pettigrew played safe by supporting the incumbent, Jefferson P. Kidder. This man was partially responsible for the extinguishment of Indian title to the Black Hills, and as a result was extremely popular in the western section of the Territory.⁴⁷ He had considerable support among party leaders also, except for two determined groups which backed Gideon C. Moody

⁴⁷ The Black Hills Treaty was signed in 1876 and ratified in 1877. Kidder sponsored the land district bill. See: Congressional Record, 44 Cong., 2 Sess., January 17, 1877, V, 693.

and Granville G. Bennett. Bennett, too, was popular in the Black Hills because of his opposition to the "Yankton Ring," while Moody, now chairman of the central committee, had numerous partisans throughout Dakota. Nevertheless, neither of these men had enough support to succeed alone. Only combined did their backers have enough power to wrest the nomination from Kidder.

Pettigrew was appointed to the committee on permanent organization and was thus in a position to witness the manipulation of the convention delegates from the inside. His committee named W.H. Parker, a Bennett man, to the chair. Moreover, William H.H. Beadle, the former Surveyor General, and E.A. Williams of Yankton were named secretaries. When Beadle declined to serve, George W. Kingsbury was named to replace him. All of these were Moody men.

The balloting began on August 28, 1878. Pettigrew and his colleagues from Minnehaha County voted for Kidder and continued to support the Judge all afternoon, as no decision could be reached. Finally, at the supper hour a recess was called which was to last until eight o'clock. During the recess the final decision was made to switch the Moody votes to Bennett and on the first ballot after the group reconvened his support almost doubled. Before the balloting ended, several more counties changed their votes and within a few minutes Parker entertained a motion that the nomination of Bennett be unanimous. This motion carried

and Bennett was victorious. Pettigrew never changed his vote, but he accepted the decision of the convention and later campaigned vigorously for Bennett.⁴⁸ At the same time, of course, he worked in his own behalf and was re-elected to the territorial council in November.⁴⁹

The opening of the legislative session of 1879 marked the beginning of a new era in Dakota politics.⁵⁰ The new Governor, William A. Howard, crossed swords immediately with Pettigrew, who soon demonstrated his mastery of the art of political vilification.⁵¹ Just as he smeared Governor Burbank during the printing contract crisis in 1872, he now attacked Howard for remarks which the Governor made in his opening address. These remarks concerned the activities of Territorial Treasurer E.A. Sherman during the previous two years. Sherman had neglected to date a number of entries in his books during that period and Howard chided him for his carelessness.⁵² The Treasurer came from Minnehaha County

⁴⁸ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1064-1066; Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 30. As a reward for his withdrawal Moody was named to fill the judgeship vacated by Bennett. This is the first good example of bloc voting in Dakota Territory politics; the North and West against the Southeast.

⁴⁹ Yankton Press and Dakotan, November 28, 1878.

⁵⁰ Schell, South Dakota, 198.

⁵¹ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 196.

⁵² Yankton Press and Dakotan, January 16, 1879.

and was a friend and business associate of Pettigrew, who chose to consider the Governor's words as an accusation of dishonesty. He waited three days, pretending to give Howard enough time to discover his mistake and apologize. When nothing happened during the allotted time, he sprang to the attack. The Governor, he declared, was mistaken and must withdraw his accusation since it was likely to injure the reputation of the Treasurer. Howard replied that he had no wish to smear Sherman, but that the public had a right to know the facts. Pettigrew retorted that if the Governor had corrected his own mistake, there would be no cause for complaint. However, since the Governor seemed determined to press the matter it would have to be seen through to a conclusion.

On January 18, 1879, Pettigrew moved to appoint a committee to investigate the accounts of the Treasurer. Such a committee was formed and set to work immediately.⁵³ On the twenty-third the committee reported that it could find no basis for a charge of malfeasance against Sherman and the next day Pettigrew moved that he be reappointed.⁵⁴ Shortly after, Pettigrew withdrew the motion, ostensibly at the request of Sherman, and the episode was ended. It is important, however, as an example of the type of political

⁵³ Ibid., January 23, 1879.

⁵⁴ Ibid., January 30, 1879.

maneuvering that was to become Pettigrew's trademark. He covered his own tracks with a smokescreen of accusations against his opponents and attempted to divert interest from his own activities.

On this occasion the screen was designed as cover for a scheme to improve the position of some of his real estate. He introduced a bill which if successful would result in the creation of one large county through the consolidation of Hanson and Davison Counties, which lay directly to the west of Minnehaha. The consolidation would place Pettigrew's tract near the center of the large county where it would have an excellent chance to fall within the county seat. Unfortunately for him, the "anti-Pettigrew press" was not deceived. The Yankton Press and Dakotan, for example, attacked the bill bitterly: "It is a scheme against Rockport, the only promising town in the area," raged the editor. "Pettigrew has bought land further up river, and now relies on the legislature to do the rest."⁵⁵ The bill did not pass, but the efforts of Pettigrew and his brothers to locate townsites continued. Said the Dakota Republican:⁵⁶

The Pettigrews are famous for having a "big shake" in townsites. R.F. had a portion of Sioux Falls; Fred has that of Flandreau; and now J.A. proposes to sell

⁵⁵ Ibid., February 13, 1879.

⁵⁶ Dakota Republican, (Vermillion), August 21, 1879. This is a clipping found among the Pettigrew Papers.

an addition to Watertown. All are towns on the Big Sioux River. There is nothing like "going in on the ground floor."

At the end of the legislative session Pettigrew journeyed to Chicago where he married Elizabeth V. Pittar, a young school teacher he met on one of his numerous business trips. Very little evidence exists concerning the Pettigrews' domestic life. It is known, however, that the young couple set up their permanent residence in Sioux Falls and that two sons, Franklin and Arthur, were born to them in the early 1880's. The Pettigrews celebrated twenty-two anniversaries before the death of Elizabeth in 1901.⁵⁷

By 1879 Pettigrew's drive for political leadership began to mature. He was now ready to launch his campaign for a seat in Congress and he intended to construct his support as solidly as possible. Already certain of his position in the Big Sioux Valley, he journeyed through the northern and western sections of the Territory during late 1879 testing political sentiment. He appeared in Bismarck in the early fall and from there he travelled by stagecoach to Deadwood in the Black Hills. Here he inspected a quartz mine in which he owned an interest and opened his campaign as well.

The journey from Bismarck to Deadwood was a grueling trip of four hundred miles through hostile Indian country.

⁵⁷Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 13-14.

All the passengers and the driver of the coach were armed, and no one disembarked except to eat at the numerous way stations. The six horses which pulled the stage were driven at break-neck speed over the uneven terrain and changed at each station. There were no bridges over any of the rivers and each one had to be carefully forded.

When they had reached a point about forty miles from Deadwood, the driver suddenly stopped and summoned the passengers from the coach. On a hill some distance away stood a very large antelope, the first they had seen. While the driver and messenger discussed the possibility of killing the animal Pettigrew took a pot-shot at it and to his amazement the antelope fell dead in its tracks. After their initial shock had subsided, the men retrieved the carcass and lashed it to the coach. Later, in Deadwood, a big barbeque was held and the story of Pettigrew's prowess with a rifle was widely circulated. He later related that the miners and outdoorsmen of the Hills were so impressed with his feat that he was soon dubbed "the deadshot," and he liked to think that this incident helped him to carry the mining region in the election the following year.⁵⁸

Pettigrew remained in Deadwood about four days and then set out for the Cross Quartz mine. He was joined by

⁵⁸R.F. Pettigrew, "Account of Experiences During a Political Campaign in Dakota," Pettigrew Papers, Loose File, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 1-2.

Jefferson P. Kidder, the former Delegate whom he had supported for re-election the year before. They travelled by stagecoach to Rapid City, and there they hired a team and wagon for the remainder of the trip. Their first stop was the Rockerville mining camp, where they stayed in the shed which served as a hotel and spent the evening drinking whiskey. As they entered the saloon, Kidder, who was already "in his cups," stepped up to the bar, pounded with his fist and demanded, "Give me some rot gut; I don't want whiskey, I want something you sell." The incredulous barkeep was about to throw the old man out when Pettigrew intervened and informed him that this was Delegate Kidder who had been instrumental in extinguishing Indian title to the Hills. While Kidder continued to demand "rot got," Pettigrew convinced the bartender of his identity. Finally, the man exclaimed, "If that's Judge Kidder, he can have anything in the house he wants and it won't cost him a cent." Pettigrew later recalled: "We were then served exactly what Kidder asked for."

The two men left Rockerville the next day to inspect the Cross mine, in which Pettigrew had \$1500 invested. After spending some time there they returned to Rapid City and from there Pettigrew returned to Sioux Falls, where he soon found himself embroiled in a new political crisis.⁵⁹

On April 10, 1880, Governor Howard died and soon

⁵⁹ Ibid., 6.

after, Territorial Secretary George H. Hand made known his desire to be named Howard's successor. As a member of the "Yankton Ring" and as confidant of federal officials, Hand immediately drew fire from Pettigrew and his growing entourage of supporters. Excluding the Pettigrew following, however, the candidacy of Hand was greeted with enthusiasm, and it was not Pettigrew, but the dead hand of Governor Howard which finally defeated the Secretary. Howard had become convinced during his short tenure that it was unwise for resident Dakotans to hold positions of great authority in the Territory. Only an outsider could detach himself from the intra-party squabbles and factional fights which characterized Dakota politics. Howard had relayed his views to President Hayes in a letter delivered after the Governor's death, and this no doubt influenced the President's decision to by-pass Hand. Instead he named Nehemiah G. Ordway of New Hampshire, who took office on June 25, 1880.⁶⁰

At the same time, Pettigrew continued his campaign for the nomination as Territorial Delegate. Judge Bennett, of course, desired to succeed himself, and during the early months of the year seemed to have a great deal of support throughout the Territory. The addition of a third candidate, however, aided Pettigrew's cause. John B. Raymond, United States Marshall, threw his hat into the ring and with it came

⁶⁰Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1119.

fuel for Pettigrew's campaign fire. Raymond was a native of Mississippi and thus was open to attack as an "intruder." "Dakota for the Dakotans," became Pettigrew's campaign cry, and the sod-busters flocked to his banner in droves.

Bennett, too, was open to attack, since he had originally come to Dakota with a federal commission. In addition, he had become closely associated with the "Yankton Ring" during his term of office, and though he was the incumbent and was popular, Pettigrew was able to make the most of his weakness. "Dakotans can govern themselves without help from that knot of politicians in Yankton," he declared. Like the "Dakota for Dakotans" theme, this cry struck a responsive chord among the populace.

Raymond inadvertantly helped Pettigrew in another way. He had strong support in the north and in the Black Hills where Pettigrew was weak. Raymond was almost certain to get enough votes in these areas to hurt Bennett, even though he had little chance to win in the Territory as a whole.⁶¹

The pre-convention campaign went on through the summer months. Then in September the delegates gathered in Vermillion for the showdown.⁶² Pettigrew had been unable to assure himself of enough votes to win on the first ballot,

⁶¹Ibid., 1131-1134.

⁶²Alexandria Herald, undated clipping found among the Pettigrew Papers.

but a straw vote showed that he could count on fifty-five. Bennett had a like number and Raymond had thirty-one. The formal voting showed the same distribution through six ballots. Then a recess was called for one hour. It is not known what occurred during that recess, but on the first ballot after the group reconvened, the Raymond men began a shift to Pettigrew, and before the vote could be completed his nomination was declared unanimous.⁶³

Thus Richard F. Pettigrew approached the threshold of political success. He controlled a powerful faction of the Republican party and was well known and popular among the voters of Dakota. Since 1874 the Republican nominee for Delegate had been virtually assured of election and there were no signs that the trend would change in 1880. His most virulent opposition among territorial politicians, he knew, would continue to come from the federal officials and the "Yankton Ring." But he was ready now to do battle with them, and his goal was nothing less than complete political control of the Territory. There could be no compromise with his enemies, no turning back. His course was set.

⁶³Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1135.

CHAPTER II

PETTIGREW AND GOVERNOR ORDWAY! POLITICAL CONFLICT IN DAKOTA

Dakota almost lost her new Delegate before he could be elected. During the campaign, Pettigrew again went to Deadwood to check on the political situation. He journeyed by railroad from Sioux City, Iowa, to Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory, and from there by stagecoach to Deadwood. Enroute the stage was held up by bandits at Buffalo Gap. Pettigrew and the other passengers decided not to attempt a "shoot out," thinking they were covered by members of the gang who did not expose themselves. At the command of the robbers they stepped down from the coach and stood in a line. As he made his descent, Pettigrew suddenly realized that he knew the identity of one of the masked men who stood before him. The man's name was Kemsley Towles, and his family had a homestead near Sioux Falls. As the outlaw drew near, Pettigrew whispered to him, "Kemsley, what shall I tell your mother?" To which the boy replied, "Don't tell her nothin'."

The other passengers noticed the conversation and also the fact that Kemsley failed to take anything from Pettigrew. After the bandits had left them, the politico was

hard pressed to explain that he had not been involved in the holdup somehow. But he finally succeeded and the group continued toward Deadwood where they arrived safely a short time later.¹

Pettigrew was still in Deadwood on election day 1880. His friend Nye Phillips had joined him there and the next day they started home. The journey took them to Rapid City by wagon where they boarded a stagecoach which would take them to Pierre over a newly inaugurated route. On the first night out, however, snow fell and the driver became lost. The situation could have become serious, but luckily, after hours of aimless wandering, they found a way station. Here they rested a while before continuing on their way. In due time they arrived at Fort Pierre on the west bank of the Missouri, only to find the river covered with a thin layer of ice which made crossing impossible. As a result they were forced to watch helplessly as the train they hoped to catch chugged eastward out of Pierre. While they discussed their next move, a steamboat making its last run of the season came down the river. They boarded the craft thinking their troubles had ended. The vessel could take them to Yankton where another train could be caught. Trouble, however, was only beginning, for the captain of the boat had neglected to

¹R.F. Pettigrew, "Account of Experiences During a Political Campaign in Dakota," Pettigrew Papers, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Loose File, 5-6.

take on enough firewood, and before they had gone far the supply aboard was exhausted. The crew was sent ashore for more firewood, but found only green cottonwood, and this would not burn. Finally the ship simply drifted down stream with the current until it became stuck in the ice several miles above Yankton.

Pettigrew and Phillips went ashore and set out on foot to find a road. After a grueling hike they finally crossed what appeared to be a stage route and began to follow it in the direction of the capital. Shortly, an Indian came along driving a wagon and team. Phillips, who thought he knew the Sioux tongue, attempted to converse with the red man, and asked for a ride to Yankton. He could not make himself understood, however, and the Indian refused to help them. Frustrated, Pettigrew and Phillips drew their side arms and demanded to be taken to their destination. The Indian understood this, and while Phillips covered him in the back of the wagon, Pettigrew drove on. They travelled in this fashion until they came to Charlie Wanbow's trading post near Springfield. Here, they released the Indian and paid him for his trouble. Charlie, who spoke the native tongue very well, explained to the startled redman that the two whites had meant him no harm and he departed happily.

From Springfield the two friends drove a rented wagon to Yankton, where they boarded a train for Sioux City. There, they changed trains and finally arrived in Sioux Falls

to discover that Pettigrew had been elected to Congress and they had been considered lost by their families and friends for more than ten days.²

Pettigrew was opposed in the election by Michael L. MacCormack of northern Dakota. The Democrats hoped that intra-party disputes might once again weaken the Republicans and bring victory as in 1870 and 1872. This time, however, they were disappointed. Pettigrew won by a margin of almost two to one, garnering 17,664 votes to 9,343 for MacCormack.³ Thus the young politician was well on his way toward realizing his goals. He was immediately confronted, however, with a serious obstacle in the bulky form of Governor Nehemiah G. Ordway.

Historical assessments of Ordway vary because substantial evidence is lacking. However, he was a man with ambitions quite similar to those of Richard Pettigrew and the two men soon became bitter rivals fighting for political control of Dakota Territory. Ordway looked upon his office as a stepping stone to wealth and power and had no intention of allowing anyone to stand in his way. A native of New Hampshire, he served in the legislature of his state, and for twelve years was Sargeant-at-Arms of the United States

² Ibid., 7-10.

³ Sioux Falls Press, November 2, 1880.

House of Representatives.⁴ While serving in that capacity, he became prominently linked with the Credit Mobilier and in 1876 his activities were investigated before a Congressional Committee headed by J.M. Glover of Missouri. The report of this investigation has been lost, but even though it exonerated Ordway he received a good deal of bad publicity from the whole affair.⁵

In Dakota, Ordway planned to establish complete control of territorial politics by monopolizing patronage. Here, he crossed swords with Pettigrew who claimed the patronage for himself. The result was a political duel which has seldom been equalled for its savagery. Carried on through personal encounters and through the press, this duel did not end until Ordway was finally removed from office in 1884.⁶

It began shortly after Pettigrew's election when he was in Yankton on business. There he was visited by former Governor Newton Edmunds and advised to see Ordway before leaving. He was told that the Governor was offended at some

⁴Lamar, Dakota Territory, 202-203.

⁵Lois Malvina Drake, "The Influence of the Newspapers of Dakota Territory upon the Administration of Governor Nehemiah G. Ordway," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Missouri, 1941), 9.

⁶Lamar, Dakota Territory, 203-221.

remarks Pettigrew had made during the campaign and that unless he apologized, he might not receive his certificate of election. Outraged, Pettigrew refused to call on the Governor, declaring that he did not think Ordway would refuse to perform his legal duty. Ultimately, the certificate was issued and Pettigrew journeyed to Washington where he was sworn in on March 4, 1881.

It proved more difficult than he had imagined, however, to sidestep Governor Ordway. Pettigrew soon learned that Ordway intended to appoint all the territorial postmasters himself. Since loss of this prerogative might mean his ruin, Pettigrew determined at once to stop Ordway by any means which might be necessary. His first step was to contact Senator O.H. Platt of Connecticut, an old friend, and relate the story to him. Platt agreed that Pettigrew was entitled to the patronage, but suggested that he might "get together" with Ordway on the matter and work out a compromise. Although he was reluctant, Pettigrew finally consented and a meeting was arranged.⁷ The Governor was in Washington, having arrived shortly after the adjournment of the legislature, and he came to Pettigrew's hotel room that very night. Ordway suggested that the two men cooperate in dispensing the

⁷R.F. Pettigrew, Imperial Washington (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1922), 152.

patronage, but Pettigrew refused and they parted on unfriendly terms.⁸ Shortly afterward Ordway left for Dakota, but before doing so he publicly declared that Pettigrew had demanded control of all the appointive offices in the Territory. No Delegate, the Governor went on, had ever had such power, and Pettigrew was not to be the first.⁹

Ordway knew from his experience with the legislature that he too faced a powerful opponent. During the 1881 session, elements friendly to Pettigrew were in control.¹⁰ The legislature, concerning itself primarily with the organization of counties and the authorization of building bonds, passed more bills than any of its predecessors. Even though relations between the Governor and the legislators were cordial on the surface, Ordway vetoed a large number of these bills which were then passed over his objection.¹¹ After adjournment, he referred to the legislature publicly as "an irresponsible group."¹² and from this point no attempt was made to hide the hostility which existed between himself and Pettigrew.

⁸ Ibid., 154-155.

⁹ Yankton Press and Dakotan, March 30, 1881.

¹⁰ Schell, South Dakota, 202.

¹¹ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1172.

¹² New York Tribune, March 21, 1881.

The Pettigrew press in Dakota moved swiftly to discredit the Governor. The March 28 edition of the Fargo Republican editorialized on Ordway's "dictatorial policies,"¹³ and shortly after, the Deadwood Times exclaimed, "Ordway is an unworthy, incompetent affliction. He is also a fraud."¹⁴

Meanwhile the Sioux Falls Times strove to further the Pettigrew image:¹⁵

. . . He attacked the corrupt official rings of the territory and handled them so well that even the Democratic press which hated his ultra-Republicanism spoke of him with admiration.

His record gives evidence of keen knowledge of Dakota affairs. He knows people; has bitter enemies but many warm friends. We have faith in him.

The Delegate was not content with mere newspaper attacks upon his opponent. He knew that he must rid himself of this dangerous opponent if he were to hope for untrammelled success in the future. Thus in May, 1881, he filed formal charges of nonfeasance against Ordway with the Secretary of the Interior.¹⁶ These charges were based on the assertion that Ordway had left his post and gone to Washington in order to campaign against statehood for southern Dakota. In July Pettigrew wrote to former Congressman Glover who had headed

¹³Fargo Republican, March 28, 1881, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁴Deadwood Times, April, 1881, ibid.

¹⁵Sioux Falls Times, May 10, 1881, ibid.

¹⁶Black Hills Journal, April 9, 1881, ibid.

the 1876 investigation of Ordway, asking for information. Glover sent the material and wrote:¹⁷

. . . You refer to N.G. Ordway, Ex-Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Representatives, and ask if he ever answered the damaging evidence taken before my committee to my satisfaction. I answer emphatically No. It was impossible for him to make satisfactory answer. I have no hesitancy in giving as my opinion, in view of all the evidence developed against him, that he is one of the most corrupt and unprincipled men that has ever disgraced the public service of this country. I am convinced that he never held an office with the view of being satisfied with its honors and its legitimate emoluments but to prostitute it to the worst jobbery and fraud for money making.

On the basis of the evidence supplied by Glover, Pettigrew published in September a multi-page broadside entitled "Ordway's Record." This savage attack was concerned primarily with his tenure as Sergeant-at-Arms of the House and accused the man of demanding bribes, accepting bribes, theft of government funds, and other crimes.¹⁸

Ordway counter-attacked almost immediately. "Ordway's Record," declared the governor, "is nothing but a scheme by Pettigrew to ruin my reputation." "The Delegate," he continued, "has withheld all the testimony before the Glover Committee which was "favorable to me."¹⁹ Actually, Pettigrew

¹⁷ J.M. Glover to Pettigrew, July 24, 1881, Pettigrew Papers, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Loose File.

¹⁸ Drake, "The Influence of the Newspapers of Dakota, . . ." 9.

¹⁹ Ibid., 21.

never had any "favorable evidence" since Glover, who harbored an almost psychotic hatred for Ordway, had sent him only damaging material.

On another occasion the Governor wrote:²⁰

From the moment I took my stand against these mercenary combinations, I expected misrepresentations and personal abuse would be poured out to divert the attention of the public from the real issues. I do not however propose to be diverted from the main question at issue even to notice the great "anonymous" containing more lying to the square inch than ever before blackened even a very poor quality of white paper.

A friendly newspaper, the Dakota Herald, tried some diversions of its own. Said the editor, "Pettigrew is the leader of a 'ring' of politicians trying to control territorial patronage. This group of local politicians is made up largely of a gang of speculators. . . ." ²¹

Pleading his case before the people of the Territory, Ordway argued that the legislature had been controlled by a combination of delegates from Moody's district in the West and Pettigrew's district in the Big Sioux Valley. After the agents of this combination had been made officers of the Council and Assembly, bills for issuing bonds and building public buildings were passed. No pretense was made of submitting these questions to the people, and for this reason

²⁰ Ordway to the Citizens of Bonhomme County, November 1, 1881, Pettigrew Papers, Loose File.

²¹ Dakota Herald, March 26, 1881, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

Ordway vetoed them. This action, he declared, had brought down the wrath of the combination upon him. Nevertheless, he vowed to veto all other such bills placed before him in the future. "This legislation," wrote the Governor, "is a reckless attempt to serve certain individuals at the expense of the people and without their consent."²²

Meanwhile, the Pettigrew press took up the cry of "removal." "We want the President to remove Ordway," said the editor of the Deadwood Daily Times, "he has no experience; is dishonest and corrupt."²³ And again: "The governor's greatest mistake is in thinking his policy of 'divine right' is for the guidance of the people. He is one of the territory's greatest afflictions. He thinks he owns Dakota and should have complete control of appointments."²⁴

While the charges and counter-charges flew, Pettigrew submitted two important bills in Washington, one for the division of Dakota Territory at the forty-sixth parallel; the other asking statehood for the southern portion.²⁵

²² Ordway to Charles Deverns, February 4, 1881, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, Dakota 1871-1884, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²³ Deadwood Daily Times, April 19, 1881, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

²⁴ Ibid., April 12, 1881.

²⁵ Congressional Record, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., December 19, 1881, XIII, 206.

He knew Congress was not ready to admit another state, but he felt that the division bill might be forced through. In any event, he intended to keep the statehood issue alive.²⁶

"South Dakota has many strong claims to statehood," he declared in a press release. "The population has grown to more than 138,000. We have over 1000 miles of railroad track and more under construction. The eastern area of the region has rich soil and produces immense crops while the mining opportunities in the Black Hills are unlimited."²⁷

Both Pettigrew's bills were referred to the Committee on Territories of which he was a member. On February 18, 1882, much to his disgust, the committee reported back a substitute measure providing that the entire Territory be made a single state.²⁸ The Delegate was disappointed but not discouraged. When the substitute failed in August, he promised his constituents, "The territory will be divided two years hence."²⁹

Very shortly, the question of statehood for South Dakota was to become the crux of the Pettigrew-Ordway feud,

²⁶Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1624-1627.

²⁷Fargo Republican, no date, as cited in Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1623-1624.

²⁸Congressional Record, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., February 16, 1882, XIII, 1220.

²⁹Grand Forks Morning News, August 10, 1882, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

but for the present Pettigrew was forced to concentrate on the more personal problem of his own re-election. He returned from Washington to find himself confronted by powerful opposition. George Hand, still a formidable enemy, headed a faction in southern Dakota which desired Pettigrew's defeat. He campaigned hard in the southern counties and the competition became so bitter that when the Republican convention met in Grand Forks early in September, there were several contested delegations. To make matters worse, Ordway arrived as an onlooker and lent his influence to the support of Hand.

There was a third candidate in the person of John B. Raymond, who once again entered the race as favorite of the northern section. At the outset it appeared that he controlled 81 votes, while Hand had 116 and Pettigrew only 42. Still, the situation was not hopeless until the credentials committee refused to seat any of Pettigrew's delegates from contested counties. This turn of events virtually assured his defeat, but his fertile brain did not cease to function. Realizing that his influence in the south might be jeopardized if Hand were elected, Pettigrew immediately withdrew his own name and before the stunned delegates could react, strode out on the floor to nominate John Raymond. His own votes combined with those already controlled by Raymond succeeded in preventing the nomination of Hand.

The method used to accomplish this scheme merits some

explanation. It required that the report of the credentials committee be ignored so that the Pettigrew faction could vote. This requirement was met by contriving that two reports, majority and minority, be submitted. There were eight members on the committee. Seven of them, all from the north, signed the majority report while one, C.H. Winsor of Sioux Falls, signed the minority report. After both had been submitted, the portion of the majority report dealing with uncontested counties was adopted. Then it was moved that the minority report which admitted the Pettigrew delegates from all other counties, be adopted. This motion carried with the members of the credentials committee who had submitted the majority report voting for it! After this the matter was cut and dried. Pettigrew nominated Raymond and the latter was victorious on the first ballot.³⁰ As a result, the northern section gained control of the office of delegate while the Pettigrew faction controlled the party organization.³¹ Through shrewd manipulation and almost perfect timing, Pettigrew had salvaged victory from certain defeat.

The great struggle between Pettigrew and Ordway now neared its climax. With Hand defeated and Pettigrew in firm control of the party, Ordway's chances for further developing his political power were considerably diminished. He thus

³⁰Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1217-1224.

³¹Schell, South Dakota, 208.

determined to play his trump card: the removal of the capital. If successful, this scheme held out the possibility of great financial reward. The Governor owned considerable real estate in Bismarck, which was his first choice. In Pierre, the second choice, his son owned several lots and was agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, which also desired that the capital be moved.³²

The idea of capital removal was not new. Ordway had mentioned it as early as June 1880, shortly after his arrival. At the time, however, he felt it was more important to convince the leaders of the "Yankton Ring" that he was friendly to them, and thus the idea was not pushed. Now, in 1883, the time for deception had passed. The friendship of the Yankton politicians was no longer vital. The situation demanded action. There was little to be lost; much to be gained.

For victory, Ordway relied upon the aid of a number of friendly newspaper editors in northern Dakota. They established the Dakota Press Association, which pushed the removal scheme, and several of them succeeded in having themselves elected to the Territorial Legislature. In control of the Council during the session of 1883, they joined with the Governor to push through the capital removal bill.³³

³²Lamar, Dakota Territory, 209.

³³Drake, "The Influence of Newspapers, . . ." 42.

At first it was proposed that Huron be made the new capital. According to plan, the Huron bill failed, but succeeded in enlisting the unwitting aid of that town and most of central Dakota in the removal scheme. It was then proposed that a capital removal commission be created which would organize in Yankton within thirty days and decide where the capital should go. This bill, according to plan, was approved.

The citizens of Yankton, infuriated by this audacious plan to divest them of the capital, attempted to prevent the commission from organizing. Its members were kept under constant surveillance in the hope that the thirty-day period would expire before they had a chance to make their move. Early one morning, however, an unobtrusive train passed slowly through the city limits. In one of its cars were the capital commissioners who quickly organized.³⁵

Ordway and his associates were now ready to proceed. For two months the commission travelled about the Territory inspecting those towns which desired the capital. After much sober deliberation they selected Bismarck, and in June the change was made official.³⁶

At the same time an attempt was made to stop Ordway

³⁴ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 203-204.

³⁵ Ibid., 205.

³⁶ Schell, South Dakota, 210.

with legal action. A quo warranto proceeding was inaugurated against the commission on grounds that the Organic Act of 1861 provided that the capital be located by the legislature. The matter was tried before District Judge Alonzo J. Edgerton in July. He handed down his verdict favorable to the plaintiffs in September. By that time, however, the change had already been effected. The decision was appealed to the Territorial Supreme Court and reversed.³⁷

Those who opposed removal were a motley group made up of local politicians drawn together by their common hatred of Ordway, and their desire for home rule. In April 1883, the anti-removalists met in Sioux Falls and effected an important combination which was to overshadow all others in Dakota politics for several years to come. Pettigrew joined forces with the "Yankton Ring" led by Gideon Moody, William H.H. Beadle, an old friend who had given Pettigrew his first surveying contracts, and George W. Kingsbury. Moody, now attorney for the Homestake Mining Company, was an active force in Black Hills affairs, and a firm alliance with him brightened Pettigrew's prospects in that area to a marked degree.

The combination appointed county committees to begin gathering facts on the activities of Ordway. These were later to be presented to a grand jury for consideration, in the

³⁷ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 237.

hope that Ordway would be indicted for malfeasance in office and removed. If the grand jury failed to produce results, however, the combination was prepared to demand Ordway's impeachment by the federal government.³⁸

Ordway fought back valiantly, attempting to disassociate himself from the removal scheme. He spoke to a large gathering in Turner Hall, Yankton, early in April. There, he recounted his accomplishments and swore that no illegal "deal" had been entered into for the removal of the capital, concluding: "I consented to the moving of the capital because the last election showed a concentration of population in the northern area [of the territory]."³⁹

Two weeks later, in the same hall, Pettigrew lashed back at the Governor. "He is hostile to me because I refused to join hands with him to control territorial appointments," cried the ex-Delegate. "The capital removal scheme is a plot against those of us who wish to see South Dakota become a state," he concluded.⁴⁰

At the same time, the county committees began making public the evidence of corruption they had gathered against the Governor. It was alledged, but never proved, that Huron had paid someone \$27,000 expecting to get the capital. It was

³⁸ Ibid., 221.

³⁹ Yankton Press and Dakotan, April 5, 1883.

⁴⁰ Ibid., April 20, 1883.

furthered claimed that one Council member confessed he had been offered \$15,000 to vote for the Huron bill, but again there was no proof. In addition, there was evidence that Ordway vetoed bills favored by the anti-removalists in the legislature. If their views "changed" properly, he then signed substitute measures.

With evidence of this nature before it, a grand jury convened in Yankton late in the month of April. Before this body the Governor was further accused of selling county commissionerships to the highest bidder. He appeared to defend himself, but the members of the jury, who were decidedly hostile to him, refused to ask questions. As a result, Ordway could only utter a few defensive remarks and retire; whereupon the jury formally censured him for interference in the organization of Douglas County. Oddly, he was not indicted.⁴¹

After his experience with the grand jury, Ordway immediately wrote to President Arthur:⁴²

I have been advised by your telegrams that certain elements in Yankton urged on by former delegate Pettigrew are seeking to create unfounded prejudices against the late legislature and myself on account of the passage of an act to remove the territorial capital from Yankton to Bismarck. . . . These charges will undoubtedly be presented to you with a request for my removal.

⁴¹ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 236-237.

⁴² Ordway to President Chester A. Arthur, April 23, 1883, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, Dakota 1871-1884, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

While the Governor anxiously awaited a reply, the anti-removalist-home-rule elements led by Pettigrew and Moody launched an active campaign for statehood. This would settle the question of "outside interference" once and for all. In May, 1883, they held a brief convention in Huron. Here, a novel approach to the statehood question was presented by U.S. Attorney Hugh J. Campbell. The lawyer claimed that since southern Dakota met all the constitutional requirements for statehood, it was incumbent upon Congress to admit her to the Union. If Congress refused to act, the citizens of southern Dakota should ignore federally appointed officers and independently organize a state. He declared:⁴³

. . . The peoples of southern Dakota could by united popular action, separate at a stroke the councils of the north and south, destroy the power of the political combination which opposed division, and begin as a separate state organization.

The ideas of Campbell were warmly accepted by Pettigrew, who asserted that if Congress failed to pass an enabling act the people of Dakota should remove all territorial officials and install a state government. This would not be rebellion, he snorted, since Dakotans were trying to get into the Union, not out of it.⁴⁴

Campbell's theory was adopted as a resolution by the

⁴³Lamar, Dakota Territory, 222.

⁴⁴Yankton Press and Dakotan, April 20, 1883.

Huron convention. It was also agreed that a convention should be held in Sioux Falls that September to write a constitution.⁴⁵

During the summer of 1883 the statehood leaders did everything in their power to maintain interest in the movement. Eastern newspapers were bombarded with articles designed to show that the people of the Territory demanded to be accepted as first-class citizens. Campbell published his theory in a pamphlet which was widely distributed, and Pettigrew declared again and again that merchants, farmers, bankers, and virtually all other citizens demanded statehood. This great propaganda campaign, however, was a gross misrepresentation of the facts. The fight for statehood was, for all practical purposes, a battle between two groups of politicians.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, interest among many was at fever pitch when the delegates to the constitutional convention arrived in Sioux Falls on September 4, 1883. Both the Republicans and the Democrats were well represented and the bipartisan nature of the gathering became apparent at the outset when a leading Democrat, Bartlett Tripp, was chosen to preside. Among the important Republicans who attended were Pettigrew, W.W. Brookings, J.P. Kidder, Hugh J. Campbell, George W.

⁴⁵Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1660-1668.

⁴⁶Lamar, Dakota Territory, 225-226.

Kingsbury, William H.H. Beadle, and Gideon Moody.⁴⁷ In addition to the politicians there were many spurred by desires to write specific clauses into the constitution. The prohibitionists were there in force as were the protagonists of woman suffrage.⁴⁸ There were also eleven land speculators led by young Arthur C. Mellette, soon to rise to prominence in Dakota politics. His group opposed the opening of more Sioux Indian lands to settlement since this would cause a costly drop in land prices.⁴⁹

The document which was finally produced mirrored the desires of the politicians who wrote it. It provided for the division of Dakota Territory at the forty-sixth parallel. Prohibition and woman suffrage were excluded but would be submitted to a vote of the people at a later date. A bicameral legislature was created, the veto powers of the governor were restricted, and Yankton was made the capital. In general, the other clauses of the constitution were similar to those found in most state constitutions.⁵⁰

One month after the adjournment of the convention the constitution was submitted to the will of the electorate and approved by a vote of 12,336 to 6,814. Two factors concerning

⁴⁷Ibid., 229-230.

⁴⁸Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1676-1677; 1679.

⁴⁹Lamar, Dakota Territory, 230.

⁵⁰See Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1293-1316, for a partial text of the proceedings of the convention.

this vote marred Pettigrew's pleasure with the victory. His home county voted against the document overwhelmingly, and the total vote was so light that Congress ignored the outcome.⁵¹ In Washington, the Republican-dominated Senate approved a statehood bill, but the Democratic House rejected it,⁵² despite furious lobbying by a pro-statehood delegation from Dakota.

Meanwhile, Governor Ordway, who personally led the fight against adoption, found himself faced with problems of a more serious nature. Several of his officers refused to move their records to the new territorial capital in Bismarck. The most notable of these was Territorial Secretary James H. Teller, brother of Henry Moore Teller, Secretary of the Interior. James had apparently been promised by the home-rule-anti-removalists that he would be recommended for governor if statehood were not forthcoming in the near future.⁵³ Ordway, knowing nothing of this, wrote to Henry Moore Teller complaining of his brother's obstinacy:⁵⁴

Will you use your good offices with your brother the secretary to prevent him from falling into the hands

⁵¹Ibid., 1716-1717.

⁵²Congressional Record, 48 Cong., 1 Sess., March 13, 1884, XV, 1824.

⁵³Lamar, Dakota Territory, 238.

⁵⁴Ordway to Henry M. Teller, September 22, 1883, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, Dakota 1871-1884, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

of the Yankton and Sioux Falls factions who are trying to precipitate a conflict between him and the governor and ultimately between the pretended state government they have set up and the federal officers representing national authority?

Teller, unfortunately for the governor, refused to order his brother to move, and James, considering his own position quite sound, could not be moved by any exhortation from Ordway: "I believe my refusal valid. Further, I am unaware of any U.S. statute that impowers the governor of a territory to control or interfere with the secretary."⁵⁵

Even more dangerous to Ordway was the fact that the home-rule-anti-removalists, furious at his attempts to thwart them, had sent all the damaging evidence they possessed to Washington. Henry Moore Teller was still considering this evidence when on April 1, 1884, a second grand jury convened in Yankton to study charges of corruption against the Governor. Ordway, now desperate, wrote in his own defense to Teller:⁵⁶

All the accusations against me concerning fraud and dishonesty are false. I have organized 25 counties, but only in two have any charges been made against me whereas disreputable adventurers infest them all with the view of plunging them into debt and speculating out of county seats.

During the hearings before the grand jury, Ordway was specifically charged with demanding and receiving bribes for

⁵⁵ James H. Teller to Ordway, September 24, 1884, in ibid.

⁵⁶ Ordway to Henry M. Teller, March 27, 1884, in ibid.

the organization of counties. This time he was not even summoned to testify in his own behalf,⁵⁷ and he countered by charging U.S. Attorney Hugh J. Campbell with misconduct and bias.⁵⁸ Friendly newspapers also moved swiftly to aid him. The Sioux Valley News of Canton declared that the jury was packed with enemies of Ordway and that "certain federal officials" Campbell were acting against the Governor with malice.⁵⁹ So vicious was the editor's attack on Campbell that he soon found himself called before the grand jury to explain his actions. At the same time, Campbell wrote to U.S. Attorney General B.H. Brewster in his own defense:⁶⁰

I do not believe any members of the grand jury are personally hostile to Ordway. I declined to summon Ordway before the jury because his first request to appear as a witness against one Juno P. Grennan whom he charged with forging his name to a territorial commission and this is not an offence against the U.S. Statutes. Sic Last night he for the first time asked me to summon him as a witness in his own behalf. I declined but I deny and denounce the charges of personal malice which he has levelled at me.

In spite of his denials, the Justice Department investigated the charges against Campbell and found some substance to them. It was discovered that he had indeed acted

⁵⁷United States Attorney Hugh J. Campbell to United States Attorney General B.H. Brewster, April 18, 1884, in ibid.

⁵⁸Ordway to Brewster, May 8, 1884, in ibid.

⁵⁹Drake, "The Influence of the Newspapers, . . ." 135-136.

⁶⁰Hugh J. Campbell to B.H. Brewster, April 18, 1884, as cited above.

without impartiality toward the Governor and had, in fact, neglected his own official duties to carry on the prosecution.⁶¹ He was shortly removed from office.⁶²

Meanwhile, the grand jury handed down an indictment against Ordway and he was brought to trial on June 13, 1884. His attorneys moved immediately to quash the indictment on the grounds that as an appointed officer of the United States Ordway was not indictable by a territorial grand jury. No matter what he had done, they argued, he could only be punished by the agency which had appointed him. After considering this motion for a very short time, Judge Edgerton granted it and Ordway went free. Nevertheless, public opinion was by now so hostile to him that he was soon removed from office.⁶³

Thus ended the fight by Pettigrew and his anti-removalist allies against a dangerous and powerful foe. The outcome resulted largely from the immense amount of damaging publicity which the two sides heaped upon each other, which caused disgust among the public and in Washington. Fortunately for the home-rule-anti-removalists, the loss of Campbell's office was not a great blow to them, while Ordway's loss virtually ended his career. Although he continued to be

⁶¹Lamar, Dakota Territory, 240.

⁶²Drake, "The Influence of the Newspapers, . . ." 140-143.

⁶³Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1381-1382.

active in politics, he was never again a serious threat to the dominance of local politicians. Thus Pettigrew and his allies were free to turn their attention wholeheartedly toward the quest for statehood.

From another point of view the Pettigrew-Ordway embroglio was more important for its symbolism than for anything else, for it was emblematic of the traditional struggle between federal officers and local politicians in the territories of the United States. Nowhere was this struggle more acute than in Dakota, where from the very beginning of organized political activity the keynote was factionalism.

The dispute between Governor Ordway and Delegate Pettigrew involved an interest clash between two dominating personalities. Ordway, representing the "outsiders," fought to secure political control of the Territory, and hoped at the same time to gain economic advantages. Pettigrew, representing the "home-rule" faction, had identical motivations. Thus, a clash was inevitable. The years of the Ordway Administration were "boom years" economically, but were chaotic politically. Pettigrew and Ordway were competitors who were unscrupulous and ambitious, and they attempted to capitalize on this situation. They spent much time and effort attempting to enrich themselves through speculative schemes and political manipulations that could only have been successful in a society where political and economic institutions were as yet unsettled. Only by understanding

this can one understand why such fierce battles and such deep rooted personal hatreds could be engendered by the location of the territorial capital or the control of territorial patronage. The political leaders of the Territory were deeply interested in all such matters as the location of county seats, schools, asylums, and the penitentiary. Each affected the speculative or vested interests of one group or another in the Territory. And there could be only one winner.⁶⁴

Richard Pettigrew, leader of the "home-rule" elements of Dakota, is a prime example of the men who fought with all their might to check the usurpations of outsiders such as Ordway. Pettigrew and his kind claimed for themselves the right to distribute political favors, and plan for themselves the economic development of their Territory. As has been seen, they achieved a measure of success, but then, as they entered the last phase of the drive for statehood, the leaders of the dominant Republican party began to disagree among themselves over the distribution of political favors and economic benefits. Very soon, the farmers, long an important force in Dakota, demanded a louder voice in party counsels, and their spokesmen emerged to challenge the combination for political leadership.

⁶⁴Lamar, Dakota Territory, 97-98, 241-242.

CHAPTER III

SENATOR PETTIGREW, THE COMBINE AND THE AGRARIAN UPRISING

During the "Dakota Boom" years between 1878 and 1887 thousands of farmers emigrated to Dakota seeking economic independence. Led on by the advertising campaigns of the railroad companies and the Territorial Government they sought to make their fortunes in cattle, wheat, and corn. Disregarding the fact that world-wide competition weakened rather than strengthened their economic position, they put hundreds of thousands of acres into cultivation and themselves into debt hoping to pay their way with profits which never came. Overproduction, falling prices and continual increases in the costs of production pushed them further and further into debt until many lost all hope of recovery.¹

The farmers blamed the railroads and the grain elevators for their predicament because of the extremely high service rates charged by those agencies. And indeed there is evidence that in some cases freight and storage rates absorbed from

¹Schell, South Dakota, 158-174.

one-third to one-half of the value of a farmer's entire crop.²

Unable to comprehend the abstractions of theoretical economics, the farmers turned against the railroads and elevators whose evil practices they abhorred. They soon came to believe that the unpleasant circumstances in which they found themselves could be mitigated only by seizing control of the governments of the states and territories in which they lived. Acting upon this belief they formed "alliances" which were designed to act as pressure groups within existing political parties. Unfortunately these groups were often under the leadership of professional politicians who were motivated primarily by a desire to secure public office. Such a man was Henry L. Loucks, founder of the Territorial Alliance of Dakota.

Loucks was an immigrant from Canada who settled upon a government homestead in Deuel County early in 1884. He was a part of the migration which entered the Territory toward the end of the great boom. Thus he experienced almost at once the hardships which were common to the farmers of the region and he took up their cause by organizing a "farmers' club" which soon became the Territorial Alliance. In 1885 this group affiliated with the National Farmers' Alliance.³

²Report of the Dakota Railroad Commission (Bismarck, 1886), 21.

³Dictionary of American Biography, "Henry Langford Loucks," 426.

From the very outset the Dakota Alliance worked to elect men to the legislature who would support its demands. An Alliance bloc attended every session from 1885 to 1889, but achieved only limited success in bringing about the passage of regulatory legislation. Its failure to achieve more was due primarily to the powerful influence exerted on the Republican party by railroad lobbyists. It was also due to the reluctance of party leaders to allow the farm bloc any influence within the party itself.⁴ Among the leaders of the Dakota Alliance were Alonzo Wardall, John W. Harden and A.D. Chase. These men constituted a recognized threat to the control of the party by the Pettigrew-Moody Combine.⁵ Thus a clash between the two forces was virtually inevitable.⁶

After his defeat as delegate in 1882, Pettigrew was out of office until he was elected to the territorial legislature in 1884. When he took his seat at Bismarck in 1885, he found that a number of the legislators could be counted as "friends of the farmer." He watched closely their efforts to push through far-reaching railroad legislation,⁷ and was

⁴K.E. Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota" (unpublished Master's thesis, State University of South Dakota, 1959), 10-24.

⁵Lamar, Dakota Territory, 276.

⁶For evidence that the Combine recognized the threat see: Pettigrew to Mellett, March, 1890 (Exact date uncertain, Pettigrew Papers).

⁷Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota,"
7.

somewhat relieved by their inability to do so because it reflected their impotence as an independent political force. Even though a railroad commission was established, its emasculated powers left the companies little to fear.⁸ Of far greater importance to Pettigrew, and for that matter to the Alliance men, was the statehood movement. The legislature authored a memorial demanding that the sovereign status of southern Dakota be recognized by Congress.⁹ The document embodied the arguments of the Campbell theory which, though eloquent, were completely without foundation at law. Said the Dakotans:¹⁰

Let Dakota stand upon her own rights, and assert them, and act upon them. Let her say to the party in power in Congress, in the words of the Supreme Court, in the case of Dred Scott v. Sandford: "You have no power to hold this people as a territory permanently" but you are bound to admit us as a state as soon as our population and situation entitle us to admission.

If you refuse us admission we will go to the people of the United States on that question, and turn you out of power. That is the language of a free people who are American citizens, and have rights guaranteed by treaty, and compact, which are irrepressible without our consent.

From this point the intensive fight for statehood developed which lasted from 1885 to 1889 and culminated in the entrance of South Dakota into the Union. Since this fight had important side effects on Republican party politics, it

⁸ Session Laws of Dakota Territory, 1885 (Chap. 126, Sec. 9), 186.

⁹ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1727-1728.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1728.

bears detailed discussion. Pettigrew remained in the background leaving active participation to Moody, Mellette, Campbell and Judge A.J. Edgerton who had now become a member of the Combine. Nevertheless, Pettigrew still controlled party organization, and his approval was necessary for most of the actions taken by these men.

Opposed to the statehood faction stood the Democratic party and those who wished to admit Dakota Territory to the Union as a single state. Among the leaders of this group were ex-governor Ordway, and Governor Luis K. Church, an appointee of Grover Cleveland.¹¹ They were prepared to go to any lengths to prevent the statehood faction from succeeding, and backed by the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives in Washington, their position was virtually impregnable.

Thus it was in the face of almost certain repudiation that the advocates of statehood for southern Dakota called a second constitutional convention to meet in Sioux Falls in September 1885. Pettigrew, busily engaged in business activities, was not a delegate, but most of the other members of the Combine attended and dominated the proceedings from the outset. Edgerton was made chairman while Moody acted as floor leader.¹² The constitution which they produced was

¹¹Lamar, Dakota Territory, 258.

¹²Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1732.

quite similar to the 1883 document and thus its actual writing was of secondary importance to the delegates. Rather they were concerned with finding some method of forcing Congress to grant statehood once the constitution was accepted by the voters.¹³ Here, a difference of opinion arose between two factions of the Combine. Edgerton and Moody represented the moderate view. They were loath to do anything which might antagonize Congress. On the other hand, Campbell, representing the radical view, favored the creation of the machinery of a state government without reference to the wishes of Congress. Thus he offered an amendment to the preamble which gave the citizens of the "state" the right to ". . . alter, reform or abolish their form of government in such a manner as they may think proper." Such a pronouncement was dangerous to prospects for success in the opinion of the moderates and Judge Edgerton descended from the chair to answer Campbell. He declared:¹⁴

. . . I desire that we should present to Congress a constitution which will receive the approbation of Congress. I desire to appeal to them, not declare that we have an absolute right to establish a different form of government. . . .

After further remarks by Moody and the Rev. Josiah Ward, who represented the Congregational Church of Dakota, Campbell's resolution was put to a vote and adopted.

¹³ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 252.

¹⁴ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1739.

Immediately after this vote, however, an adjournment was called and the resolution was submitted to the Committee on resolutions. The committee returned the preamble with Campbell's harsh wording removed. This action was adopted on the floor and thus the Combine was victorious. The exact strategy employed to bring about this victory, however, remains a mystery.¹⁵

After the adjournment of the Constitutional Convention, a call went out for a "Republican State Convention" to meet in October for the purpose of selecting nominees for "state offices."¹⁶ There was, of course, no legal justification for such a convention. It was held primarily as a dramatic gesture to arouse the spirit of territorial voters. The Combine was well aware that its one slim chance of success rested on a large turn-out and overwhelming acceptance of the constitution,¹⁷ and they were willing to go this far in their efforts to capitalize on that chance. Most of the nominees were men who had been delegates to the convention and it was a surprise to no one when Arthur C. Mellette was named candidate for governor.¹⁸

The election took place in November. Once again the

¹⁵ Ibid., 1742.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1745.

¹⁷ Lamar, Dakota Territory, 254.

¹⁸ Ibid., 255.

voters of Dakota approved their constitution by a very light vote. But on this occasion they also elected a "state" government even though they knew it could not legally operate. Mellette was unopposed in his bid for the governorship as were all the other candidates including Moody and Edgerton who were elected "senators."¹⁹ Hugh Campbell, whose "we are a state" theory was in large part responsible for the actions of these men, was made chairman of the "State Executive Committee," while Pettigrew, apparently content with control of party machinery, did not seek an office.

In December, 1885, the "legislature" of the new "State of Dakota" met in Huron. "Governor" Mellette addressed the "legislature," devoting himself almost entirely to a rationale for the existence of the "state." His speech showed a firm belief in the Campbell doctrine, and that Mellette was a determined advocate of home rule, and a divisionist. Regarding the validity of the "State of Dakota," he said:²⁰

The only possible argument against the case we present to Congress is that the Civil War materially changed the construction of the Constitution and modified the traditions of American law as to the relation sustained by the states to the federal government. It is urged that every precedent upon which we predicate our case is antebellum construction

¹⁹Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1753-1754.

²⁰Ibid., 1759.

of our unwritten constitution obliterated by the blood of that awful sacrifice. Upon careful examination, however, we discover that our issue is not involved in or related to the questions settled by the Civil War.

At the same time, the question of admission was presented to Congress by Senator Benjamin Harrison of Indiana, a personal friend of "Governor" Mellette. On December 15, 1885, Harrison introduced a bill providing for the admission of the State of Dakota into the Union and the organization of the Territory of North Dakota. This measure was referred to the Committee on Territories.²¹ However, Matthew C. Butler of South Carolina countered immediately with a resolution directed to the same committee, which demanded to know by what authority a "so-called" state government had been organized in the Territory of Dakota. He was joined by George G. Vest of Missouri who exclaimed:²²

. . . when the Senator from Indiana the other day presented a memorial coming from certain persons in that territory, in the hurried reading of the secretary it escaped me that it came from the official representatives of a state of which I had never heard. . . .

Butler and Vest entered a formal protest against the creation of the "State of Dakota." "I want to know," demanded the Missourian, "if any senator here . . . will undertake to say that this state can exist except by the sovereign will of

²¹Congressional Record, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., December 15, 1885, XVII, 179.

²²Ibid., 301.

Congress."²³ He also opposed the division of the Territory and declared that the residents of the southern section were attempting to usurp the powers of Congress.²⁴ Vest directed his attacks personally against Hugh J. Campbell and the State Executive Committee of Dakota:²⁵

This committee has no official existence. Its chairman, Hugh J. Campbell, in recent events in Louisiana, distinguished himself as a partisan of Mr. Hayes and was rewarded for his efforts with an appointment as U.S. Attorney in Dakota. He has published an address, 5,000 copies of which have been distributed over that territory, asserting the monstrous doctrine that the State of Dakota exists by virtue of a vote of the people of that territory without reference to Congress.

Vest then turned upon Harrison and demanded to know whether he believed that the people of Dakota Territory had the right to act as they had without regard for Congress. At a loss to defend either the Dakotans or himself, Harrison replied: ". . . I hold, and have always held, to the doctrine that a state can neither break into nor out of this Union."²⁶ He refused to say more and here the matter was allowed to rest.

On January 11, 1886, the bill was reported back to the Senate unfavorably, and it was postponed. However, on February 5, it was returned to the floor and passed by a vote

²³Ibid., 302.

²⁴Ibid., 304.

²⁵Ibid., 302.

²⁶Ibid., 303.

of thirty-two to twenty-two.²⁷ It was then referred immediately to the House where on May 25, 1886, it was reported adversely and dropped.²⁸

In the meantime, Dakota stock took a sudden rise and fall. After the Harrison bill passed the Senate, Mellette, Edgerton and Moody journeyed to Washington for an interview with the President. They assured Cleveland that they were not revolutionaries and that everything they had done was for the purpose of inducing Congress to grant Dakota legal and bona fide admission to the Union. Edgerton, who spoke for the group, also assured the President that the leaders of the Dakota statehood movement had done nothing for which historical precedent could not be cited.²⁹ Cleveland, for his part, assured Edgerton and the others that he would give the matter careful consideration. Apparently the Dakotans were not distressed by the ambiguity of the President's words for they returned home with glowing reports of success.³⁰

Later, however, it was discovered that the House Committee was not disposed to report the Harrison bill

²⁷ Ibid., 1171.

²⁸ Ibid., 4891.

²⁹ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1779-1781.

³⁰ Ibid., 1782.

favorably and that Congressman William M. Springer, of Illinois was about to introduce a counter-measure. The Sioux Falls Press commented bitterly on this turn of events:³¹

It means . . . that immediate admission is out of the question. It means that the Democrats are aiming to so divide Dakota as to put the sparsely populated section by itself, so that it will not be entitled to admission for years to come. The Democratic leaders see that it is necessary to do something and they are resorting to this division scheme as a measure which will postpone indefinitely the admission of one territory and that of the other until after the next presidential election.

The Springer bill provided for the division of Dakota not at the forty-sixth parallel, but at the Missouri River. News of its proposal and the imminent defeat of the Harrison bill motivated the constitutional convention to reconvene on May 4, 1886, to consider the situation. The delegates were in an ugly mood and were squarely divided between those who wanted to operate as a state regardless of Congress, and those who opposed this step. The former group was led by Campbell; the latter by Edgerton. The Campbellites won out and the provisional government remained in existence.³² However, it was with little enthusiasm that the "legislature" convened for the second time to hear "Governor" Mellette defend once more the existence of the "State of Dakota." Afraid to pass laws or do anything to activate their paper government, the "legislators" drifted quietly away from the

³¹Sioux Falls Press, February 10, 1886.

³²Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1783-1784.

"capital" until there were too few left to establish a quorum. Soon the "session" was forced to adjourn, and it appeared that the Democrats and one-staters were victorious.³³

This point in time is significant in the fight of Dakota for admission to the Union, first because it marks the end of the second unsuccessful drive; and also, because it constitutes a pause before the opening of the final and successful drive in which Richard Pettigrew assumed open leadership. In the period since his final defeat of Ordway in 1884, Pettigrew stayed for the most part in the background, devoting much of his time to railroad promotion. But, when the third and final drive for statehood began in February, 1887, he was ready to devote full time and energy to it. He was confident of success and expected that his control of the Republican party organization would place him in the Senate when South Dakota became a state.

The territorial assembly voted to call for a ballot on division in November,³⁴ and a convention was planned which would arouse the enthusiasm of the voters.³⁵

Pettigrew favored such a move and his mouthpiece, the Sioux Falls Press declared that all those who wanted statehood should get behind the movement and push. "The people,"

³³Lamar, Dakota Territory, 259.

³⁴Ibid., 259-260.

³⁵Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1801.

declared the Press optimistically, "are overwhelmingly in favor of division and will prove it if given the opportunity."³⁶

On June 7, 1887, Pettigrew, Mellette, Campbell, Edgerton and several others met in Huron and issued a formal call for the division convention to meet the next month. They issued a statement declaring that the purpose of the convention was to unify the divisionist forces in preparation for the election in the fall with the hope of getting out a vote large enough to impress Congress.³⁷ The importance of the convention was highly publicized in the newspapers. The Sioux Falls Press, for example, declared:³⁸

In the matter of division there are three classes; those who favor it, those who are opposed, and those who are indifferent. The first class are in the majority but it will not do to take anything for granted. Friends of division can be united and encouraged and the indifferent can be so thoroughly instructed as to cause them to become active supporters of the movement.

When the convention finally met, several diverse interest groups were represented. M.H. Day, representing divisionist Democrats, was there. Also, Father Robert W. Haire, radical Socialist priest from Aberdeen, was a delegate. Haire was an avid supporter of the Farmers' Alliance, but that group also sent its official representative, T.H. Conniff.

³⁶Sioux Falls Press, February 5, 1887.

³⁷Ibid., June 8, 1886.

³⁸Ibid., July 13, 1887.

His very presence illustrates the fact that the Alliance was rapidly becoming an important factor within the Republican party.

The delegates were agreed that all previous statehood movements were dead and that a new start was necessary. Hugh Campbell even agreed to abandon his "we are a state" doctrine, at least for the time, and work for a division and admission bill which might be expected to pass Congress. With the Combine in firm control of the proceedings, Campbell was made chairman and plans were laid to carry out an intensive campaign throughout the Territory in favor of division.³⁹

The months following adjournment were characterized by feverish activity in every county of the Territory and the divisionists became more and more optimistic of success. But on November 8, when the ballots were finally cast, Pettigrew and his friends received a shock. Northern Dakota voted overwhelmingly against division. In the south the result, while favorable, was inconclusive.⁴⁰ This unexpected reversal gave new heart to the opponents of the division-admission movement who immediately called a convention of their own in Aberdeen where they once again endorsed the

³⁹Lamar, Dakota Territory, 260.

⁴⁰Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1809-1810.

Springer bill.⁴¹ Meanwhile, in Congress, Delegate Oscar Gifford attempted to check the one-state advocates by introducing a bill which called for the creation of two separate states in Dakota rather than one state and one territory. It was the first time this idea had been officially mentioned and it changed the tempo of the admission fight.⁴² To this point the quest had been only for the admission of the southern portion and territorial status for the north. Now the statehood leaders asked that their territory be divided into two sovereign states. In the House Springer again led the opposition, while in the Senate Butler and Vest once more attacked the demands of the Dakotans. Senator Harrison was joined by O.H. Platt of Connecticut in his drive to push the Gifford bill through.⁴³

The debates on statehood, which began in April, 1888, became an issue in the Presidential campaign and excited interest throughout the country. Time and again editors of such partisan Republican papers as the New York Tribune lashed out at the obstructionist tactics of the Democrats. The campaign of the Tribune in behalf of Dakota reached its climax on August 15, 1888, when it declared: "Every voter

⁴¹ Ibid., 1810-1812.

⁴² Lamar, Dakota Territory, 261.

⁴³ Ibid., 262.

who believes it is a crime to withhold representation from this state . . . should vote for a Republican member of Congress in November. A Republican House of Representatives means the prompt admission of Dakota."⁴⁴

Furthermore, the Republicans had a plank in their platform calling for the admission of the territories "as soon as possible," and, of course, their presidential candidate, Benjamin Harrison, had long been the champion of statehood for Dakota.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, in Dakota, Pettigrew, Mellette and the other leaders of the movement labored to excite more enthusiasm among the citizens of the Territory. They had now hit upon the expedient of calling conventions of statehood advocates divided according to profession. Thus Pettigrew and Mellette organized a lawyers' convention, and W.S. Bowen of the Yankton Press and Dakotan organized an editors' convention. In addition there was a clergymen's gathering and one of businessmen and farmers.⁴⁶

It was during this period of intense activity that the final estrangement of Hugh J. Campbell from the other leaders of the Combine occurred. He had now returned to his

⁴⁴ New York Tribune, August 15, 1888.

⁴⁵ Thomas McKee, The National Conventions and Platforms of the Political Parties (Baltimore: The Friedenwald Co., 1906), 241.

⁴⁶ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1837.

"we are a state" thesis which was extremely popular.

Campbell was personally more active than any of the others and he spoke on the subject of statehood almost every day during the summer of 1888. He became so enamored of his own importance to the movement that he began to believe that it could not succeed without him and that only he could successfully guide an admission bill through Congress.⁴⁷

Thus Campbell began to combine his own campaign for the office of Delegate with the statehood campaign. Unfortunately, his ambitions were more lofty than the plans which the Combine had for him and by mid-summer they turned against him. This caused a split in the statehood forces which might have been fatal had it not been for the election of Harrison in November. As it was, it meant only the loss to the Combine of the services of Campbell, who went over to the Farmers' Alliance.⁴⁸

Events now moved rapidly. The success of the Republicans in the national elections of 1888 spelled certain success for the statehood movement in Dakota and the other territories. On February 20, 1889, the Omnibus Bill was passed despite vigorous opposition from Democrats led by the unrelenting Springer.⁴⁹ In Dakota, when it became certain

⁴⁷Lamar, Dakota Territory, 264.

⁴⁸Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1846-1852.

⁴⁹Congressional Record, 50 Cong., 2 Sess., February 20, 1889, XX, 795.

that the state would be admitted, the Farmers' Alliance moved to seize what it considered its fair share in the distribution of offices. The Combine, fearing the agrarian leaders meant to gather all political power to themselves, sought to head off such a move.

Although there is no conclusive evidence, it appears that the leaders of the Combine had already agreed on the distribution of the important offices. Mellette was to be Governor, and Pettigrew, and Moody, Senators. If possible, a Federal Judgeship was to be procured for Edgerton. Since Pettigrew was in control of party organization, he had his pick of the offices. Moody was chosen for Senator in order to secure the support of Republicans in the Black Hills.⁵⁰

On March 9, 1889, President Harrison appointed Arthur C. Mellette Governor of Dakota Territory to serve until the constitution could be approved and state officers chosen.⁵¹ Immediately thereafter, plans were laid for the third and final constitutional convention to meet in Sioux Falls in July. The Republican Alliance men, fearing that the Combine meant to ignore them in the distribution of offices, attempted to seize control of the convention. Allied with the Democrats and Prohibitionists, they very nearly

⁵⁰ Evidence of this agreement is scanty, but see: Pettigrew to Mellette, September 21, 1889; and Edgerton to Mellette, October 19, 1889, as proof that it existed. Mellette Papers, South Dakota State Historical Society Museum, Pierre, South Dakota.

⁵¹ Schell, South Dakota, 220.

succeeded, but by careful manipulation of delegates Pettigrew and Moody were able to defeat them.⁵²

The success of the Combine in maintaining control was soon to have a significant effect on politics in the new state. It was to alter the history of the agrarian political movement of South Dakota, since as a direct result some Alliance leaders began to consider leaving the Republican party and founding a new independent political organization dedicated to the interests of farmers. However, the proper time had not yet arrived. Most influential Alliance men still agreed with Henry L. Loucks that it would be unwise to organize a third party. They preferred to operate within the existing parties as a pressure group, even though that method had brought them only limited success.⁵³ Thus with the new state nearing its birth the Alliance men paused to reflect upon their future role in the Republican party and South Dakota.

On June 19, 1889, they held their last territorial convention at Huron. Here, Loucks declared that the farming element was entitled merely by virtue of numbers to control both Senate seats, both seats in the House and all major state offices.⁵⁴ Hugh J. Campbell, now completely ostracized from

⁵² Lamar, Dakota Territory, 266.

⁵³ Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 15.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 15-16.

the Combine, challenged the farmers to ". . . go into every primary, caucus and convention and nominate your friends and not your enemies for all the offices from United States Senator to constable."⁵⁵

The Alliance made desperate efforts to gain recognition at the county level and despite the opposition of the Combine was fairly well represented at the first Republican State Convention which assembled at Huron, August 28, 1889. Of primary importance here was the selection of candidates for the state offices. Fearing that the nomination of Mellette would mean their political death, the Alliance men sought to head off this event,⁵⁶ but were unable to gather enough support. In the end they did not even bother to name a candidate of their own.⁵⁷ Instead, they accepted the candidacy of Mellette and the party platform, which was, in fact, specifically designed to allay their fears. It called for fair elections, just taxation, equitable transportation rates, and prohibition.⁵⁸

Loucks, still opposed to a third party movement, exerted all efforts to convince his followers that their

⁵⁵Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1884-1885.

⁵⁶Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota,"
17.

⁵⁷Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1904-1906.

⁵⁸South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 647.

interests would best be served by the Republicans. Through his mouthpiece, the Ruralist, he insisted that the Alliance was satisfied with the results of the convention. The leaders of the party, said Loucks, have heeded the demands of the farmers; the party nominees moreover, ". . . are broadminded and conservative, and pledged to support a platform which embodies almost every plank in the Alliance platform."⁵⁹

Pettigrew, despite the pronouncements of Loucks, was unconvinced as to the loyalty of the Alliance. He feared that pressure from the agrarian element for a greater voice in party counsels would continue. Whether heeded or not it would threaten the power of the Combine and perhaps endanger his own tenure in office. In order to allay this danger, he cleverly sought to intermesh the interests of certain Alliance leaders with those of the Combine by doling out a tidbit of patronage. Pettigrew advised Mellette that Donald Needham, Vice President of the Territorial Alliance might well be appointed to the Railroad Commission. "Mr. Needham has been one of our closest friends and has helped us everywhere, . . ." he pointed out.⁶⁰ Despite this plea,

⁵⁹ As quoted in Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 18.

⁶⁰ Pettigrew to Mellette, October 7, 1889, Mellette Papers.

Needham was not appointed. Oddly, there is no hint of disgust in the Pettigrew correspondence. Perhaps he feared to precipitate a factional dispute on the eve of success. Or perhaps he knew that Mellette was corresponding with the radical Father Haire of Aberdeen who was active in Alliance circles. This exchange shows conclusively that Mellette considered the agrarian element in the party an important one.⁶¹

In spite of the small rift in the Combine over this particle of strategy, the party succeeded admirably in the first state election. Mellette carried all but five of the fifty-one counties and defeated his Democratic opponent by more than 30,000 votes.⁶² Shortly after, the legislature convened in the Hughes County Court House in Pierre, the new capital, to elect two United States Senators. On the evening of October 15, the Republicans caucused to decide upon their candidates. Pettigrew and Moody of the Combine were challenged for the nomination by Alonzo Wardall of the Alliance. In addition, Judge Edgerton, who also enjoyed a certain amount of Alliance support accepted a nomination. After each of these men was nominated a straw vote was taken. The poll disclosed that Pettigrew and Moody led the others far and away with 98 and 85 votes respectively. Edgerton had 67 and

⁶¹ For example see: Haire to Mellette, December 7, 1889, in ibid.

⁶² South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 289.

Wardall only 44. Thus it was moved that Pettigrew and Moody be made the unanimous nominees. This motion carried and the next day the two politicians were elected by the legislature. The only dissenting votes were those of the seventeen Democrats who voted for their leader, Bartlett Tripp. After the election, Pettigrew and Moody drew straws for terms and Pettigrew won the six year term.⁶³

On the surface, it appeared that the party was acting in complete harmony and that Wardall and Edgerton had gracefully stepped aside in favor of the more popular candidates.

This, however, was not the case. Wardall was very anxious for the nomination and had with great confidence predicted his election at an Alliance convention in St. Paul seven months before. Loucks, who accompanied him to that convention, had given him full support. Although he employed great tact when he conceded to Pettigrew, Wardall actually harbored bitter resentment at having lost the senatorship.⁶⁴

As a matter of fact, many of the Alliance leaders were disappointed over their failure to control the Republican caucus. Edgerton was very popular throughout the state and he might have been able to secure the nomination had he pressed hard enough to get it. In supporting Edgerton against Moody, the Alliance had hoped to draw enough support to Wardall

⁶³ Kingsbury, Dakota Territory, II, 1918.

⁶⁴ Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota,"
20.

to defeat Moody and Pettigrew, and they later claimed to have had enough votes lined up to elect both Edgerton and Wardall.

When Edgerton refused to push his candidacy and finally withdrew from the contest, accepting the results of the caucus, he was accused by Loucks of having betrayed the Alliance. Loucks charged that the understanding among Edgerton, Mellette, Moody and Pettigrew had been designed to eliminate the Alliance from contention. According to Loucks, Edgerton was to remain a candidate only long enough to keep anyone else from being elected and then withdraw at the proper moment leaving the field clear for Pettigrew and Moody. Edgerton was to receive his Federal Judgeship as a reward.

There is little concrete evidence with which to evaluate the charges of Loucks, but as if to bear out popular belief, Edgerton was duly appointed to the judiciary by Benjamin Harrison. The petition on his behalf was signed by Pettigrew, Moody, Mellette and virtually all the other leading Republicans in the state. Furthermore, Pettigrew's correspondence reveals complicity as he kept Mellette informed of the progress of the appointment in November.⁶⁵

Naturally, Edgerton denied that any "corrupt bargain"

⁶⁵ For example see: Pettigrew to Mellette, November 4, 1889, Mellette Papers.

had been consummated,⁶⁶ but Loucks concluded that his acceptance of the judgeship proved he was a "traitor." Whatever the truth, it is certain that the Republicans were determined to elect Moody over any Alliance candidate in order to gain the support of the Black Hills. Pettigrew was virtually assured of election no matter what, and the Combine argued that Edgerton withdrew in order to "maintain harmony."⁶⁷

After the election in October Pettigrew journeyed to St. Paul where he chartered a special train to take him home to Sioux Falls.⁶⁸ When he arrived on October 16, he was greeted by thousands of people, a city bedecked in bunting of red, white and blue and the adulation of the press.⁶⁹ He found that his friends had prepared a royal welcome in his private office also, which was covered with flags. Upon his desk was a beautiful bank of flowers upon which was woven in blooms of white the word, "Congratulations."⁷⁰ That night there was a fireworks display and speeches by leading citizens. It was a spectacle to rival the greatest remembrance of the Fourth of July that anyone could imagine.

⁶⁶Edgerton to Mellette, October 19, 1889, in ibid.

⁶⁷Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 21.

⁶⁸Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 21.

⁶⁹Sioux Falls Press, October 17, 1889.

⁷⁰Sioux Falls Argus Leader, October 18, 1889.

To add to the personal glory of the occasion the Argus Leader declared:⁷¹

. . . The impression is general that Frank Pettigrew in the Senate means more to Sioux Falls than would the capital or a new railroad. The businessmen look upon his election as a piece of good luck. . . .

Pettigrew responded to his admirers by assuring them that he was sympathetic with the problems faced by the tillers of the soil, and pledged to protect their interests through Republican protectionism. At the same time, however, he declared himself to be in favor of "an ample supply of currency but not greenbackism."⁷²

Thus Pettigrew's immense personal popularity plus the facade of party harmony seemed to bode success for the future. Harmony, however, was not long maintained. By the early months of 1890, Pettigrew was already suspicious that Mellette, dissatisfied with his lot, harbored senatorial ambitions.⁷³ Pettigrew believed that the Governor was looking for an excuse to run against Moody when the legislature convened in 1891. This matter was cause for considerable worry for Pettigrew since he feared that any chink in the armor of the Combine would provide an opening

⁷¹ Ibid., October 16, 1889.

⁷² Sioux Falls Press, October 17, 1889.

⁷³ Pettigrew to Donald Needham, March 1, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

wedge for the Alliance. He conveyed his fear to Mellette,⁷⁴ and at the same time appealed to the Governor's party loyalty by expressing his hope that neither Loucks, Wardall nor any of "that crew" would be elected to office in South Dakota. He was contemptuous of them, saying their purpose was to destroy the Republican party and that it would be a disgrace to have the state run by "that bunch of crooks." He then cleverly added that he hoped the dispute between Mellette and Moody would not become serious enough to prevent the Combine from defeating "those unholy, un-republican cranks who are trying to capture Dakota."⁷⁵

Pettigrew's true motive in attempting to assuage Mellette, however, was fear that with Mellette in the Senate, President Harrison would by-pass Pettigrew in matters of patronage. Since this would cause him to lose influence rapidly, he was willing to do whatever was necessary to avoid it. Thus during the spring of 1890, Pettigrew strove to "save the Combine." He succeeded for the time being and actually remained on cordial terms with Mellette. Indeed, the Governor indicated that he would abandon his senatorial aspirations in favor of Moody, and it seemed that the Combine might remain in control of the state indefinitely.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Pettigrew to Mellette, March 10, 1890, in ibid.

⁷⁵Pettigrew to Mellette, March 1890 (the exact date is obliterated).

⁷⁶Pettigrew to John Diamond, April 8, 1890, in ibid.

Thus at the age of forty-one, Richard F. Pettigrew had achieved his ambitions. Wealth, honor, dignity and political power were all his. As popular leader of the Republican party in South Dakota his future seemed secure. Yet dangers soon to manifest themselves awaited him. Against him stood the Alliance. Against him stood his erstwhile partner, Mellette. Near in the future was the depression. All were to affect his career significantly.

CHAPTER IV

WESTERN PROMOTER

Although politics was his first love, Pettigrew continued his interest in the industrial development of Dakota throughout the long fight for statehood. As a result of his labors, he can be credited with bringing five railroads to Sioux Falls while it was still a relatively small town. The first of these, already discussed, was the St. Paul-Sioux City Line which arrived in 1878. It came as a result of the activities of the Citizens Committee of which Pettigrew was the leader.

The committee continued its work and was shortly successful in bringing another railroad to Sioux Falls. This time it was a spur from a line being constructed between Sioux City and Pembina in the far distant northeastern corner of Dakota. This line was soon purchased by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Company and remained under its control for many years to come.¹ Thus by 1880, when Pettigrew first went to Congress, Sioux Falls was blessed with the presence of two railroads, and for the next four years,

¹Bailey, Minnehaha County, 150.

little work of a promotional nature was done.

By 1884, however, interest in railroad promotion was again at fever pitch. A new Citizens Committee was organized, the purpose of which was to get Sioux Falls on a direct route to Chicago. The plan was to extend a branch line from Ellsworth, Minnesota, forty-five miles away. If this were done, the city would be connected to the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern, which had a line running to Chicago through Burlington, Iowa. Farmers in southeastern Dakota would then be in a better position to compete with those who shipped through arch-rival Sioux City, which enjoyed lower rates than Sioux Falls. The plan received a good deal of discussion throughout 1885, but no definite action was taken. Finally, Pettigrew, who was not a member of the committee, took matters into his own hands and invited the representatives of the company to Sioux Falls.²

The officials came to town on January 2, 1886, and offered to extend their line to Sioux Falls on two conditions. First, the people living along the proposed route between Sioux Falls and Ellsworth were to contribute \$80,000 to the cost of construction; and second, land for the right of way and for depot grounds within the city was to be donated. Despite these demanding conditions, representatives of the city agreed to them, and contracted to assume \$50,000

²Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew,"
68.

of the contribution for Sioux Falls conditional to the agreement of the voters. A special election held on February 9 showed that the voters approved the contract overwhelmingly, and the bonds were issued immediately.³ Meanwhile, Pettigrew travelled along the proposed route of the right of way talking to landowners. He was able to convince them that construction of the line would be profitable, and by the time he returned to Sioux Falls the success of the scheme was virtually assured.⁴

Construction of this railroad began immediately and was completed October 26, 1886. Its completion led the citizens of Sioux Falls to believe that the days of unfair rates were over, but unfortunately this proved to be a premature assumption. Nevertheless, many were so appreciative of Pettigrew's work that a poem in his honor was published in the Sioux Falls Press:⁵

And don't forget
One thing you bet,
Give honor where'er it's due.
This line we own,
Thro' zeal we'er shown
by R. Frank Pettigrew.

During the same time that the Ellsworth line was being constructed, a movement was under way among the officials of the Illinois Central to extend their line west

³ Bailey, Minnehaha County, 152.

⁴ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 69-70.

⁵ Sioux Falls Press, October 29, 1886.

from Cherokee, Iowa, to Sioux Falls. People in northwest Iowa were in favor of the scheme, but the assent of Sioux Falls was necessary before it could be carried out. On May 12, 1887, a delegation from Cherokee, Sheldon and Rock Rapids arrived in town to lay their proposition before Sioux Falls civic leaders. Mayor Thomas McCulla, of Cherokee, spokesman for the group, said the purpose of the visit was to ascertain whether Sioux Falls would cooperate with the other towns along the proposed route. The Dakotans were asked to provide the right of way through Minnehaha County and sufficient land in Sioux Falls for station grounds, stock yards and sidetrack. A meeting was called for that very night and Pettigrew, acting as spokesman for Sioux Falls, assured the Iowans that his people would do whatever was necessary to secure the construction of the line as soon as possible. Before adjournment the mayor of Sioux Falls made Pettigrew chairman of a committee to secure the right of way, and the Iowans went home satisfied.⁶

Pettigrew went to work with characteristic vigor. He conferred with officials of the company in Dubuque, Iowa, and assured them that everyone was ready to cooperate. These negotiations convinced the company to proceed on the condition that financial responsibility be assumed by the cities along the right of way. This condition was accepted

⁶Sioux Falls Argus Leader, May 13, 1887.

and Pettigrew immediately inaugurated a campaign in Sioux Falls to obtain the necessary subscriptions. By July 30, 1887, with his associate E.A. Sherman, he had succeeded in raising \$42,000 and the company accepted the guaranty. The only problem now remaining was to secure the right of way. During the next two weeks Pettigrew and Sherman visited almost every farmer whose land was involved. Gathering the sod-busters in the barn, the two men would talk business, while their "ladies' man" associate, R.G. Parmley, would "smooth talk" the women in the farm house. By August 12 they had secured the necessary land and within a month construction was under way. It proceeded rapidly and the last spike was driven by Mayor Norton of Sioux Falls on December 11, 1887, amid wild acclaim for Dakota, the Committee and Richard F. Pettigrew.⁷

Still the Promoter did not rest. He and Sherman were already at work on a scheme to bring the Wilmar-Duluth Line to Sioux Falls. If successful, this scheme would provide the wheat farmers of southern Dakota with a direct route to the Great Lakes Waterway. In order to succeed, however, it was necessary to convince the owner of the railroad, none other than James J. Hill, that it would be profitable. Pettigrew, who knew the tycoon, secured his approval by promising future expansion of the line to Yankton. Hill agreed, again on

⁷Bailey, Minnehaha County, 153-157.

the condition that the right of way be provided along with a fund of \$50,000 for construction. Pettigrew accepted and in turn induced the citizens of Sioux Falls to provide \$60,000 as a gesture of good faith. The money was raised through a bond issue and furnished to the railroad in September.⁸

By that time construction had already begun, but little progress was made during the ensuing weeks. Worried, Pettigrew and Sherman went to St. Paul to confer with Hill. They found him bothered by the fact that land for the station grounds had not yet been secured in Sioux Falls. Pettigrew assured him that there was no cause for alarm, whereupon the great man said, "I have agreed to put my line through to Sioux Falls, and it is going there." And put it there he did. Construction was recommenced and one year later, on October 25, 1888, the final spike was driven within the city limits.⁹

Pettigrew's vision now began to broaden. He decided to build a railroad himself. In December, 1888, he and his brother Fred, along with several others organized the South Sioux Falls Railroad and Rapid Transit Company. The line was to be a relatively small one running from the Sioux Falls

⁸Sioux Falls Arcus Leader, July 28, September 16, 1887.

⁹Bailey, Minnehaha County, 157-160.

business district to the industrial area on the south edge of town. During the spring the grading and construction were completed and the first run was made on June 25, 1889.¹⁰

The original equipment of the street railway company consisted of two mule drawn cars. After using these for a few months, the company was granted a franchise for the use of motor-driven cars. The addition of these modern conveyances required that a central power station be built, but after this hurdle was overcome at a cost of \$80,000, the motor-cars went into operation and a long and prosperous future seemed to be in store. Unfortunately for its owners, however, the Rapid Transit Company went bankrupt in the panic of 1893, and was forced to cease operations. All that remained were eleven miles of railroad track; mute reminders to Pettigrew of his shattered dreams.¹¹

During the late 1880's one thought dominated Pettigrew's mind. It was his ambition to build a real railroad. Something larger than a local street car company. For many months he toyed with the idea of starting a line from Sioux Falls to Yankton, but hesitated because of the great expense which would be involved. In addition, he had hope that this project would be handled by the Duluth-Wilmar Company. This hope, however, had faded by 1888. Thus in the

¹⁰Ibid., 161.

¹¹Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 76-77.

spring of 1889, acting in his capacity as President of the Sioux Falls Commercial Club, Pettigrew sent D.R. Bailey as his emissary to the Territorial Legislature. Bailey's job was to lobby for the passage of an act which would allow the Territory to aid in the construction of railroads. He succeeded, but the law was rendered void when South Dakota entered the Union in October.

At the same time Pettigrew was forced to delay the project and devote full time to his duties as U.S. Senator, and nothing was done for three years. Then, at the end of the congressional session of 1892, Pettigrew organized the Yankton, Sioux Falls and Southwestern Railroad Company with himself as president. In September, he was given assurances by the civic leaders of Sioux Falls that the city would render all possible aid to his project, and he began construction at once. Grading contracts were let within a month, and the laying of track began soon after. By August 15, 1893, trains were running between Sioux Falls and several small towns along the route. In October the tracks reached Yankton; the Yankton, Sioux Falls and Southwestern was completed. Pettigrew, the proud owner of the line, was feted at a gala celebration in Yankton one day after the completion of his railroad. Dignitaries from each of the small towns along the line attended. There was a sumptuous feast with ample drinks, and cascades of flowers to match the speeches of gratitude which were showered upon the hero

of the hour. It was a joyous occasion. One to be remembered long after failure had tarnished the gleaming cup of success.¹²

The grandest project of all now approached reality. Still convinced that Sioux Falls could be made the industrial center of the Midwest, if it were on the route of a trans-continental railroad, Pettigrew decided to build that road himself. He proposed to build a railroad from Sioux Falls west to Pierre, the capital; thence westward through the Black Hills, Wyoming, the Yellowstone Country and Washington to the mighty port of Seattle. When this was done his dream would be complete. His town would be connected with Chicago, the Great Lakes and the West Coast. The opportunities for industrial expansion would be unlimited; wealth would pour into South Dakota, and much of it would be his.

Pettigrew made several junkets to New York in quest of financial support. He interested his contacts there in his scheme and once he was assured of aid he organized the Midland Pacific Railroad Company with himself as president.¹³ Shares in the corporation sold quickly to local investors, interested parties along the proposed line, and eastern financiers. Some were even sold in England, and plans were

¹² Bailey, Minnehaha County, 165-167.

¹³ Pettigrew Papers, Loose File, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The articles of incorporation along with a prospectus of the Midland Pacific are intact.

under way to advertise their sale throughout the British Empire.¹⁴

With the funds derived from the sale of stock, Pettigrew took options on land along the proposed roadbed and paid for the survey. In the early months of 1893 some grading was done near Sioux Falls and later near Pierre. In the same year, however, financial disaster struck and the entire project had to be abandoned. When the panic came, almost every property owner along the route upon whose land options had been taken, demanded full payment. Pettigrew had sunk much of his available cash into the project and was hard pressed to meet these obligations. Finally, through the sale of the Yankton line to Hill's Great Northern, he was able to cover most of his debts, but his losses had been great. His dream was dead. In later years he recouped much of his fortune, but never again did he engage in the promotion of railroads.¹⁵

During the vintage years Pettigrew did not confine himself to transportation in his quest to develop the Sioux Falls area into a mighty industrial complex. Very early in his career he proposed to build a flour mill which would be among the finest in the nation. He sought eastern capital, and finally persuaded one financier, George Seney, to come

¹⁴Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 80.

¹⁵Ibid., 80-81.

to Dakota in June 1878. Pettigrew had arranged for Seney to come at that particular time in order that he might see the wheat crop at its best. Seney was impressed. Pettigrew also arranged another impressive sight for the New Yorker. Since the Sioux River was low at this particular time, he constructed an earthen dam across it north of the city. At the proper moment, the dam was opened and Seney witnessed a tremendous volume of water passing through the channel. The water supply, he thought, was more than adequate to power a large mill.¹⁶

Construction began in August 1879, and the building was ready for occupancy by October 1881. It was one of the engineering marvels of its day. The huge structure, built of Sioux Falls granite, measured 80 by 100 feet and was six stories high. Inside, according to contemporaries, were ten miles of belting, eight miles of spouting, three miles of conveyors and two miles of elevator shaft.¹⁷

This maze of machinery, the best that money could buy, was designed to produce 1,200 barrels of flour a day, but it never did. The milling operations which began on October 25, 1881, were never run at capacity because there was seldom adequate water power. Finally, in 1883, the plant was shut down. During its short period of operation the

¹⁶ Ibid., 83.

¹⁷ Bailey, Minnehaha County, 383.

mill provided no profits to its owner and when it was attached on April 20, 1883, there was an outstanding indebtedness of \$97,000.¹⁸

The Queen Bee Mill stood idle for more than twenty-five years. Finally, it resumed operations on a limited scale in 1911, remaining open until the end of World War I. At that time it closed for good and stood empty, another ghost to the dreams of Richard Pettigrew, until it was destroyed by fire in 1956.¹⁹

Another of Pettigrew's projects was a combination stock yards and meat packing plant. Once again he sought capital in the East, and in the summer of 1889, organized the Sioux Falls Stock Yards Company with himself as president.

By 1891 over \$370,000 had been spent but the project was still incomplete. Then, the panic of 1893 made further work out of the question and the project was temporarily abandoned. Two years later, however, the company was reorganized with capital stock of \$2,000,000 and the building of the yards was completed. Still, there were no funds for the purchase of machinery and further delays were encountered. It was not until 1899 that the plant was opened. It remained open for exactly three months, until closed by the courts. During all the time which had elapsed no thought had been given to the adequate disposal

¹⁸ Ibid., 363.

¹⁹ Schell, South Dakota, 363.

of sewage. When operations finally began waste materials were simply dumped in the river. Residents along the stream immediately complained and sought an injunction. Their suit was successful, bringing the demise of the Sioux Falls Stock Yards Company. The loss to the promoters and investors was reported to be in excess of \$1,000,000.²⁰

At about the same time he promoted the stock yards, Pettigrew also built a woolen mill in Sioux Falls. He provided the land himself and built a small two-story building to house the mill. The Senator was confident that he had adequate influence in Washington to secure government contracts for the manufacture of blankets. This proved to be a pipe-dream. There were no contracts, and the mill was forced to close during the depression.²¹ Years later the machinery was sold to a New England firm,²² but the building stood idle until it was destroyed by high winds in 1930.²³

In addition to his other enterprises in the 1880's Pettigrew built an axle grease factory and a corn starch factory. There was also a corn canning factory and a linen mill. In addition to these, he owned two railroads, and the

²⁰ Bailey, Minnehaha County, 384.

²¹ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 86.

²² Pettigrew to E.P. Beebe, March 8, 1902, Pettigrew Papers, Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

²³ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 86.

packing plant looked like a prospective gold mine. Then there was the knit underwear factory worth \$250,000 and employing 250 persons, the felt boot factory valued at \$150,000, an oil mill worth \$10,000 and a sash, door and blind company.²⁴ All of these properties were lost in the panic of 1893.²⁵

In surveying the business enterprises of Richard Pettigrew it soon becomes apparent that he was over-optimistic and somewhat irresponsible. But his optimism was symbolic of the time and place in which he lived. In the 1870's and early eighties Dakota was a frontier area into which vast numbers of emigrants were pouring in search of their fortunes. With them came the railroads along with speculators and promoters like Pettigrew who were willing to risk much in quest of large profits. They dealt in real estate, townsites and railroad rights-of-way. They sought to manipulate territorial politics to their own advantage. Yet they cannot be said to have been completely evil men, for many of them, like Pettigrew, were dreamers who saw more in the future than profits alone. They dreamed of a day when cities would rise on the prairie; when shining rails would cross and re-cross the vast grassy stretches breathing vibrant life into dormant lands. Like Pettigrew, many promoters were overly exuberant in their optimism. Pettigrew dreamed of

²⁴ Sioux Falls Press, September 26, 1889.

²⁵ Parkinson, "The Early Career of R.F. Pettigrew," 87.

making Sioux Falls a vast metropolis which would become a distribution center for beef and wheat; a railroad hub; a city great enough to support large numbers of subsidiary industries. Although his results fell far short of his expectations, he was, nevertheless, largely responsible for the rapid economic growth of his home city and is thus entitled to commendation as one of those unsung heroes of the Gilded Age who, sometimes by design, often unwittingly, contributed much to the vital economic development of America.

From another point of view, there can be no doubt that the staggering financial losses suffered by Pettigrew after 1893 affected his political thinking. Heretofore, no man was more dedicated to the capitalistic system and the Republican party than he. But from 1892 onward he began to revise his opinions of bankers, financiers, lawyers and even the party itself. In time all became anathema to him. He became one of the loudest advocates of free silver in the United States and gradually accepted much of the socialistic dogma of the Populists. Midway in his Senatorial career he allied himself with the People's party and turned upon his former Republican colleagues with a ferociousness which became legendary. Pettigrew became notorious for his biting criticisms on the floor of the Senate. No one was safe from the intimidations which spilled from his bearded lip. None could predict who might next feel the barbs of

his sarcasm during the heat of debate.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that Richard Pettigrew was a professional politician before all else. While it is certain beyond reasonable doubt that his financial losses were important in his spectacular change of parties, it is also true that the immutable economic forces at work upon the nation as a whole affected his thinking to a degree. He watched as the farmers of South Dakota and other states rose up in quest of political power. He feared they might succeed. Knowing their success would destroy the Republican party, he saw as his only salvation a chance to seize the reins of this mighty apocalyptic movement and control it for his own purposes. To men such as Pettigrew it was vital to stay in office. No sacrifice was too great to achieve this end. If principles must be changed or abandoned; so be it. The most important thing was to stay in the mainstream of political opinion and in 1892 the current was switching channels. Populism was at flood tide. A re-evaluation was in order

CHAPTER V

A WESTERN SENATOR AND REPUBLICAN PARTY POLITICS

Twenty years of intense activity had told on Richard Pettigrew. When he arrived in Washington in 1889 he appeared much older than his forty-one years. He was still tall, of course, but now his shoulders were slightly stooped; his face pale and drawn. Faint downward lines now marked his countenance giving the observer the erroneous impression that Pettigrew suffered from constant fatigue or lethargy. A full beard complemented his sagging face so that Pettigrew somehow reminded one of a basset hound. Still, his most striking characteristic was a shrill, whining voice which, when it reached crescendoes of emotion-packed oratory, made the blood run cold.¹

In education and experience Pettigrew compared favorably with any freshman Senator and many of his "veteran" colleagues. His training in the law was more than adequate for the day, and coupled with nearly twenty years of practice, made him an expert in the nuances of a complex profession.

¹C.W. Thompson, Party Leaders of the Time (New York: G.W. Dillingham and Co., 1906), 89.

In addition, his political experience was vast. He was recognized by most of his new colleagues as "boss" of the South Dakota Republicans and this reputation entitled him to a position of respect among his fellows.

It must not be forgotten, however, that Pettigrew's experience in Republican politics was of a unique character. He had matured on the political activities of a territory, not a state, and this fact had a marked effect on his philosophy. It has already been shown that he had developed a hatred for federal authority. This hatred for "outside" interference in affairs of local concern marked all his relations with the administrations under which he served, whether Republican or Democratic. More important, his provincial orientation prevented him from becoming an integral part of the national Republican machine. When he began his senatorial career, he found himself for the first time surrounded by men to whom South Dakota was a matter of secondary import. This discovery affected his subsequent actions fully as much as did the specific issues with which he dealt.

In his first session of Congress Pettigrew was assigned to the Committee on Railroads and the Committee on Indian Affairs. Later, in April 1890, he became a member of the Committee on Public Lands. Each of these committees dealt with matters which were of vital concern to the

Senator and he threw himself into their activities with a will.²

Pettigrew's first move in Congress was to exercise his patronage prerogative by removing every Democratic Indian Agent in South Dakota. He replaced the incumbents, many of whom were not only Democrats but "outsiders," with South Dakota Republicans. Unfortunately, his attention to jobbery was more scrupulous than his attention to ability and the result was a noticeable decline in the quality of agency administration. His "crowning achievement" was the removal of the powerful Pine Ridge agent, D.H. Gallagher, who had served with distinction since 1886. The Senator removed Gallagher on the pretext that the agent was unable to maintain order on the reservation. In his place Pettigrew appointed Dr. D.F. Royer of Rapid City who apparently knew nothing at all about Indian affairs.³ Within a few weeks of his appointment Royer demonstrated his ignorance and fear of the Indians by demanding that troops be sent to stop the "ghost dance" craze among the Sioux. Since none of the other agents considered the deployment of troops necessary, none were sent. Nevertheless, Royer continued to demand military aid, and his panic was a prominent factor in causing the Wounded Knee

²Congressional Record, 51 Cong., 1 Sess., December 16, 1889, XXI, April 2, 1890, 175, 176, 2959.

³G.E. Hyde, A Sioux Chronicle (Norman; University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 254.

tragedy which took place shortly after.⁴

The Indian Commission was aware of Royer's incompetence and sought to replace him with an experienced Sioux agent, Major V.T. McGillicuddy, who had served at Pine Ridge from 1879 to 1886. When Pettigrew learned of this he wrote Royer that he would do everything necessary to protect his place: "Put McGillicuddy off the agency if he appears again," declared Pettigrew. "I consider him a scoundrel. He would like to be your successor."⁵

Pettigrew also wrote McGillicuddy declaring that he would not consent to his entering the Indian Service again. "I feel that you did not act the part of an honest agent while you were in the employ of the government before," wrote the Senator. "And my suspicions have not been removed."⁶

Later, McGillicuddy wrote to Governor Mellette complaining of the opposition of Pettigrew. The letter is an excellent example of the attitude held by most people who did not find themselves within the "charmed circle" of Pettigrew's favor. "I am catching 'Hail Columbia' from Pettigrew and the crowd," wrote the Major. "If they are to

⁴Ibid., 259-260.

⁵Pettigrew to D.F. Royer, Undated, Pettigrew Papers.

⁶Pettigrew to V.T. McGillicuddy, January 14, 1892, in ibid.

run South Dakota forever I may as well emigrate to Alaska."⁷

In an effort to remove the Indian service from the realm of party politics, the Administration sponsored a bill early in 1892 which transferred the control of Indian Agencies to the Army. Pettigrew naturally voiced his vehement disapproval of the plan. It would destroy his patronage and with it his influence among South Dakota Republicans. The Senator declared that agents should be qualified to teach the Indians the "value of money and property ownership." Despite the fact that some of his own civilian appointees appeared to be incompetent on this score, he argued that Army officers did not possess the proper qualifications. He declared flatly that civilian agents had never been responsible for past examples of dishonesty and corruption, but that Army officers who served as agents were to blame. "Thus," raged the Senator, "the proposition to replace civilian agents with Army officers is absurd."

In the debate on this matter Pettigrew clashed with his colleague, James Henderson Kyle. Senator Kyle submitted that charges of corruption and incompetence against civilian agents could be corroborated by high ranking Army men. Pettigrew flatly contradicted Kyle's statement. Furthermore, he declared:⁸

⁷McGillicuddy to Mellette, April 7, 1892, Mellette Papers.

⁸Congressional Record, 52 Cong., 1 Sess., March 30, 1892, XXIII, 2686-2689.

Kyle also states that certain agents are appointed because they have influence and that they are placed for work done in a certain political campaign and for the purpose of settling certain bills. I say that I did select some men of influence because it is a mark of superiority. Further, if I were to recommend a man it should be a Republican because I believe the Republicans of this country to be the majority of the best that is in it.

Despite these intonations, Pettigrew's fanatical patronage policy; his insistence upon assuming sole responsibility for Department of Interior appointments, created a rift in the South Dakota Combine. Mellette, who was aggrieved by the great power Pettigrew seemed to be developing, complained to his friend President Harrison.⁹ Harrison in turn brought the matter to the attention of Secretary of the Interior, John W. Noble, and Pettigrew soon began to encounter difficulties with his appointments. Immediately, he wrote to Perry Heath of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette asking for clarification of the matter. Heath was an important figure in the Republican hierarchy, and had great influence with Harrison. Pettigrew said he believed Noble and Mellette were scheming to undermine his strength, since Noble had adopted a policy of refusing to act on Pettigrew's recommendations. The Senator pointed out to Heath that such a policy could only serve to weaken the party in South Dakota.¹⁰

⁹ Mellette to Halford, August 21, 1891, Benjamin Harrison Papers, Vol. 128, May 13, 1891, Vol. 122, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ Pettigrew to Heath, Washington, May 20, 1891, Pettigrew Papers.

Despite his plea to Heath, the situation did not improve. In September, 1890, Pettigrew wrote the newsman once again asking him to talk with the President in an effort to learn whether the Administration intended to fight him regarding the appointments. He declared blandly that if this were the case he would accept it but wanted to be certain about Harrison's position. Then he added:¹¹

You had better get a copy of the [Chicago] Inter-Ocean of the seventeenth of this month which has an interview with me with regard to the President and also with regard to Blaine. It might not do any harm to show it to Harrison.

Even this obvious threat to pull South Dakota out of the Harrison camp did not avail. Noble continued to ignore Pettigrew's recommendations. As a result the Senator soon lost all confidence in the Administration and began to seriously consider supporting Blaine for President in 1892.¹²

In spite of Pettigrew's obvious political motivations in his policy of Indian appointments, the matter cannot be dropped without the comment that his attitude toward the Indians themselves was in many ways realistic and benevolent. Pettigrew had become well acquainted with the Sioux Indians of Dakota over the years. He knew their problems and was sympathetic. Even though he favored their removal or assimilation to make way for the economic development of the

¹¹Pettigrew to Heath, September 28, 1891, in ibid.

¹²Pettigrew to Heath, September 8, 1891, in ibid.

state, he believed that they should be dealt with as fairly as possible. Shortly after he entered the Senate, Pettigrew donated a large tract of land near Flandreau for the construction of an Indian School.¹³ Furthermore, he asked Congress to appropriate \$150,000 for the construction of two more schools at Chamberlain and Rapid City.¹⁴ Although the institution at Chamberlain never materialized, the government ultimately constructed an Indian boarding school at Rapid City.¹⁵ Pettigrew favored such schools because he believed that Indians should not be educated in the East only to be returned to the reservation, and because he believed that agency day schools contributed little toward the process of civilizing the Indians. His view was that Indian children should be given a practical education at an industrial boarding school near their home. He believed one year in such a training school would be worth more to an Indian child than five or six years in an ordinary day school. "Indian children," declared the Senator, "who are not removed from camp life gain nothing from their exposure to education. Their parents oppose their learning English and the ways of

¹³ Pettigrew to Roger Brennan, July 11, 1890; Pettigrew to James E. Helm, Santee Sioux Agency, Nebraska, March 31, 1891, in ibid.

¹⁴ Congressional Record, 52 Cong., 1 Sess., April 1, 1892, XXIII, 2826.

¹⁵ Schell, South Dakota, 327.

the white man."¹⁶

Pettigrew also believed that the vast Indian reservations of South Dakota should be opened to white settlement as soon as possible. He had advocated this policy since territorial days when he served as Delegate. Cession of the Indian lands, he believed, would facilitate two important objectives: additional land for settlers and further exposure of the Indians to the society of the white man. It would also be of great economic benefit to South Dakota. As the Senator wrote:¹⁷

I want to close out all Indian Reservations just as soon as possible. We have either got to pursue that course or else pursue the course pursued by the other western states; that of getting rid of the Indians in some other way. We cannot develop and build up a state with such vast areas of unoccupied and untaxable property.

Pettigrew was obviously not motivated by a feeling of humanitarianism. During his early years in the Senate he was yet quite actively engaged in promotional enterprises. He was still driven to a large extent by his passion for attracting railroads to Dakota; railroads which would bring with them emigrants, increasing land prices and profits for the shrewd investor. Sympathetic as he was toward the Indians, he never lost sight of his primary objectives: economic development for South Dakota; wealth and power for himself.

¹⁶ Pettigrew to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 23, 1892, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁷ Pettigrew Diary, "Notes and Comments on Men and Events," 17, in ibid.

In his zeal for the economic development of his state, Pettigrew, like many westerners, became vitally interested in the question of land laws. One of his most important activities while in the Senate was his work in connection with the withdrawal of forest lands. Oddly, though his motivations were selfish, he helped in the long run to establish the national forest policy of the United States.

When Pettigrew entered the Senate in 1889, the question of a general revision of the nation's land laws had already been before Congress for nearly ten years. During his first days as a member of the Public Lands Committee, Pettigrew found that the group was considering a House Bill sponsored by William S. Holman of Indiana, providing for the repeal of the act of June 3, 1878, which allowed the sale of timber lands in the Pacific states. Chairman Preston B. Plumb of Kansas appointed a sub-committee to study the measure consisting of himself, Edward C. Walthall of Mississippi, and Pettigrew. The sub-committee amended the Holman bill by adding twenty-three sections which in effect completely revised the land laws of the United States.¹⁸

The amended bill encountered stern opposition when returned to the House. Thus a conference committee was appointed to adjust the differences. This committee consisted of Plumb, Walthall and Pettigrew for the Senate; and for the

¹⁸D.H. Smith, The Forest Service (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution for Government Research, Service Monograph No. 58, 1930), 18-19.

House, Holman, John Pickler of South Dakota, and Lewis E. Payson of Illinois. During the closed sessions of the conference, Secretary of the Interior Noble, influenced by the American Forestry Association, asked that a rider be inserted authorizing the President to establish forest reserves. His efforts were successful and thus a twenty-fourth section was added to the bill which provided for the creation of the reserves. This procedure--the introduction of a new provision in a conference report--was contrary to the rules of Congress. Thus when Plumb brought the bill back to the Senate floor he insisted on its speedy consideration and it was passed without being printed and with little time for comment.¹⁹

The twenty-four sections of the new law repealed the Timber-Culture and Pre-emption Acts, amended the Homestead and Desert Land Acts making them less susceptible to fraud, and abolished the public sale of government lands, in addition to giving the President the power to reserve forest lands.²⁰ Senator Pettigrew was the author of section seven of the law.²¹ This section was a modification of the Desert Land Act providing that settlers on arid lands might purchase tracts

¹⁹ John Ise, The United States Forest Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), 115-116.

²⁰ Smith, The Forest Service, 19.

²¹ Pettigrew to William T. LaFollette, September 28, 1894, Pettigrew Papers.

of 320 acres or less for \$1.00 per acre upon filing proof that such land had been reclaimed and cultivated within a period of four years after the initial settlement. Furthermore, section seven provided that the government might at any time within the four year period demand additional proof that all legal requirements for the issuance of patents had been met.²²

The most important section of the new law to everyone concerned, however, was section twenty-four. Within a few months of its enactment the President had withdrawn about 2,500,000 acres of timber land in Wyoming and Colorado. By 1893, more than 17,500,000 acres had been reserved. Unfortunately, the law did not provide for the administration and protection of the reserved lands. For this reason, and also because of political opposition from timber and mining interests in the western states, no further withdrawals were made after September, 1893, pending the creation of administrative machinery.²³

Pressure for the enactment of administrative rules and regulations was sustained for several years by the American Forestry Association. Finally, in 1896 the Association prevailed upon Secretary of the Interior Hoke Smith to call upon the National Academy of Sciences for a commission to make a careful study of the forestry question.

²²United States Statutes at Large, 51 Cong., 2 Sess., March 3, 1891, 1097.

²³Smith, The Forest Service, 19.

The commission, appointed under a \$25,000 appropriation by Congress, consisted of Professor C.S. Sargeant, Alexander Agassiz, Henry L. Abbot--a prominent hydrographer--Professor W.H. Brewer of Yale, Arnold Hague, and Gifford Pinchot.²⁴ This group began its work in July, 1896. The next February, Professor Sargeant submitted a preliminary report recommending the creation of thirteen new reserves totaling more than 21,000,000 acres.²⁵ Pinchot opposed the preliminary report. He believed that the recommendations for new reserves should be accompanied by definite plans for their administration and protection. He also anticipated great danger in withdrawing millions of acres of land with no provision for its use.²⁶ Nevertheless, upon receiving the letter from Sargeant, President Cleveland, on February 22, 1897, proclaimed all of the new reserves.²⁷ His action provoked immediate hostility in the Senate.

In this attack Senator Pettigrew joined with Senators Mantle of Montana and Clark of Wyoming to demand that the proclamation be revoked.²⁸ This move nearly succeeded, but

²⁴Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 129.

²⁵U.S. Congress, Senate, Papers Relating to the Establishment of Forest Reservations, 55 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document 21, April 5, 1897, 14-15.

²⁶Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 129-130.

²⁷U.S. Congress, Senate, Papers Relating to the Establishment of Forest Reservations, 55 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document 21, April 5, 1897, 16-36.

²⁸Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 131.

the westerners were forced in the end to settle for a temporary vacation of the order pending the creation of administrative machinery.²⁹ However, when the Sundry Civil Bill carrying this rider reached the White House, it was pocket-vetoed by Cleveland, and the western men were forced to await the pleasure of William McKinley.

Meanwhile, Charles D. Walcott of the Geological Survey, went to Senator Pettigrew in an effort to convince him that there was an opportunity to do great service for the country by securing the passage of legislation for the administration of the reserves. Pettigrew was amenable, and Walcott drew up a bill and asked Pettigrew to introduce it as an amendment to the Sundry Civil Bill.³⁰ Pettigrew took the proposed bill, made several changes in it, and submitted it shortly after the opening of a special session of Congress called by McKinley.³¹ This amendment subsequently played an important role in the history of forest reservations.³²

The changes which Pettigrew had made in the bill as prepared by Walcott made numerous concessions to western opponents of forest reserves and thus were instrumental in

²⁹Pettigrew to I.J. Webb, Deadwood, South Dakota, November 30, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

³⁰Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 132.

³¹Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., May 5, 1898, XXX, 899.

³²Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 132.

passage of the measure. As prepared by Walcott, the amendment contained a provision that settlers, miners, residents and prospectors mentioned as being entitled to free timber should include only individuals and not corporations. Before introducing the amendment, however, Pettigrew consulted with Gideon Moody, still head counsel for the Homestake Mining Company of South Dakota. Moody removed the provision referring to individuals and Pettigrew prepared to introduce the measure in this form. Despite the vigorous protests of Walcott, he did so on May 5, 1897.³³

As submitted by Pettigrew, the amendment provided that reserves might only be set aside for specified purposes--"to improve or protect the forest," or "for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States." The inclusion of lands more valuable for minerals or for agricultural purposes was forbidden. Also, the Secretary of the Interior was authorized to give free timber and stone to settlers, miners or residents for firewood, fencing, building, mining or other purposes. In addition, the reserves were opened to mining and prospecting; and, as a last concession to opponents, a clause was added which allowed any person with a patent to land inside a reserve to relinquish his patent and select land of an equal area outside.

³³Ibid., 140.

On the other hand, many sections of the Pettigrew Amendment showed the influence of those who favored forest reserves. The Secretary of the Interior was empowered to make rules and regulations for the administration of the reserves. Also, he was authorized to regulate the sale of timber from withdrawn lands, and restore any reserved area to public domain if it was found to be better suited to agricultural uses.³⁴

Debate on the Pettigrew Amendment turned on the issue of whether the recent reserves should be permanently suspended. Pettigrew continued to insist that they should and was supported by most of the other western Senators, primarily Clark of Wyoming, White of California, Rawlins of Utah and Wilson of Washington. The best they could do, however, was to secure a rider calling for the temporary suspension of the reserves, and the measure was sent to the House in this form.³⁵ There, the debates also turned upon the question of the Cleveland reservations, and the bill encountered severe opposition from western Representatives. Freeman Knowles, Populist from South Dakota, declared that the issue of this "villainous order" meant that 15,000 people in the Black Hills area would be evicted from their homes. He was particularly

³⁴ Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., May 6, 1897, XXX, 132-133.

³⁵ Ibid., 924.

indignant that Cleveland had failed to consult the wishes of the West. "We know that the 'rotten boroughs of the West,' as the New York World calls us, have little influence with this administration," he declared. "Our representatives warm their heels in the anterooms not only of the President, but those of the heads of Departments, while the Representatives and Senators from the East file past them and have the quick ear of every branch of the Government."³⁶

Four days after the Sundry Civil Bill and the Pettigrew Amendment reached the House, debate was ended by John F. Lacey of Iowa who introduced a motion of non-concurrence. This motion was adopted by a vote of 100 to 39.³⁷ Immediately after, it was sent to a conference committee composed primarily of men who favored forest reserves, and several weeks later the bill emerged with only one important clause of the Pettigrew Amendment revised. That was the provision relating to lieu selections by settlers of forest reserves.³⁸

As originally introduced, the Pettigrew Amendment provided: "Any person who may have initiated or acquired any lawful claim or right to land within any forest reservation, might exchange said claim for land outside the reserve and have the new claim patented to him free of charge." This

³⁶Quoted in Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 137.

³⁷Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., May 10, 1897, XXX, 1013.

³⁸Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 139.

clause was very generous because it would allow anyone who had merely initiated a claim to patent a new claim anywhere in the public domain. Thus speculators could take advantage of the law by making entries on lands likely to be reserved, and then trade their claims for patents elsewhere.

Representative Lacey of Iowa led the attack on the lieu section of the Pettigrew Amendment and offered a substitute which gave "any settler or owner" of an "unperfected bona fide claim or patent" included in a forest reserve the right to relinquish and select instead any vacant tract open to settlement. It differed from the Pettigrew lieu section in that it gave the settler no better title than he had had in the forest reserve before.

The report of the conference committee adopted the provisions of the Lacey substitute. Thus, even though all other important sections of the Pettigrew Amendment were unaltered, many westerners opposed the adoption of the report. Pettigrew himself dismissed the previous compromise and again demanded the permanent revocation of the Cleveland reserves. He said he would fight for this even if it meant the defeat of the Sundry Civil Bill to which his amendment was attached. Thus it appears that the lieu selection clause was very important to him, since he had previously agreed to the temporary suspension of the reserves. Despite the opposition of the West, the conference report was adopted by the Senate on May 27, 1897, and on June 4, the Sundry Civil Bill

containing the Pettigrew Amendment was signed into law by President McKinley.³⁹

In its final form the act of 1897 was certainly a compromise. The temporary suspension of Cleveland's proclamation gave ample time to speculators who wished to establish claims against the government and gave mining companies like the Homestake ample time to cut supplies of timber. Furthermore, the clause limiting the uses for which reserves might be set aside was not too severe, while the provision opening the reserves to mining certainly caused measurable reduction in the hostility of westerners. On the other hand, the Pettigrew Amendment did provide a workable basis for the administration and protection of the nation's forest reserves.⁴⁰ Thus, although the Senator himself was motivated almost entirely by sectional demands, he must be credited as the legislative sponsor of a most important measure. The fact that at one point he found himself demanding the revocation of a proclamation creating more than half the existing reserves, while at the same time sponsoring an amendment providing for their administration and protection, is incongruous but true.

Many years later, Pettigrew put forth the claim that he had been the author of section twenty-four of the act of March 3, 1891, which gave the President authority to withdraw

³⁹ Ibid., 139-141.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 141-142.

forest lands.⁴¹ However his claim was vigorously disputed by Walcott and the American Forestry Association, and the research of Professor John Ise of the University of Kansas shows as conclusively as possible that Pettigrew's claims were exaggerated. Nevertheless, the part which Pettigrew actually played was far from insignificant.⁴²

While Senator Pettigrew was embroiled in his work on the forestry bill and other matters in 1890, he was forced to devote at least a part of his attention to political events in South Dakota. He was greatly concerned over the creation, on June 6, 1890, of the Independent party of South Dakota. This organization was founded by the Farmers' Alliance and its inception was an important step in the gestation of Populism.⁴³ Even such conservative Alliance leaders as Henry L. Loucks now declared that the move was justified on grounds that the old parties paid no attention to the demands of the farmers for reform and redress of grievances. Loucks was present at the Alliance convention which made this startling move and it was he who suggested the name for the new party.⁴⁴

⁴¹Gifford Pinchot to Pettigrew, February 18, 1913; Pettigrew to Pinchot, April 1, 1913, Pettigrew Papers.

⁴²Ise, The United States Forest Policy, 115.

⁴³Huronite, June 6, 1890.

⁴⁴Aberdeen Daily News, June 7, 1890.

One month later the first state convention of the Independent party met in Huron to adopt a platform and nominate candidates for office. Planks were laid which demanded the abolition of the national banking system, direct issuance of currency by the government, an income tax, a tax on real estate mortgages, government ownership and operation of railroads, and the Australian ballot. Loucks led the list of nominees, being selected to stand for governor.⁴⁵

The general trend of events had been moving in this direction for many months, but Pettigrew and his associates had at first looked askance at the possibility that the Alliance could succeed as an independent political organization. Pettigrew, for his part, looked disdainfully upon the talents of the Alliance leaders, and, although he was willing that the Alliance exist as a non-political institution, he had no intention of allowing the farmers to gain a foothold in the control of state politics.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, by the early months of 1890, he was already predicting that a severe fight with the "Loucks crowd" was in the offing, and he began to plan his strategy accordingly.⁴⁷

One newspaper proclaimed that the major elements

⁴⁵ Huronite, July 10, 1890.

⁴⁶ Pettigrew to John S. Proctor, Pierre, January 21, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

⁴⁷ Pettigrew to S.F. Conklin, Watertown, February 10, 1890, in ibid.

of the independent movement were "Democrats and sorehead Republicans,"⁴⁸ while Pettigrew suggested attacking the new party through what he considered its weakest point: its leadership.⁴⁹

"I see that Loucks is nominated for Governor," he wrote in feigned understatement to Governor Mellette. "I have written to Frank Phillips to commence looking up his history."⁵⁰ And to Phillips he wrote asking that a check be run to ascertain where Loucks was naturalized, where his home was in Canada, and who his antecedents were. "Send someone to Deuel County to check on Loucks," wrote the Senator, "I want to look him up thoroughly."⁵¹

Pettigrew also suggested that it might be wise for the Republicans to show in the campaign that they were doing everything reasonable for the best interests of the farmers. One tangible effort which might be made, he thought, was for the party leaders of South Dakota to register more interest in free silver. "Silver is an illustration," he wrote to his confidant, John Diamond. "This session of Congress will

⁴⁸ Aberdeen Daily News, June 10, 1890.

⁴⁹ Pettigrew to John Diamond, June 25, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

⁵⁰ Pettigrew to Mellette, July 11, 1890, Mellette Papers.

⁵¹ Pettigrew to Frank Phillips, Watertown, July 11, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

probably pass a free coinage act."⁵² This is the first mention of free silver which appears in Pettigrew's correspondence. Whether he really believed in it as a panacea at this time is an open question, but within less than two years he was to become a confirmed advocate.

The bill to which Pettigrew referred was the Sherman Silver Purchase Act then under discussion in the Senate. He did not take part in the debates on this measure, but cast his "aye" when it came to a vote. He seems to have already concluded that the volume of currency in circulation should be expanded and to have thought this bill might be a step in the right direction. It is fairly certain, however, that in 1890 he had not yet realized what an apocalyptic effect free silver was to have on his own career.⁵³

It must not be forgotten that Pettigrew's major objective in 1890 was victory for the Republican party. He would defeat the Independents if he could, cater to them if he must. But he would win at any cost. Thus in their efforts to appease the farmers, the Republicans included in their platform several "glittering generalities" as well as a few planks that practically duplicated the most important features of the Independent platform. Among these were calls

⁵²Pettigrew to Diamond, June 25, 1890, in ibid.

⁵³Pettigrew to A.F. Van Doren, Aberdeen, February 17, 1890, in ibid.

for the expansion of the currency, legislation to insure the use of the entire silver output, the Australian ballot, anti-trust legislation, and prohibition.⁵⁴

At the same time, Pettigrew sought to muster further support at home by demanding that the tariff bill under consideration during the summer of 1890 contain duties on tin to protect the budding tin mines in South Dakota. The Senator went to Representative William McKinley who was sponsor of the bill with this proposal. Pettigrew informed McKinley that he expected the tariff on tin to be adopted and that if it was not, South Dakota would vote against the duty on tin products which was designed to protect the tin manufacturers of Ohio. According to Pettigrew, McKinley agreed, but when the matter came to a vote in committee, he changed his mind and cast the tie-breaking vote against the tariff. When Pettigrew was told of this by Robert M. LaFollette, he angrily confronted McKinley, whereupon the Ohioan blandly declared that he considered a tariff on tin "unwise."⁵⁵

Later, when the bill was under consideration by a conference committee, Pettigrew joined with Preston B. Plumb, A.S. Paddock of Nebraska, and several other westerners to vote against it. As a result, Pettigrew was told by

⁵⁴South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 647.

⁵⁵Pettigrew Manuscript, "The McKinley Tariff," Pettigrew Papers.

President Harrison that he could no longer be considered a Republican.⁵⁶ Still later, when the tariff bill came to the Senate for final approval, Pettigrew registered his disgust by neither speaking nor voting upon it.⁵⁷

Despite his failure to secure a duty on tin and the dark pronouncements of Harrison, Pettigrew still represented the Republican party at home and was faced with the necessity of defending party policy. Thus he turned a different side of his Janus face toward the farmers of South Dakota when he declared: "Stress the tariff to the farmers in the coming campaign. Show them that what we want is an American market for farm products, and that the present bill will increase employment if it passes."⁵⁸

The pressure in South Dakota was even greater on Gideon Moody than on Pettigrew, since the Judge would have to stand for re-election before the next session of the legislature. Recognizing his problem, Moody toured the state defending the Republican policy against the onslaughts of the Independents. When he spoke before a group of farmers in Sioux Falls after the passage of the McKinley Act he declared that the Republicans had lowered the tariff on hemp in order

⁵⁶William E. Connelly, The Life of Preston B. Plumb (Chicago: Browne and Howell Co., 1913), 325.

⁵⁷Congressional Record, 51 Cong., 1 Sess., October 1, 1890, XXI, 10740.

⁵⁸Pettigrew to Hackett, July 28, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

to cut the cost of binder twine which was so vital to the farmers. "The Independents," he continued, "say that the tariff is of no help to farmers, but it does put a duty on everything imported that is raised here to allow our producers to hold the market by underselling."⁵⁹

There was yet another factor which bothered Pettigrew during the election year of 1890. He was mightily displeased with the performance of his colleagues, Congressmen John L. Pickler and Oscar O. Gifford. The former had introduced the Farmers' Alliance Subtreasury Bill in the House. Pettigrew, who called the subtreasury plan "the most insane and idiotic scheme ever concocted outside a lunatic asylum," considered Pickler a stupid politician and actually worse than no representative at all. "I want somebody in the lower house who can do some work," he wrote to Mellette. "I don't care if some of the prohibitionists are against Gamble, they ought to be glad to get rid of such a worthless chap as Pickler."

Pettigrew referred to his friend and political crony John R. Gamble of Yankton, a notorious drinker, whom he would have much preferred to see in the House of Representatives than the "untrustworthy" Pickler. The Senator failed in his efforts to oust Pickler, however, and by August of 1890 he concluded that it would be wise to renominate the Congressman and put Gamble in Gifford's place in order to insure against

⁵⁹Huronite, October 29, 1890.

rebellion from Pickler's following in the state.⁶⁰ Thus with Mellette for Governor, and Pickler and Gamble for Congress, a combination would be formed within the party which would place the success of the Republican ticket beyond doubt.⁶¹

But shortly, events took another turn when Pettigrew learned that Pickler was not only "stupid" but "deceitful." Pettigrew had backed a bill in the Senate which provided for the opening of the Fort Randall Military Reservation to settlement. The bill passed the Senate but was killed in the House, and Pettigrew blamed Pickler for its defeat. "He thought it would secure the vote of Marshall County for him at the state convention," wrote the Senator. "I now want him beaten."⁶² Pettigrew, however, did not have sufficient power at the convention to stop Pickler, and he was nominated. In the general election that November, Pickler and Gamble won handily.⁶³

The severe fight with the "Loucks crowd" that Pettigrew had predicted materialized in November also. Independent candidates reduced Republican majorities by 20,000 votes

⁶⁰Pettigrew to Mellette, August 11, 1890, Pettigrew Papers.

⁶¹Pettigrew to C.E. McKinney, Sioux Falls, August 11, 1890, in ibid.

⁶²Pettigrew to Gamble, August 19, 1890, in ibid.

⁶³South Dakota Legislative Manual (1921), 245.

over those secured in 1889.⁶⁴ Mellette, who had polled 54,000 votes the year before, now polled only 34,000 in winning the governorship. Henry L. Loucks, the Independent candidate, polled 24,000 votes even though he carried only thirteen counties.⁶⁵ Thus, the results of this election were a source of great concern to the leaders of the Republican party. Even more serious to Pettigrew and his cronies, however, was the fact that they lost control of the legislature.

In the state senate the Republicans had a majority of one over the combined votes of the Independents and Democrats. In the house, however, forty-three Independents had been elected. By combining their strength with the nineteen Democrats, they found themselves in a tie with the Republicans. The balance of power thus fell to one Charles X. Seward, a Republican who did not consider himself bound by the dictates of the Combine. Although both sides made overtures to Seward, he joined with the Independents and Democrats, thus enabling them to control the organization of the lower body of the legislature by a majority of one. Seward was subsequently elected speaker by one vote.⁶⁶

The first important order of business before the legislature was the election of a United States Senator, since

⁶⁴ Ibid., 246.

⁶⁵ Ibid. (1911), 284.

⁶⁶ Robinson, History of South Dakota, I, 343-344.

Gideon Moody's short term had expired. Moody was unanimously renominated by the Republicans at a caucus held on the night of January 19, 1891. The Independents, on the other hand, could not settle upon a single candidate. Former Alliance leaders Alonzo Wardall, George Crose, and John W. Harden were all determined to win and each had a certain amount of support.⁶⁷ The Democrats nominated their acknowledged leader, Bartlett Tripp.⁶⁸ Pettigrew, of course, still favored the re-election of Moody, and came to Pierre to lend his influence to Moody's support.

The first ballot was taken on January 21 with Moody receiving 76, Tripp 24, Harden 20, Crose 15, and Wardall 10 votes.⁶⁹ Since 85 votes were necessary to win with all members present, Moody had not received a majority and another ballot was necessary. Still the Black Hills leader stood nine votes shy of victory.⁷⁰

During the succeeding days the Independents caucused every night in an effort to agree upon a single candidate. From subsequent events it became apparent that they decided to give all their votes to Wardall, Crose and Harden on succeeding days and then drop them if they could not win. On

⁶⁷Huronite, January 20, 1891.

⁶⁸South Dakota Senate Journal (1891), 127.

⁶⁹Huronite, January 27, 1891.

⁷⁰Ibid., January 23, 1891.

January 30 Wardall got 55 votes, far short of the required majority. The next day Harden got 41. Wardall and Harden then withdrew from the contest, but the supporters of George Crose refused to concede and continued to vote for him. The Independents still had not found a candidate upon whom they could all agree.

On February 3 the Independents switched their support to Hugh J. Campbell, erstwhile member of the Republican combine. He held only 55 votes, however, and had no chance for victory. On the same day rumors began that the Democrats and Independents would combine their votes once again to elect a Senator. These rumors, however, were not taken seriously.

Meanwhile, with the blessings of Pettigrew, the Republicans switched their support to A.B. Melville who had been an ardent Moody man until the Judge released his support. Melville, however, could do no better in gathering support to himself.

During the next few days the respective political groups cast the bulk of their votes for Campbell, Melville and Tripp but no one could obtain enough support to win. Finally, on February 13, the Republicans shifted their full support to Thomas Sterling of Redfield, while the Independents shifted theirs to a dark-horse candidate, James Henderson Kyle of Aberdeen.⁷¹

⁷¹Huronite, January 27, 28; February 2, 4, 5, 11, 13, 1891.

So unusual was the entrance of this man into South Dakota politics, that it demands a bit of explanation. Kyle was a Congregationalist minister who had only recently come to the state. He was a public speaker of some note and his popularity among the Independents sprang from a Fourth of July oration he had given at Aberdeen in 1890. His speech entitled "Perils and Safeguards of the Republic," hit upon two of the most important problems to which Independent thinkers addressed themselves. The first of these was unrestricted immigration which menaced the laboring classes and "jeopardized the Sabbath." The other was the concentration of wealth in the hands of large corporations. To safeguard the "rights and liberties" of the people he called for further immigration restrictions, complete liberty of the press, universal and compulsory education, universal suffrage, the secret ballot, and prohibition.⁷² The day following his speech Kyle was nominated for the legislature by the Brown County Independent Convention. He was elected and thus he appeared in Pierre with a ready made reputation the next January.

With the nomination of Kyle, Republican leaders began to fear the outcome of the senatorial election. William T. LaFollette wrote to Mellette that the Republicans had better go to the preacher, arrange with him to vote Republican in the Senate and then elect him. LaFollette declared that in

⁷² Aberdeen Daily News, July 5, 1890.

his opinion the election of a true Republican was now impossible.⁷³ And Pettigrew voiced deep concern over the "wrangle" the Republicans had gotten themselves into. "I now fear," he wrote, "that the matter has been delayed so long that no Republican can be elected."⁷⁴

Pettigrew's analysis of the situation was correct. Kyle was elected on February 16, due to an understanding which had been reached between the South Dakota Alliance men in the legislature and the Democratic party of the state of Illinois. Under the terms of this agreement, the Democrats of South Dakota were to vote for the Independent candidate if the Alliance men of Illinois would support the Democratic candidate in that state. The Democratic candidate in Illinois was John M. Palmer. With the help of the three Populists (Alliance men) in the senate, the Democrats had a majority of two over the Republicans, 103 to 101, and Palmer was elected.⁷⁵ In South Dakota, eight Democrats continued to vote for Bartlett Tripp, but the rest were loyal to the bargain.⁷⁶

⁷³LaFollette to Mellette, February 4, 1891, Mellette Papers.

⁷⁴Pettigrew to V.E. Prentis, February 16, 1891, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷⁵Dictionary of American Biography, "James H. Kyle," X, 515-516.

⁷⁶South Dakota Senate Journal (1891), 513.

"Well, Kyle is elected," wrote William T. LaFollette, "I predict that the parties who elected him will dominate state politics for the next five years."⁷⁷

Pettigrew was incensed with election of Kyle. "Those parties who were responsible . . . ," he wrote, "ought not to receive any recognition for years from the Republican party."⁷⁸ The Senator felt constrained, however, to offer party comity to his new colleague in Washington. When Kyle arrived, Pettigrew offered him a seat on the Republican side, and asked that he take his committee assignments from the Republicans. To the chagrin and disgust of the politico, Kyle refused point-blank, saying he preferred to think of himself as an "Indecrat." He took a seat with the Democrats and received his committee appointments from them. In doing so he earned the undying hatred of Pettigrew, who felt Kyle had made a fool of him.⁷⁹ Kyle and Pettigrew became bitter personal enemies and often clashed verbally during Senate debates.

The remaining months of 1891 were spent in preparation for the campaign of the succeeding year. Pettigrew feared

⁷⁷ LaFollette to Mellette, February 18, 1891, Mellette Papers.

⁷⁸ Pettigrew to James McDowell, Huron, May 1, 1891, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷⁹ Pettigrew to George Schlosser, Aberdeen, December 15, 1891, in ibid.

that unless the Republican party faced the campaign with a united front it would be defeated by the Independents.⁸⁰ From his point of view, the major threat to Republican party unity was Arthur C. Mellette whose ambitions for a seat in Congress had begun to blossom afresh. ". . . He is so crazy to go to the United States Senate," wrote Pettigrew of the Governor, "that he is willing to do anything."⁸¹ Pettigrew's great fear was that Mellette, friendly as he was with the Harrison Administration, meant to deprive him of the patronage. The controversy with Secretary Noble had never been resolved, and Pettigrew suspected that Mellette had already promised the state to Harrison for the next year in exchange for the right to influence Department of the Interior appointments. Pettigrew's suspicions led him to oppose the renomination of Harrison and favor instead the candidacy of Secretary of State James G. Blaine.⁸²

To make matters worse, Pettigrew suspected that Mellette was attempting to influence the President against Gideon Moody, for whom Pettigrew sought a circuit judgeship. However, Presidential spokesmen advised the Senator that he could insure Moody's appointment by promising to support the

⁸⁰ Pettigrew to S.B. Milton, Redfield, March 30, 1891, Pettigrew Papers.

⁸¹ Pettigrew to Conklin, March 30, 1891, in ibid.

⁸² Pettigrew to J.E. Jolley, April 5, 1891, in ibid.

Administration, and Pettigrew wrote Moody that he was willing to make this trade.⁸³ Pettigrew's concession, it must be noted, was quite insincere.

Faced with stern opposition from the Mellette-Harrison faction in South Dakota, Pettigrew sought to insure his control of the state by gaining control of the delegation to the Republican National Convention. Mellette had the same idea and the fight which ensued was spectacular and highly publicized. "The Pettigrew-Mellette fight has caused a split in the party," commented the Minneapolis Evening Tribune. "Both sides want to send delegates to the National Convention."⁸⁴

Pettigrew declared publicly that South Dakota would send a delegation to Minneapolis which would represent the sentiment of the state, but privately he declared that he did not care whether the delegates to the Minneapolis convention were for Harrison or Blaine, so long as Mellette "and his crowd" were left out.⁸⁵ He admitted again, however, that his personal choice for the Presidency was Blaine, but of course at the time he did not know whether the Secretary

⁸³ Pettigrew to Moody, April 21, 1891, in ibid.

⁸⁴ Minneapolis Evening Tribune, February 3, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

⁸⁵ Pettigrew to William B. Sterling, Huron, January 29, 1892, Pettigrew Papers.

would consent to run.⁸⁶

"I never attack the Administration in any of my letters," wrote Pettigrew, "but say that it has been a good one although you know what I think of Harrison."⁸⁷ "He never did anything for the statehood of Dakota," fumed the Senator. "In fact his actions really delayed statehood for several years. Now he is siding with Mellette to usurp my patronage."⁸⁸

This indictment of President Harrison was grossly unfair. He had indeed labored as well as he might to get South Dakota into the Union. But he had done so because of his political association with Mellette, not Pettigrew. Thus his continued loyalty to the Governor was not unusual. Neither was it unusual that Pettigrew sought to eliminate Mellette once and for all by controlling the convention which would name delegates to the national convention. "We must carry this convention," he wrote, "that ends Mellette. Then we will put our man in the field for Governor and gain control of state patronage."⁸⁹

By the time the convention met in Chamberlain late in March, the battle lines were drawn. However, Pettigrew

⁸⁶ Pettigrew to C.S. Sherwood, Clark, January 29, 1892, in ibid.

⁸⁷ Pettigrew to D.H. Henry, Chamberlain, February 2, 1892, in ibid.

⁸⁸ Pettigrew to Donald Needham, Crow Lake, February 16, 1892, in ibid.

⁸⁹ Pettigrew to Needham, February 25, 1892, in ibid.

continued to attempt to make it appear that no tempest marred the peaceful sea of South Dakota Republican unity. "Pettigrew could not have controlled the selection of delegates if he wanted to," said the Sioux Falls Press. But in the same issue the paper declared, "Mellette has been badly defeated in the election of delegates and Pettigrew is stronger than ever. The administration has been injured by allowing Mellette to control patronage."⁹⁰

Pettigrew sent Moody to Chamberlain to attempt to "ramrod" the selection of delegates, but the Judge was only partially successful. When the smoke of battle had cleared away, there was great confusion as to whether the delegates had been instructed, and if so, for whom. Two reports, one for Harrison, the other for Blaine, were introduced at the same time, and when Moody rose to speak on them he was booed so loudly that he could not be heard. The motion of instruction for Harrison finally carried, but many of those present thought the procedure had been invalidated by confusion.⁹¹ The next day Moody declared that the delegation had not been instructed at all, but that it made no difference because Pettigrew was not working against the best

⁹⁰ Sioux Falls Press, March 18, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

⁹¹ Sioux Falls Daily Gazette, March 24, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

interests of Harrison.⁹² But Pettigrew himself indicated in a remarkable interview that the delegation from South Dakota would vote for the President only if he did not need their votes to win!⁹³

While the newspapers from out of state reported the confused conditions which existed among the South Dakota Republicans,⁹⁴ party organs within the state sought to gloss over these matters and preserve the facade of unity. "It was a very satisfactory convention," said the Aberdeen Daily News. "Mellette and Pettigrew men voted for each others' candidates. The question of positive instruction was an honest difference of opinion among Harrison men. Those who opposed instruction were among the President's warmest friends."⁹⁵

And the Sioux Falls Press declared:⁹⁶

Outside papers like the Sioux City Journal and the Minneapolis Tribune are trying to create dissension among South Dakota Republicans and spoil the marked good feeling which the Chamberlain convention inspired in the ranks of the party. They talk about Pettigrew being "burned down" as if they were Democratic papers. They ought to mind their own business.

⁹² St. Paul Pioneer Press, March 24, 1892, Clipping, in ibid.

⁹³ Sioux City Journal, March 25, 1892, Clipping, in ibid.

⁹⁴ Minneapolis Newspaper (The title and date are unknown. This is a clipping found in a scrapbook among the Pettigrew Papers).

⁹⁵ Aberdeen Daily News, Undated Clipping, in ibid.

⁹⁶ Sioux Falls Press, March 26, 1892.

And later: "Many ghost stories have been written about relations between Pettigrew and the administration. All are exaggerations."⁹⁷

Finally the Sioux Falls Gazette published an article on state politics which quite admirably reduced the problem to its essentials: ". . . Now the Combine has separated. Pettigrew and Moody still hang together with Mellette and Edgerton on the other side attempting to 'do up' Pettigrew as Moody was 'done up' two years ago. Mellette wants to go to Congress. . . ."⁹⁸

Once the delegates had been selected, Pettigrew turned his attention to the approaching national convention. "South Dakota is unquestionably a Blaine state," he boasted.⁹⁹ He travelled to Minneapolis several days before the opening of the convention to do what he could for the "Plumed Knight." He declared to the minions of the press that Blaine would be nominated on the first ballot since he had the support of all the West.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile, Benjamin Harrison and his political advisors

⁹⁷ Ibid., April 8, 1892.

⁹⁸ Sioux Falls Daily Gazette, April 22, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

⁹⁹ Minneapolis Journal, May 26, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁰⁰ Detroit Free Press, May 28, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers; Sioux Falls Press, May 28, 1892.

were watching the situation closely, with special interest centered on the silver producing states of the West. "I do not fear the outcome of the Minneapolis Convention," wrote the President. "Those who talk against my re-nomination can point to no official delinquency or inadequacy."¹⁰¹ Then, at 12:45 P.M. on June 4, 1892, came the event which shocked the nation. James G. Blaine resigned as Secretary of State, in order, thought most people, to wrest the Presidential nomination from his chief.¹⁰²

Pettigrew was not surprised. The resignation, he declared, should have come sooner, but despite the lateness of the hour, Blaine would still secure the nomination.¹⁰³ It is difficult to believe that Pettigrew actually thought Blaine had a chance, but he went through the motions regardless. However, it was all in vain. Although the "Plumed Knight" received some support, the Harrison men were in control of the convention and he received the nomination on the first ballot. South Dakota, true to the prediction of Richard Pettigrew, cast her eight unneeded votes for the President.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹Harrison to William A. Russell, Boston, June 2, 1892, Benjamin Harrison Papers, Vol. 141, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰²Blaine to Harrison, June 4, 1892, in ibid.

¹⁰³New York World, June 6, 1892, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁰⁴Telegrams from A.J. Michener and Russell B. Harrison to Secretary Halford, Washington, June 6-10, 1892, Harrison Papers, Vol. 141; New York Tribune, June 11, 1892.

Mark Hanna summed up the attitudes of anti-Harrison Republicans in a letter to John Sherman. "The renomination of Harrison fell like a wet blanket on the convention except those personally interested. In Cleveland and Chicago there is indifference toward his success."¹⁰⁵

And Pettigrew, frustrated in his efforts to stop the President, wrote to Harrison in an effort to smooth the matter over. He said that the South Dakota delegates feared that Harrison would disregard the representatives of the state chosen by the people [Pettigrew] and consult only with persons of the President's own choosing [Mellette]. "This causes me annoyance," wrote the Senator, "and I have undertaken to counteract that impression, but am confronted by a statement that the present Governor and his friends assert they have assurance from you to that effect."¹⁰⁶

At the same time Mellette wrote to the President:¹⁰⁷

Senator Pettigrew is making a great effort to control the coming state convention and has almost the entire federal patronage to aid him. If he succeeds you may have to come to terms with him although I fear his pledges are worthless and he will try to make good his prediction that you cannot carry South Dakota.

¹⁰⁵ Hanna to Sherman, June 14, 1892, John Sherman Papers, Vol. 583, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁶ Pettigrew to Harrison, June 30, 1892, Harrison Papers, Vol. 143.

¹⁰⁷ Mellette to Harrison, June 30, 1892, in ibid.

Indeed, Pettigrew had now turned his full attention toward the "coming state convention." He stayed adroitly in the background, but nevertheless was in complete control of proceedings through the activities of his agents John Diamond, A.B. Kittridge, and Nye Phillips. In his letters he spoke approvingly of a number of candidates for governor, but indicated that his correspondents should "see what his friends Kittridge and Phillips think." He was attempting to stay out of the limelight while at the same time he influenced the selection of the candidates. It was to be a crucial election. Pettigrew needed a friendly governor to help him in the 1894 legislative elections, for his own seat in the Senate would be at stake in 1895.¹⁰⁸

The Republican State Convention was held in Madison late in July, and Pettigrew was delighted with its outcome. "Every chap who was engaged in the conspiracy to defeat Moody was thoroughly cleaned out," he gloated, "and every fellow who bolts the Republican nominations hereafter will be returned to the shades of private life forever in the future."¹⁰⁹ His words were more prophetic than he knew.

Pettigrew and the other Republican leaders of South Dakota now turned their attention once more to the threat of the Independents. They feared that the Independents

¹⁰⁸ See Pettigrew Correspondence, June-July, 1892, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁰⁹ Pettigrew to J.F. Norton, Sioux Falls, August 3, 1892, in ibid.

contemplated a combination with the Democrats in order to carry the state as they had in the legislature of 1891 to elect Kyle to the Senate. The Senator had information which led him to believe that fusion was to be attempted in order to gain control of the major state offices. The plan, according to rumor, was to give the Democrats the offices of state auditor and treasurer, while the Independents were to get the rest of the positions.

The Republicans were also fearful of the influence that the Independents might have on the voters of foreign extraction. Pettigrew therefore proposed to place one hundred agents in the field in an attempt to hold the foreign-born voters within the party. He declared that it was absolutely essential that the party be sure of the Scandinavian and German votes.

Pettigrew also proposed to "see that the press was taken care of," particularly his own organ the Sioux Falls Press, and the leading German paper, the South Dakota Ekko.¹¹⁰ A fund of \$10,000 was supposed to be supplied by the Republican National Committee for these activities, but because of Pettigrew's opposition to Harrison, only a trickle was received. So urgent did Pettigrew consider the situation that he appealed to Chairman Thomas H. Carter to send the entire

¹¹⁰ Pettigrew to Republican National Chairman Thomas H. Carter, New York, October 16, 1892; Pettigrew to J.M. Greene, Chamberlain, October 17, 1892, in ibid.

amount,¹¹¹ but there is no evidence that Carter heeded this plea.

Pettigrew's information concerning fusion was correct. Efforts were already under way to form combined tickets at the local level. However, there was still a strong tide of opposition against fusion within the Independent party itself, and thus, success was not as great as it might have been even though some degree of combination occurred in thirty counties. The Independents State Convention met at Redfield in June and under the leadership of Henry Loucks, who opposed fusion, a full slate of candidates for state offices was nominated. At about the same time the Democrats also held their state convention and named their own candidates for office.¹¹²

The careful planning of the Republicans coupled with dissension over the fusion question brought overwhelming defeat to the Independents in November. South Dakota went Republican by a large majority.¹¹³ On the other hand, the Harrison administration was repudiated by the nation at large, and thus, the results were entirely satisfactory to Pettigrew.

¹¹¹Pettigrew to Carter, October 1, 1892, in ibid.

¹¹²Yankton Press and Dakotan, July 30; August 9; September 2, 29; October 4, 28; June 22, 1892.

¹¹³Huronite, November 11, 1892.

"It is fortunate for me that Harrison is beaten," wrote the Senator. "He would have used the entire power of his administration to have me defeated two years from now. I am well aware of that."¹¹⁴

In addition to the defeat of Harrison and control of the state, Pettigrew also had the written pledge of John Pickler that the Congressman would not oppose him for a Senate seat in 1895.¹¹⁵ Thus at the opening of the year 1893 Pettigrew's political position appeared to be as strong as it had ever been. However his conversion to the forces of free silver had already begun. He had already passed the zenith of his power within the Republican party.

¹¹⁴ Pettigrew to R.E. Carpenter, Waterton, January 13, 1893, Pettigrew Papers.

¹¹⁵ Pettigrew to William T. LaFollette, December 6, 1892, in ibid.

CHAPTER VI

SENATOR PETTIGREW AND THE SILVER QUESTION

From 1890 to 1896 the keynote of American politics was "free silver." Politicians could seldom avoid the controversy. For many, careers were drastically altered by it, and there were few examples which more perfectly illustrate this fact than that of Richard Pettigrew. In order to understand the implications of the free silver controversy, it is first necessary to grasp the meaning of the term for those who used it, and what arguments were presented for and against the policy of free coinage. Once these questions are understood, Pettigrew's position can more easily be analyzed.

The term, "free coinage of silver," meant that an individual had the right to take silver in any form to the government mint and have every 371.25 grains stamped, free of charge, into a dollar. The factors which prompted the so-called silverites to demand the renewal of this right require some explanation. On April 2, 1792, Congress passed the first Mint Act which established the value ratio of silver and gold at 15 to 1. This legislation had the effect of

undervaluing gold; that is, the bullion in a gold dollar was worth more than one hundred cents when sold on the commercial market. Thus gold coins did not circulate and gold was shipped abroad in exchange for commodities at its commercial value.

The situation did not change until 1834 when the quantity of gold in a gold dollar was reduced from 24.75 grains to 23.22 grains. At the same time the ratio of coinage was fixed at 15.988 to 1 or approximately 16 to 1. This action undervalued silver and now it came to be used commercially instead of being coined. As a result silver dollars became obsolete and as years went by they passed out of circulation. This situation was recognized by Congress in the Currency Act of 1853.¹ No attempt was made in this piece of legislation to alter the legal ratio and thus bring silver dollars back into circulation. Thus it is important to remember that the use of silver as an unlimited legal tender was actually abandoned in 1853, not in 1873 as is often supposed.² It was a matter of circumstance, not law, which gave greater notoriety to the legislation passed in the latter year, and caused it to become known as the "Crime of '73."

¹Edward O. Leech, Director of the Mint, "The Menace of Silver Legislation," North American Review, CLII (March, 1891), 299-300.

²J.L. Laughlin, The History of Bimetallism in the United States (New York: Appleton and Co., 1896), 82.

The Mint Act of 1873 was similar to the act of 1853 in that it made no mention of the ratio between silver and gold. Furthermore, it dropped the silver dollar piece from the coinage list, and thus became known as the act which "demonetized" silver.³ The act of 1873 passed unnoticed by the public for about two years. But the speculative mania which had followed the Civil War came to its inevitable collapse in 1873, and large numbers of people were suddenly caught in the pincers of "tight money" currency. As a result, demands for inflation were heard. Most of the people affected were located in the western states and territories where they had participated in speculative enterprises of various nature until caught in the panic. Now they found themselves trapped by debt, and sought desperately for an escape. Led by skillful politicians, they began to demand that the government come to their aid by issuing more currency. That is, they demanded inflation which would allow them to unburden themselves financially by means of artificially high prices for the goods they produced.⁴

It has been said that the cry for free coinage began where the demand for unlimited paper money left off, and this is not an unreasonable assertion. Silver production

³ Ibid., 92.

⁴ Ibid., 218-219.

experienced a marked increase after 1875, which resulted in a decline in the commercial value of the product.⁵ Thus silver dollars appealed to debtors who still desired the cheapest available unit with which to liquidate their indebtedness, and the demand for the free and unlimited coinage of silver dollars worth intrinsically less than one-hundred cents each came to receive the support of all who had previously demanded an expansion of paper currency. At the same time, the cry was taken up by the producers of silver who desired a ready market for their product, and "free silver" quickly became a political issue.⁶

The demands of silver men resulted in the passage in 1878 of the Bland-Allison Act. This legislation was the result of a two year period of sporadic agitation which began on July 26, 1876, when Representative William Kelley of Pennsylvania introduced a bill to restore silver coinage as it had existed before 1873. This bill failed, but a similar measure sponsored by Richard P. Bland of Missouri passed the House on November 5, 1877. When the bill reached the Senate it was amended by William B. Allison of Iowa, who proposed that the government purchase from two to four million dollars worth of silver each month to be coined into

⁵ Historical Statistics of the United States
(Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960), 371.

⁶ Laughlin, Bimetallism in the United States, 219-221.

dollars of full legal-tender value. This amendment was accepted by both Houses and submitted to President Hayes who promptly vetoed it. Shortly after, it was passed over the veto of the President and became law on February 28, 1878.⁷

The Bland-Allison Act proved to be unsatisfactory to the silverites since the Treasury insisted on purchasing only the minimum amount of bullion prescribed by law. Thus the desired inflationary effect was not produced.⁸ Pressure continued and finally resulted in the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890. This law required the government to purchase 4,500,000 ounces of silver per month at the market price of the metal. Of this amount 2,000,000 ounces were to be coined each month for one year. Thereafter, only such silver dollars were to be coined as were needed for the redemption of treasury notes. However, the Secretary of the Treasury was given the option of redeeming the notes in gold or silver at his discretion.⁹ Like the Bland-Allison Act, this legislation was not completely satisfactory to the silverites, who claimed that the option clause gave the Secretary the power to keep silver out of circulation by

⁷Horace White, Money and Banking (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1911), 169-170.

⁸Laughlin, Bimetallism in the United States, 262.

⁹Leech, "The Menace of Silver Legislation," 300.

redeeming only in gold. Furthermore, they argued, the act did not provide for unlimited free coinage and thus did not produce the inflationary trend in the economy for which they hoped.¹⁰

By 1890, the year the Sherman Silver Purchase Act was passed, it was quite apparent that the "silver fever" had spread out of the mining states to infect the western agricultural states. It already has been pointed out that the most noticeable symptom of this disease was a demand for inflation. The Greenbackers, followed by the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and finally the Populist party took up the cry and unfurled the banners of their cause before the nation. The Populist-silver-inflationists of the 1890's based their demands on the correct assumption that the existing currency formula of the United States worked to the disadvantage of the producers of agricultural commodities.¹¹ But the reasoning upon which they based their conclusion was incorrect, and they failed to arrive at an economically feasible solution to their problem. The silver men argued that a simultaneous increase in the value of gold and decrease in the value of silver had occurred since 1873. This phenomenon had in turn affected the English wheat and cotton

¹⁰C.S. Thomas, "Bimetallism and Legislation," The Arena, XI (February, 1895), 380-381.

¹¹White, Money and Banking, 169.

markets to the detriment of American farmers.¹² According to the theory, very little wheat and cotton were brought from India to Europe before 1872. After this date, however, English buyers were able to purchase these commodities within the Empire using exchange purchased at a heavy discount. Because of the declining value of silver, Englishmen could increase the purchasing power of their money by exchanging it for American silver and then minting it into Indian rupees having an artificially high face value. Silverites were fond of citing examples such as the following: "The English buy American silver at ninety cents an ounce and then work it off in India at about \$1.37 per ounce for wheat and cotton. These staples thus come into England at such low prices, that American growers, whose prices are fixed by Liverpool, lose money on their crops."¹³

When silver was demonetized, explained the silver men, the parity between gold and silver was destroyed, and henceforth, the price of farm products came to be governed by the price of silver. In the British Empire, where the silver standard was maintained, the purchasing power of the metal remained stationary. Thus there was no discount on the silver which Indian producers received for their wheat,

¹² John P. Jones, United States Senator, Nevada, "What the Remonetization of Silver would do for the Republic," The Arena, XVI (October, 1896), 736.

¹³ Samuel Leavitt, "India, Silver, Wheat and Cotton," The Arena, X (July, 1894), 192-200.

and they began to increase their exports. American producers, on the other hand, who sold on the same market, often suffered an exchange discount of up to thirty per cent.¹⁴

Unfortunately, the silverites by and large did not understand the real problem which faced them. The decline in the price of American wheat was not caused by fluctuations in the value of silver or by rate-of-exchange differentials. Rather, it was caused by tremendous increases in the volume of wheat produced and exported by the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, and India in the last half of the nineteenth century. In that period the supply of staples increased, and as a result, their price went down.¹⁵ While foreign production figures for the years before 1890 are quite rare, this statement can be adequately documented with existing information. India, for example, did begin to export large quantities of wheat in 1873. The reason for this was not the declining price of silver, but the fact that the export duty was removed from Indian wheat in that year. No exact production figures are available before 1890; however, it is known that exports of wheat from India to the United Kingdom increased gradually after 1873 until India became a

¹⁴W.M. Stewart, "Silver and the Need for More Money," The Forum, XI (June, 1891), 437.

¹⁵E.W. Zimmerman, World Resources and Industries (New York: Harper Brothers, 1951), 212.

leading competitor of the United States on the Liverpool market.¹⁶

The situation in the United States can be described more precisely. From 1870 to 1890 wheat production in this country experienced an overall increase of 55 per cent. This was caused primarily by the fact that wheat acreage doubled in that period, and secondarily by a slight increase in the yield per acre. Increasing production was accompanied by decreasing prices. From a high of \$1.25 per bushel in 1871, wheat fell to \$.83 in 1890. This situation was worsened by the depression of 1893 which drove the price of wheat down to \$.49 in that year. American wheat prices never again exceeded \$.80 a bushel in the nineteenth century.¹⁷

The farmer-silverites became convinced that the only solution to the price problem, indeed the only cure for all the ills of American economy, was the complete remonetization of silver. This would have the effect of once again anchoring gold to silver at the ratio of 16 to 1. Money would thus be made more stable and the value of silver would be buoyed up and maintained thus enhancing the value of farm products. Furthermore, the metallic basis for

¹⁶ Annual Register (London: Rivington's, 1883), 360-361.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Statistics, 1936, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1936, pp. 5, 11.

currency would be enlarged, thus ending contraction.¹⁸

One of the foremost exponents of these views in the United States Senate was Henry Moore Teller of Colorado. He agreed with the theorists that the changing ratio of gold to silver had affected the relative value of all other property, and he felt that the worst result of this situation was the increasing financial burden which fell upon debtors. Never had there existed a clearer case of class struggle with the creditor class having the advantage of government-created appreciation. The act of 1873 had altered the legal currency standard, and this, according to Teller, was its greatest evil. Furthermore, the evil had been compounded by the resumption of specie payments in 1875. This legislation had the effect of making the debtor redeem his borrowings in dollars worth far more than those he had originally received, and, as a result, he found himself caught in a financial trap from which extrication seemed impossible. Teller believed the government had a legal and moral obligation to rectify the situation without delay.¹⁹

The silver question grew to be the most controversial political issue of the day. It involved not only free coinage, but also the entire concept of monetary standards in the

¹⁸Stewart, "Silver and the Need for More Money," 437.

¹⁹Elmer Ellis, Henry Moore Teller (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1941), 185-186.

United States. It crossed party lines and divided politicians according to the economic interests they represented. Richard Pettigrew studied the question at length and came to accept the position of the silverites in its entirety. Thus he gradually separated from the orthodox Republicans and became identified with a group known as the "Silver Republicans." Among the Senate leaders of this group were Teller, John P. Jones of Nevada and Fred T. DuBois of Idaho, both of whom wrote extensively on the subject of free coinage; William B. Allison of Iowa, and, after 1896, Pettigrew himself.

As a national political issue, the question of standards was not primary during the decade of the eighties. It played little part in the election of 1888, and there was no mention of silver in President Harrison's inaugural address.²⁰ The great controversy between the "gold bugs" and the silverites actually was joined with the issuance of the annual report by Secretary of the Treasury William Windom in 1889. The Secretary suggested that the use of silver be expanded through government purchase of all silver offered for sale.²¹ Windom's suggestion brought the silver question to the forefront, but his scheme was rejected by both the gold men and silverites. The former opposed it because it put no

²⁰H.W. Faulkner, Politics, Expansion and Reform (New York: Harper Brothers, 1959), 185-186.

²¹U.S. Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, 51 Cong., 1 Sess., Executive Document No. 2, December 2, 1889, lxxiv-lxxxii.

limit on the amount of silver the government would be permitted to buy; the latter because the plan did not return silver to a parity with gold. The value of silver notes under this plan would fluctuate with the market price of silver.

Despite its obvious deficiencies, the Windom plan was not without political motivation. The Secretary hoped to win support for the Administration in silver mining states by creating an artificial market for silver. Support from these states was essential for the maintenance of the tariff and was made even more important by the very small majority enjoyed by the Republicans in Congress after 1888.²² The attempts of Windom and other Republican leaders to secure support from the silver states were noted by observant editorialists. E.L. Godkin, "gold bug" editor of The Nation, wrote prior to passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act:²³

The drift is toward free coinage. When Sherman says there should be more money in circulation and that the government should buy all the silver produced in the country, he is not telling what he believes to be good financial policy, but what he believes to be good politics. He is trying to save the party.

To Senator Teller and all the silverites we say:
 . . . Bring on your free-coinage bill, if you have enough votes, and then let President Harrison sign it or veto it according to his mood.

²²Faulknew, Politics, Expansion and Reform, 104.

²³E.L. Godkin, "The Silver Debate in the Senate," The Nation, XL (May 22, 1890), 403.

The Windom plan and another calling for free coinage of silver passed the Senate but both were defeated in the House.²⁴ The measure which was finally passed under the popular title, "The Sherman Silver Purchase Act," was a compromise accepted by the gold Republicans in order to gain support for the McKinley Tariff bill which was under discussion at the same time.²⁵ The silver men accepted the compromise because they saw no hope for complete remonetization in this session of Congress. Very soon, however, it was discovered that the Secretary of the Treasury was exercising his option to redeem treasury notes in gold. Thus the legislation did not produce the inflationary effects which had been hoped for by the silver men.²⁶ They felt that they had been betrayed.

After the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, the Harrison Administration sought to avoid further agitation for inflation. Harrison wrote to Lemuel E. Quigg of the New York Tribune that the ill effects of free coinage should be publicized. Furthermore, Harrison wanted the idea circulated that every dollar was equal in value to all others. By this means he hoped to rekindle the fiction of gold-silver parity in the public mind without actually resorting to

²⁴Faulkner, Politics, Expansion and Reform, 104.

²⁵Ibid., 105.

²⁶C.S. Thomas, "Bimetallism and Legislation," The Arena, XI (February, 1895), 378-389.

unlimited free coinage. The President wrote:²⁷

It should be shown that our courts have held that contracts for payment in gold can be made and enforced and that if we have a difference in the commercial use of gold and silver dollars, bankers will require payment in gold while workmen will have to accept a promise to pay in dollars which will eventually be honored in depreciated money.

Meanwhile, during the "lame duck" session of Congress, in 1890-91, several bills providing for the free and unlimited coinage of silver were introduced. Little interest could be generated in these measures, however, and they all died in committee. Also, Secretary Windom died and Harrison replaced him with Charles Foster whom he instructed to soft-peddle all discussion of ideas for increasing the circulation of currency. "Until we are forced to advocate the repeal of the silver bill," wrote the President, "I do not think other suggestions should be discussed. You will be able to claim for the Administration a large increase per capita if we stand by existing legislation for the present."²⁸

The orthodox Republican position was that remonetization would only be feasible if accomplished on an international basis. Thus, by 1892 Harrison began to consider calling an international monetary conference.²⁹ By late spring

²⁷Harrison to Quigg, October 19, 1891, Benjamin Harrison Papers, Vol. 130, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁸Harrison to Foster, October 19, 1891, Vol. 131, Harrison Papers, in ibid.

²⁹Ibid., January 16, 1892, Vol. 131, Harrison Papers, in ibid.

invitations to such a conference had been issued to all the principal nations of the world, and in November the delegates gathered in Brussels, Belgium. Representing the United States were Senators William B. Allison of Iowa and John P. Jones of Nevada, Representative James B. McCreary of Kentucky, Ex-Controller of the Currency H.W. Brown, Professor E.B. Andrews of Brown University, and United States Minister to Belgium E.H. Terrell. They were instructed to secure an agreement favoring international bimetallism; that is, the remonetization of silver by all nations. Unfortunately, it proved to be an impossible task because the persistent efforts of Congress to force unilateral bimetallism were looked upon with suspicion by most of the European powers.³⁰

The failure of the conference caused little surprise among ardent silver men in the United States. Richard P. Bland, leader of the silver Democrats in Congress, was not alone when he declared that the meeting had been called solely to postpone legislative action on the silver question.³¹ At about the same time, however, the Harrison Administration was repudiated at the polls and it remained to be seen what the stalwarts of "Bourbon Democracy" could do for silver.

Within three months after the inauguration of

³⁰A.B. Hepburn, A History of Currency in the United States (New York: The McMillan Co., 1924), 346-347.

³¹Richard P. Bland, "The Boons and Banes of Free Silver," North American Review, CLVI (February, 1893), 171.

Grover Cleveland the nation was rocked with depression. Blame for the panic was fastened squarely by the silverites on the fact that free coinage did not exist. Cleveland, a "hard money" man, promptly called a special session of Congress to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchase Act.³² Even though the silver men deemed the law inadequate, they rallied to fight its repeal since they believed the cure to be infinitely worse than the disease.

Up to this time Senator Pettigrew had said little publicly on the silver question, even though he thought about it almost constantly. By 1893, however, he came out solidly for free coinage. There were two very specific reasons for his stand. First, he believed that the appeal of free silver was spreading among the people. He was alarmed by the strong showing which the Populists made in the election of 1892, and he felt that unless the Republicans accepted free silver, they were doomed to extinction as a major party. Secondly, Pettigrew was becoming convinced, from his own business losses, that a larger volume of currency was necessary to save the nation's economy.³³

Pettigrew opposed the repeal of the Sherman Act, saying that it would cut off a needed supply of money. He

³²J.D. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, IX, 401-403.

³³Pettigrew to A.J. Conklin, April 1, 1892, Pettigrew Papers.

feared that a further contraction of the currency would result because of the inadequate supply of gold which was then available to the financial community. He declared:³⁴

If we repeal the Sherman Law, silver will decrease twenty points and will be difficult to restore. The law does us no harm. With silver demonetized and the world on a gold basis there will be a constant decline in the value of credits to the ruin of the debtor.

Pettigrew was in the thick of the cloak-room politics which accompanied the debate on silver. With the other silver men of the Senate he negotiated with House leaders and an agreement was reached concerning the debate in the lower chamber. Repeal was to be considered for fourteen days, after which a vote was to be taken on an amendment calling for free silver at 16:1. If this could not pass, free silver at 17:1, 19:1 and finally 20:1 would be considered. All these failing, the Bland-Allison Act was to be restored.

Pettigrew and his associates thought they were in an excellent position to win because they could count on 201 votes for free coinage. However, "We forgot to reckon with patronage," wrote the Senator, "when the vote came . . . we could muster only 101 votes. The debate did not bring the change. Patronage did it."³⁵

After success in the House, the repeal bill came to

³⁴Pettigrew to W.S. Bowen, Yankton, September 19, 1893, Pettigrew Papers.

³⁵Pettigrew Manuscripts on Free Silver, Loose Files, Pettigrew Papers.

the Senate where opinion was more evenly divided.³⁶ Pettigrew, recognized as a leader of the anti-repeal forces, was approached by Senator Matthew S. Quay of Pennsylvania, who opposed repeal, with the proposition that the repeal bill should be postponed, and a general discussion of the currency question be inaugurated. Pettigrew was asked to canvass the South to determine if enough votes could be secured to prevent passage of a tariff bill in exchange for maintenance of the silver law. Pettigrew accepted this proposal and set to work immediately.³⁷

Meanwhile, the repeal bill was considered by the Senate Finance Committee under Daniel W. Voorhees of Indiana, a long-time opponent of President Cleveland. The President, however, was able to win the support of Voorhees by handing him the entire patronage of Indiana in return for which the Senator pushed the repeal bill through committee.³⁸ Voorhees received the bill on August 28, 1893, and it was reported to the floor later in the same day.³⁹ But the debate which ensued lasted for more than two months.

³⁶Faulkner, Politics, Expansion and Reform, 129.

³⁷Pettigrew Manuscripts on Free Silver, Loose Files, Pettigrew Papers.

³⁸Faulkner, Politics, Expansion and Reform, 149-150.

³⁹Congressional Record, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., August 28, 1893, XXV, 1001-1009.

Between the first of September and the middle of October it appeared that the silverites had a chance to stave off repeal.⁴⁰ They were led on the floor by Henry M. Teller and Edward C. Wolcott of Colorado, George G. Vest of Missouri, William M. Stewart and John P. Jones of Nevada, Henry W.V. Allen of Nebraska and William Peffer of Kansas.⁴¹ Although he considered himself a silverite, Pettigrew did not speak during the debate because he feared political repercussions at home. However, as has already been indicated, he worked mightily, albeit futilely, for the cause behind the scenes. At the height of the debate, Pettigrew wrote to A.B. Kittridge of Sioux Falls: ". . . There are many of my friends who honestly differ with me . . . [but] if I were sure to lose my seat in the Senate tomorrow I could not change my position on the silver question."⁴² Kittridge was perhaps a poor choice for this confidence, although Pettigrew did not know it at the time. The Sioux Falls man had for some time been Pettigrew's close associate in South Dakota affairs. He was, however, completely unshaken by the Populist threat and held conservative views on the money question. In short, Kittridge

⁴⁰James A. Barnes, John G. Carlisle (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1931), 277.

⁴¹Faulkner, Politics, Expansion and Reform, 150.

⁴²Pettigrew to A.B. Kittridge, Sioux Falls, October 16, 1893, Pettigrew Papers.

and Pettigrew, like Pettigrew and his party, were soon to part company.

After many weary days of filibustering on the part of the silverites, the repeal bill was brought to a vote on October 20, 1893, and was passed by a vote of 43 to 32.⁴³ The silverites, however, had gained more than they knew by defeat. The discord and confusion which up to now had weakened their forces was gone. They had a specific cause for which to fight and which they could present to their constituents.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, in the days to come, the silver leaders overplayed this advantage and convinced themselves that the political aspirations of the people of the Middle Border were governed entirely by free silver. This did not prove to be the case.

By the end of 1893 Senator Pettigrew found himself in a peculiar position. He was fully convinced that the tide of free silver was about to sweep the country, but he was still unwilling to abandon the Republican party. Thus he set out to modify the appeal of his party so that silverites could in good conscience stay with it. He sought to carry out his program in South Dakota by establishing bimetallic leagues throughout the state which would act as distributors of Republican propaganda. "The political battle," he wrote,

⁴³Congressional Record, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., October 30, 1893, XXV, 2958.

⁴⁴Barnes, John G. Carlisle, 286.

"is going to be between the Republicans and the Populists and I am somewhat worried over the result." Pettigrew advised his associates at home that care should be taken in the organization of the leagues to see that the majority of the members were trustworthy Republicans. At the same time, he cautioned, the leagues should appear to be non-partisan with as many Democratic and Populist members as possible. Pettigrew felt that such organizations would go far toward convincing the farmers to stay within the Republican party by advising them that the best interests of free silver could thus be served.⁴⁵

When the organization of the leagues did not progress as rapidly as Pettigrew had hoped, he became even more concerned over the political situation and confessed privately that he believed Populist chances throughout the country were increasing.⁴⁶

The leaders of the silver states and the brightest men of the southern states are seriously discussing the question of forming a new party and while I want to go through the next year's campaign in South Dakota as a Republican, I am convinced that this is the last fight we will make for the Republican party. . . . I am sure that the Republican party will never elect another President and never again control either house of Congress.

⁴⁵ Pettigrew to William B. Sterling, Huron, September 9, 1893, Pettigrew Papers.

⁴⁶ Pettigrew to A.B. Kittridge, Sioux Falls, September 13, 1893, in ibid.

Pettigrew also attempted to influence the Sioux Falls Press to come out in favor of free silver, but editor E.W. Caldwell, usually amenable to his suggestions, now proved recalcitrant. "Your paper," chided the Senator, "is certainly losing the opportunity of a lifetime in pursuing a non-committal course with regard to silver."⁴⁷ Pettigrew further complained that the Press did not reprint the laudatory clippings which he sent to Caldwell. He felt that such a policy was injurious to both the party and himself.⁴⁸

The attitude taken by Caldwell, the failure of the bimetallic leagues and several other factors which gradually came to his attention convinced Pettigrew by 1894 that he was losing control of the Republican machine of South Dakota. As early as October of 1893 he intimated to his close friend John Diamond his belief that ex-Governor Mellette was organizing an attack upon him. To meet the threat Pettigrew wrote to several men he thought were involved hoping to elicit from them statements which could later be used against them if the need should arise.⁴⁹ In addition he ordered that some "discreet fellow" of doubtless loyalty should join the

⁴⁷ Pettigrew to E.W. Caldwell, September 9, 1893, Pettigrew Papers.

⁴⁸ Pettigrew to A.B. Kittridge, October 6, 1893, in ibid.

⁴⁹ Pettigrew to Diamond, October 5, 1893, in ibid.

Mellette Combination in order that it might be fought from the inside.⁵⁰

Pettigrew believed that Mellette's objective was to gain control of the state convention of 1894 with the idea of electing a slate which would insure Pettigrew's defeat before the legislature in 1895. On that score, however, the Senator did not fear Mellette nearly as much as he feared the possibility of fusion between the South Dakota Populists and the Democrats. He had information which led him to believe that Senator Kyle had agreed to throw the Populist vote to Bartlett Tripp if the latter decided to run for the Senate.⁵¹

"Tripp will be my real opposition," wrote the Senator.⁵²

During the spring of 1894 Pettigrew tried to convey the impression that he was not anxious about his own re-election. "All I want," he wrote, "is that Republicans be elected to the legislature and agree to stand by the Republican caucus. Of course I feel certain of success in that event, but if it should result in the selection of someone else I shall find no fault."⁵³

The fact that Pettigrew feared a combination of

⁵⁰Pettigrew to C.H. Palmer, Brookings, October 6, 1893, in ibid.

⁵¹Pettigrew to N.G. Nash, Canton, April 3, 1894, in ibid. The Independents had affiliated with the People's Party.

⁵²Pettigrew to W.S. Bowen, Yankton, April 5, 1894, in ibid.

⁵³Pettigrew to George V. Ayres, Deadwood, April 6, 1894, in ibid.

Democrats and Populists did not mean that fusion of the two organizations had already occurred. Henry L. Loucks, for example, fought fiercely against fusion at the Populist state convention, saying he feared it would cost the Populists thousands of votes.⁵⁴ Loucks successfully controlled the convention and was thus able to insure the nomination of his slate of "hard core" Populists.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Pettigrew's fear that Mellette meant to manipulate the Republican nominations to his own advantage failed to materialize. Charles H. Sheldon was nominated for a second term as governor, while John Pickler and Robert J. Gamble were named for Congress. In addition, the platform carried demands for railroad regulations as an appeal to the farm vote. Pettigrew favored this idea and though he detested both Sheldon and Pickler, the Senator declared that their nominations would help maintain party unity.⁵⁶ In fact, the Senator was overjoyed when Pickler accepted another term in Congress, eliminating him as a possible senatorial candidate against Pettigrew.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, though he predicted

⁵⁴Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 38.

⁵⁵Ibid., 39.

⁵⁶Pettigrew to D.H. Henry, Chamberlain, May 21, 1894; Pettigrew Papers.

⁵⁷Pettigrew to Kittridge, April 2, 1894, in ibid.

victory for Sheldon and the others, he was uncertain about the legislature. ". . . We are sure of electing governor and congressmen," he wrote, "but there is a bare possibility we may lose the legislature if the Democratic-Populist combination is thorough."⁵⁸

Thus Pettigrew set out to insure his own security. During September and October he wrote to each Republican candidate for the legislature congratulating him, wishing him success and informing him of his own candidacy for re-election to the Senate.⁵⁹ At the same time he appealed to the Democrats by warning them that they faced political assimilation if they combined with the Populists. "The fight in South Dakota is between me and the Populists," he wrote, "therefore every Democrat in the state ought to feel interested in my success."⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Pettigrew ordered his followers throughout the state to prevent Populist-Democratic fusion in as many counties as possible. Although there is no way to determine how this was done, the success of the scheme in many important counties is apparent from Pettigrew's letters. It is probable that Republicans posing as Populists infiltrated the conventions in some of these counties.

⁵⁸ Pettigrew to Kittridge, April 2, 1894, in ibid.

⁵⁹ Pettigrew Correspondence, September-October, 1894. in ibid.

⁶⁰ Pettigrew to Samuel Blum, Deadwood, October 19, 1894, in ibid.

At this juncture also, Pettigrew was faced with a problem of another order. Rumors began to circulate in Sioux Falls that the Midland Pacific Railroad would never be built. To combat this adverse publicity he wrote to Lemuel Quigg of the New York Tribune asking that an interview with one Hibbard, who had inspected the project, be published in as many papers as possible.⁶¹ About one week later a statement by Hibbard appeared in the Tribune. He declared emphatically that the Midland Pacific would be completed and that it would be of great economic benefit to the states through which it passed, particularly South Dakota. "Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the eastern terminus of the railroad, will double in population within five years of its completion," he stated.⁶²

On the same day the Hibbard interview appeared, Pettigrew received good news from Bartlett Tripp. The Democrat declared that he would not run for the Senate, and that he preferred Pettigrew to any of the Populists. "In any event," predicted the Senator, "there won't be more than a dozen Democratic members in the legislature."⁶³ The threat of a Populist-Democratic combination which Pettigrew feared so much had failed to materialize.

⁶¹Pettigrew to H.M. McDonald, New York City, October 20, 1894, in ibid.

⁶²New York Tribune, October 29, 1894.

⁶³Pettigrew to H.R. Pease, Sisseton, October 28, 1894, Pettigrew Papers.

On election day the Republicans were overwhelmingly victorious. Governor Sheldon was re-elected by a wide margin as were Pickler and Gamble. In the legislative contest the Republicans won more than one-hundred seats while the Populists were able to control only twenty-four.⁶⁴ True to Pettigrew's prediction the number of seats controlled by the Democrats was negligible.

In spite of party victory Pettigrew did not remain idle. He now sought to insure his nomination through control of the party legislative caucus. In this effort he was once again successful for on January 8, 1895, he was re-nominated by acclamation. The Sioux Falls Press commented on the outcome of the caucus: "(It) is a political marvel. Anybody who has been acquainted with South Dakota politics has known the bitterness of the opposition of certain Republicans against Senator Pettigrew." The Press went on to say that Pettigrew's unanimous re-nomination proved the Senator had truly achieved a position of leadership. "It can hardly be said hereafter," declared editor Caldwell, "that Senator Pettigrew is the leader of a party faction."⁶⁵

Two weeks later Pettigrew was elected to his second

⁶⁴South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 304; South Dakota Journal of the House (1895), 226; South Dakota Journal of the Senate (1895), 186.

⁶⁵Sioux Falls Press, January 8, 1895.

term in the United States Senate by a strict party-line vote.⁶⁶ His success did not reflect new confidence in the Republican party, however, nor did it reflect his own power adequately. He was ever fearful of the dangers of encroaching Populism, and he had made bitter enemies in his own party. Therefore, he continued his espousal of free silver, and moved even further to the "left" by declaring that he favored the demand of South Dakota Populists that the powers of the State Railroad Commission be increased. In fact, Pettigrew had announced that he favored the establishment of rate controls by the state as early as December 1894. "I am earnestly in favor of such a law," he wrote, "I want to give the state railroad commissioners the power to prevent discrimination."⁶⁷ He knew that this was an extremely delicate matter since most Republican leaders in the state opposed such legislation. Nevertheless, he believed that to survive, the party must redeem its campaign pledges and he was determined to see this done.⁶⁸

The Populists in the legislature introduced a bill which would give the state railroad commission the power to regulate rates. Pettigrew immediately wired the Republican

⁶⁶Huronite, January 23, 1895.

⁶⁷Pettigrew to C.A. Jewett, Sioux Falls, December 15, 1894, Pettigrew Papers.

⁶⁸Pettigrew to A.C. Johnson, Pierre, February 1, 1895, in ibid.

floor leaders urging them to support the measure, but he was ignored. Furthermore, he was severely criticized in Republican newspapers for alleged "interference" in legislative matters. In spite of this he maintained his position, declaring that he was ready to do whatever was necessary to bring about favorable action on the bill.⁶⁹ Pettigrew's influence, however, would not stretch so far. The railroad bill died in committee.⁷⁰ Commenting on the result Pettigrew wrote: "I am much surprised that the railroad lobby could go there and manipulate everybody; it is certainly astonishing. My sympathy is with the people on every and all questions."⁷¹ So outspoken did Pettigrew become on the question of railroad legislation that the Populists began to predict that he would soon abandon the Republicans. They were aware of his growing disagreement with his party on both the railroad and silver questions. Thus Loucks' Dakota Ruralist declared in December, 1895, that Pettigrew would soon be joining the Populist ranks.⁷²

⁶⁹Pettigrew to Jobbers and Manufacturers Association of Sioux Falls, February 6, 1895, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷⁰South Dakota Journal of the Senate (1895), index to bills, x, xi.

⁷¹Pettigrew to C.A. Soderburg, Sioux Falls, March 16, 1895, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷²Quoted in Schell, South Dakota, 234.

CHAPTER VII

A SILVER REPUBLICAN

In the spring of 1895 Richard Pettigrew once more found himself in a difficult position. In Washington he was viewed as one of those who was rapidly drifting away from the Republican fold. In South Dakota his control of party machinery was greatly weakened because of his stand on the railroad bill during the last legislative session. Yet he made no move to recant from the unorthodox position he had taken. He believed in regulatory legislation aimed at railroads and other large business concerns. He believed in free silver. The latter, he thought, must be accepted as soon as possible if the economy of the nation was to survive. The American banking system, declared the Senator, was organized so as to take from the producer the result of his efforts, and to control the volume of currency to the advantage of the organizers and managers of industry. This system was based upon the maintenance of a small volume of currency. It was the system of the Republican party and there could be no hope for relief for the agricultural classes while

that party was in power.¹ That this was now Pettigrew's political philosophy, there can be no doubt. It appears in his correspondence and in his speeches. He was committed to these principles as he had never been before. Yet he still sought to gain political advantage. "In the next [presidential] campaign," he wrote, "we are going to try to nominate a silver Republican." He was already at work on the project and thought the West was shortly to be joined by certain silver advocates in the East and South to form an organization which would control the Republican convention of 1896.²

Pettigrew's first choice for President was William B. Allison of Iowa, whose name had long been prominently associated with the cause of free silver.³ "With a man from the Northwest in the field," wrote Pettigrew, "we will be able to defeat McKinley when the time comes."⁴ The South Dakotan then turned his attention to the problem of getting himself named as a delegate to the national convention which would meet in St. Louis in June, 1896. He knew that he would encounter stern opposition among his former friends in the

¹R.F. Pettigrew Manuscript, "The Monetary System," undated, Pettigrew Papers.

²Pettigrew to E.W. Caldwell, Sioux Falls, March 18, 1895, Pettigrew Papers.

³Leland L. Sage, William Boyd Allison (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1956), 255.

⁴Pettigrew to John Longstaff, Huron, January 15, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

party, but he felt, rather naively, that this opposition would not be of a personal nature. Instead, he expected it to be based entirely on issues like railroad rate regulation and free silver. A.B. Kittridge and Nye Phillips of Sioux Falls were now both on the other side of the political fence because of the railroad bill controversy, and Republican newspapers around the state were not so friendly to Pettigrew as they had been in the past.⁵ Although the Senator made specific attempts to reconcile himself with his former friends prior to the opening of the state convention, all efforts failed,⁶ and he was forced to enter into a vigorous correspondence with men he had previously considered his enemies hoping to develop some support as rapidly as possible.⁷

Pettigrew believed, and rightly so, that a combination had been formed against him to get control of the Republican party. The new Combine was led by Kittridge and Phillips, both of whom were employees of the Milwaukee Railroad Company. "It looks as if they will succeed," wrote Pettigrew, "and will probably defeat me as a delegate to the St. Louis

⁵Pettigrew to H.G. Fuller, Pierre, January 30, 1896, in ibid. Also see the files of such newspapers as the Sioux Falls Press, Huronite and Aberdeen Daily News.

⁶Pettigrew to C.G. Sherwood, Clark, South Dakota, February 3, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷Pettigrew to Coe I. Crawford, Pierre, January 30, 1896, in ibid.

Convention. The people are apathetic and the railroad has agreed to furnish them with all the money they need."⁸ It is interesting to note that now for the first time in his career Pettigrew was genuinely alarmed by intra-party opposition to his leadership. But he declared repeatedly that he wanted to push the fight for free silver and would remain a candidate for delegate.⁹ Pettigrew wanted the state convention to be held as early as possible and in a city east of the Missouri River. Here he was successful as the convention to nominate delegates was called to meet in Huron in March. By the middle of February, however, Pettigrew claimed to have given up hope of being made a delegate to the national convention. "This does not bother me much," he wrote. "I desired to go so that I could help frame a platform which would allow silver Republicans to remain in the party." Pettigrew felt that if this were not done, the silverites, including himself, would be forced to leave that party, and thus the state would be lost.¹⁰ "I am inclined," he wrote, "to think we had better let them go ahead and name their whole ticket, for with such a row as this in the Republican party, how can we elect any ticket? And is it not better for

⁸Pettigrew to Thomas H. Brown, Sioux Falls, February 4, 1896, in ibid.

⁹Pettigrew to J.W. Shannon, Huron, February 4, 1896, in ibid.

¹⁰Pettigrew to William T. LaFollette, Chamberlain, February 10, 1896, in ibid.

them to be defeated than ourselves?"¹¹

When the nominating convention convened in Huron, however, Pettigrew was still a candidate for delegate, despite the fact that anti-silver men were in control.¹² The Senator, however, cleverly avoided making free silver the major issue, substituting in its stead railroad legislation, and was elected a delegate to the national convention. His opponents thought they had bound him to the will of the majority by extracting a pledge from all delegates to support the national ticket, whatever the outcome of the national convention, but Pettigrew disclaimed any obligation to support a "sound money" platform and declared himself to favor free silver now more than ever.¹³

Immediately after the adjournment of the convention, A.B. Kittridge wrote jubilantly to ex-governor Mellette that the delegates were tied by an "iron-clad" oath to support McKinley and endorse sound money. "By a resolution aimed directly at Senator Pettigrew," said Kittridge, "the Senator was compelled to take the floor and agree to stand by these instructions. It would have been comparatively easy to defeat his election as a delegate, but upon the advice of

¹¹Pettigrew to Conklin, February 4, 1896, in ibid.

¹²Yankton Press and Dakotan, March 26, 1896.

¹³Pettigrew to Perry S. Heath, Cincinnati, April 11, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

'friends' we concluded the above was sufficient."¹⁴

Pettigrew, on the other hand, gave the situation an entirely different connotation. "I am free," he boasted, "as a delegate to the St. Louis Convention to work for a silver plank in the platform. . . . We did not endorse sound money and. . . . I hope to be chairman of the delegation and secure a plank at St. Louis that will enable an honest silver man to support the Republican ticket."¹⁵ The Senator believed that his next move was to attempt to gain control of the state party convention which would meet in Aberdeen in July. He wrote to Moody that he had undertaken to harmonize things at Huron and had even "agreed to the platform." Nevertheless, his opponents were now assailing him in the newspapers. This course could only do damage to the party, he concluded.¹⁶ To another of his confidants he wrote, "We have got to destroy the machine in South Dakota, or have the machine destroy us."¹⁷ Pettigrew was now clearly "on the other side of the fence."

¹⁴ Kittridge to Mellette, March 30, 1896, Mellette Papers.

¹⁵ Pettigrew to Frank C. Day, Fairmont, April 2, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁶ Pettigrew to Moody, Deadwood, April 2, 1896, in ibid.

¹⁷ Pettigrew to Joseph Paul, Webster, South Dakota, April 2, 1896, in ibid.

"We must begin to organize for the Aberdeen Convention all over the state," wrote Pettigrew to B.H. Lien of Sioux Falls. "If we want to control it we must not go up there, as we did to Huron, without any definite purpose, but we must know that we have the votes to control the convention."¹⁸ Pettigrew wrote many letters to such "progressive silverites" as Oscar Gifford, Samuel Elrod, and Lien, but there is a glaring absence of any letters to Kittridge, Phillips, W.B. Sterling and other members of the machine with whom he had formerly been so closely associated.

At the same time that Pettigrew fought so valiantly to control the South Dakota Republican machine for the silverites, he attempted to convince the party's national leaders that he supported the candidacy of William McKinley. Allison's star had apparently fallen well before the time of the national convention and Pettigrew wrote to Mark Hanna that McKinley would receive his "loyal support."¹⁹ Pettigrew was willing at this point to identify himself with any party nominee if he could force a free silver plank into the platform.²⁰ However, he was not convinced that McKinley had

¹⁸Pettigrew to Lien, Sioux Falls, April 3, 1896, in ibid.

¹⁹Pettigrew to Marcus A. Hanna, Cleveland, April 3, 1896, in ibid.

²⁰Pettigrew to Oscar S. Gifford, Canton, South Dakota, April 3, 1896, in ibid.

the nomination "in the bag." "It's hard to tell who will be nominated," declared Pettigrew, "and strange events may occur before November. There is a great feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction pervading the minds of all people and it is hard to tell what may come of it."²¹

Pettigrew was probably sincere in his belief that the money question had evoked a "great feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction" among the people of South Dakota. He feared that the Republicans would be unable to carry the state in the election if a gold plank were adopted. "If this occurs," wrote Pettigrew, "the people will disregard old party affiliations and stream to the banners of Populism."²²

Perry S. Heath of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette visited with Pettigrew in Washington during April, 1896. Heath was now leading member in the McKinley-Hanna organization and was later to play a significant part in the distribution of "sound money" literature to the voters.²³ Apparently acting for McKinley, he offered to guarantee Pettigrew complete control of South Dakota patronage and "very much more than that," in exchange for support at the

²¹Pettigrew to E.W. Miller, Elk Point, April 3, 1896, in ibid.

²²Pettigrew to Perry S. Heath, April 8, 1896, in ibid.

²³Dictionary of American Biography, VIII, "Perry Sanford Heath," 489-490.

national convention.²⁴ Since Heath and his associates were well aware of Pettigrew's position on the money question, it follows that this offer was an attempt to bribe Pettigrew into supporting the gold faction of the Republican party. The refusal of the Senator to accept the bait reflects his devotion to free silver since absolute control of state patronage had always been his political goal.

On April 28, 1896 Pettigrew wrote to J.W. Shannon of Huron, publisher of the Huronite, setting forth his position on the eve of the national convention:²⁵

I want to state to you confidentially that the situation is decidedly mixed, and that our friend McKinley hasn't a sure thing on the nomination, although of course I shall support him loyally and faithfully in accordance with the instructions given, but if that convention declares for a gold standard, I shall talk with my friends before I decide what I shall do. I will not do anything rash, but it will be very hard for me to support such a platform and I do not believe I shall do it.

Pettigrew probably knew by this time that there was little hope for silver at the national convention. Thus his decision to leave the party was made more easily. Nevertheless, he wrote shortly before going to St. Louis: "It is a hard thing to leave a party we have acted with all our lives. But there is a duty greater than our

²⁴Pettigrew to E.W. Caldwell, Sioux Falls, April 9, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

²⁵Pettigrew to Shannon, April 29, 1896, in ibid.

obligation to the Republican party."²⁶ The final decision had been made. If the Republicans would abandon silver, Pettigrew would abandon the party.

Pettigrew had also decided to drop his plan to gain control of the state convention at Aberdeen. Instead he began to correspond with Henry L. Loucks, apparently in anticipation of Republican refusal to honor free silver. Loucks was now President of the National Farmers' Alliance and chief of the Populist political machine in South Dakota. Although the two had been bitter opponents until 1895, Pettigrew's stand on free silver and the railroad question apparently convinced Loucks of his sincerity,²⁷ and from this point the two men began to confer regularly on matters of political strategy.

Meanwhile, on the national scene, interest centered on the developing contest for the Republican nomination. In addition to McKinley and Allison, Levi P. Morton of New York, Thomas B. Reed of Pennsylvania and Cushman K. Davis of Minnesota were prominently mentioned. By convention time, however, no one had a chance to wrest the nomination from McKinley. Marcus A. Hanna had planned too well. From the very beginning of the campaign Hanna controlled the national

²⁶Pettigrew to X, Canton, South Dakota, June 9, 1896, in ibid.

²⁷Dictionary of American Biography, XI, "Henry Langford Loucks," 426.

committee. He had pledges from thirty-five of the fifty members agreeing to "stand firm for the right." That is, to support William McKinley. Hanna also had gained control of many state delegations prior to the convention, especially in the South. The chairmen of the various state and congressional committees were instructed to maintain control of the local conventions at all costs. These officers certified the election of McKinley men as delegates no matter what the outcome of the balloting.

At the same time, the friends of Allison, Reed and Morton also attempted to stir up support in the South, but they relied on the obsolete method of controlling the majority of the delegates to the state conventions. When the anti-McKinleyites in many states realized that steamroller tactics were being employed, they had no recourse except to bolt and hold conventions of their own. Thus when Pettigrew and the other Republican "renegades" heard that certain states were "good," they had actually received news of these bolting groups. Of course, at St. Louis, the credentials committee refused to seat "renegade" delegations, and McKinley was for all practical purposes nominated before the convention began.²⁸

Once the matter of securing delegates had been

²⁸ Arthur Wallace Dunn, From Harrison to Harding (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1922), 171-177. Also see Margaret Leech, In the Days of McKinley (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 62-63.

settled, Hanna turned to the platform. The manager favored the insertion of a plank which would allow silverites to remain in the party even though McKinley were nominated. Here he was not so successful because the platform committee led by Herman H. Kohlsaas of Illinois drafted a plank stating unequivocally the opposition of the party to the free coinage of silver. The rough draft of the plank was submitted to McKinley and approved before being inserted in the final draft of the platform. Thus, despite the objections of Hanna, the loss to the party of the Western silver men was also assured in advance.²⁹

Henry M. Teller, still the guiding light of the silver forces, had been planning his strategy for many months. He sought to organize the insurgent Republicans well enough to force the party to adopt a silver plank. His activities, however, were apparently confined to the Rocky Mountain area and did not include the Pettigrewites of South Dakota. Teller's plan was to introduce a silver resolution and demand its adoption. If the convention refused he would bolt; followed, he hoped, by a large number of delegates. His only chance of success was based upon the hope that the insurgents could rally enough support to force the party leaders to accept their demands or face a ruinous split.³⁰

²⁹Thomas Beer, Hanna (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929), 143.

³⁰Elmer Ellis, Henry Moore Teller (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1941), 252, 261.

Richard Pettigrew, for his part, still deemed it vital to his cause that he be made chairman of the South Dakota delegation. But when the delegates formally organized after arriving in St. Louis, he was not given that honor. Five of the eight delegates were strict machine men and opposed the Senator at every turn. The humiliation and fury experienced by Pettigrew was mirrored in the Sioux Falls Press:³¹

The South Dakota delegation met in St. Louis and proceeded to carry through the Kittridge program. Every effort was made by the Combine to humiliate the Senator. The Combine men were French, Williams, Lucas Snead and Sherwood. Only Meacham and Mizener stood by Senator Pettigrew. French was elected chairman and Williams, the "gold bug" banker from Webster was elected to the resolutions committee.

The fireworks began on the second day of the convention when the platform was submitted to the delegates for approval. Senator Teller, who had been the lone silverite on the resolutions committee, took this opportunity to make his move. He submitted a minority report demanding that a silver plank be added to the platform. It was signed by several of the silver men attending the convention, including Pettigrew. Teller knew very well that the minority report would be defeated. Therefore, he used the opportunity to present an emotional appeal for all silverites to rally to the call, and he concluded by announcing his official departure from the Republican party. When Teller had finished, Joseph B. Foraker

³¹Sioux Falls Press, June 16, 1896.

of Ohio immediately moved that the minority report be laid on the table. Teller asked for a rollcall vote on this motion and his demand was accepted. The vote was 818 1/2 for to 105 1/2 against, with six of Pettigrew's colleagues from South Dakota voting to table the resolution. After the vote Teller rose and with great dignity made his way out of the convention hall followed by Senators Pettigrew, Cannon of Utah, DuBois of Idaho and several others. As the silverites walked slowly toward the exit they were booed and hissed by their former comrades; and someone in the balcony began to sing, "Goodbye, My Lover, Goodbye." The parting of the ways had come.³²

Back in South Dakota, the Sioux Falls Press devoted a great deal of space to the events in St. Louis. The paper declared that Senator Pettigrew after mature deliberation, had concluded it was no longer possible for him to support the gold standard platform of the Republican party. Pettigrew believed, declared the Press, that Wall Street and the financiers of Great Britain controlled the party and its conventions. Thus he could envision no relief for the laboring classes of America if the Republicans were allowed to remain in power.

The Press expressed its deepest respect for Pettigrew,

³²New York Tribune, June 19, 1896.

and his beliefs but went on to declare that it could not endorse his move. Editor Caldwell stated that the paper would support Pettigrew without hesitation as long as he remained within the Republican party, but if free silver carried the Senator out of the party, the association must end because "honest patriotism and duty can best be served within the Republican party."³³

The following day the Press carried a statement issued by Pettigrew containing his explanation for leaving the convention. The reasons given were those commonly enunciated by silver men: "Maintenance of the gold standard may result in a further decline in prices to the utter ruin of all producers of wealth. . . . I believe that the gold of the world is cornered by the professional creditors of the world who hold . . . bonds, mortgages, and other credits; and for people already debtors to multiply those . . . is the height of folly."³⁴

Meanwhile, after leaving the convention, the insurgents met formally to organize the Silver Republican party. They issued an address to all the silver men in the country urging them to unite behind the candidacy of Henry M. Teller. They were interested in the forthcoming convention of the Democratic party, where they hoped Teller

³³ Sioux Falls Press, June 18, 1896.

³⁴ Ibid., June 19, 1896.

might be nominated for President. To no one's surprise, shortly after the Silver Republicans issued their statement, H.E. Taubeneck, chairman of the Populist National Committee, came out in favor of Teller, and thus on the eve of the Democratic Convention the Silver Republicans and the Populists were agreed that their next move was to induce the Democrats to name Teller as their candidate. If this failed they would be forced to nominate him through their own parties, for to support a regular Democrat, even though he might be pledged to free silver would mean political suicide. To force Teller upon the Democrats, therefore, was their one chance of success.

To implement their plans the insurgents attempted to gather support for their man from among the leading Silver Democrats. Senator DuBois went to Springfield, Illinois, to interview Governor Altgeld, while Pettigrew journeyed to Arkansas hoping to enlist the aid of Senator James K. Jones. Pettigrew returned to Chicago in company with Jones and wrote Teller that Jones might support his nomination. "It all depends upon Illinois and Ohio," wrote Pettigrew. "If they will say that you can carry those states, you will be nominated."³⁵ Unfortunately, Teller did not take his own candidacy seriously. He thought his nomination by the Democrats would be "injudicious" because of his recent

³⁵ Ellis, Henry Moore Teller, 262-269.

separation from the Republicans. Still, his disciples hoped to amend his attitude before the opening of the convention, and Senator DuBois wrote him that:³⁶

The serious obstacle which confronts me is the statement, repeatedly made, that you will not accept the nomination at the hands of this convention. . . . Pettigrew . . . and other loyal friends insist that if we undertake to support a Democratic candidate it will destroy them and the cause of silver.

Meanwhile, Pettigrew was kept busy analyzing the effect of his action on South Dakota politics. He received hundreds of letters and telegrams from all sections of the state and from people representing all shades of political belief. The vast majority of these messages endorsed his action in glowing terms. One telegram arrived from V.P. Ross of Yankton which declared that the people of Yankton, Bon Homme, Clay and Hutchinson Counties were in favor of silver.³⁷ Another came from Freeman Knowles, Populist editor of the Deadwood Independent, and candidate for Congress. "Men of both parties in the Hills," wrote Knowles, "congratulate you on your noble stand. This entire section favors your action and nine-tenths of the people favor free coinage even though the machine denies it."³⁸

³⁶ Ibid., 270.

³⁷ V.P. Ross to Pettigrew, telegram, June 19, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

³⁸ Knowles to Pettigrew, June 22, 1896, in ibid.

From Iowa one B.V. Leonard wrote the Senator, "Thousands applaud your course. . . ." ³⁹ E.H. Sellers, President of the National Council of Patriotic Associations of the United States, boasted to Pettigrew that he represented four million voters and suggested that Pettigrew join with him to form a new party to be called the "American Party of the Republic." ⁴⁰ More encouraging was a communication from J.V. Teibil, Chairman of the South Dakota State Democratic Committee, who lauded Pettigrew for his action and declared that the Senator's bolt had gained him many additional friends throughout the state. ⁴¹ Mark D. Scott, publisher of the Sioux Falls Journal, commended Pettigrew with the encouraging news that many residents of Minnehaha County were in favor of his stand, ⁴² while his friend Cyrus Walts was more specific. ". . . The people of Sioux Falls and Minnehaha County . . . praise your action. The country people are ten to one for you and the city two or three to one." ⁴³ C.J. Johnson, a leading Kansas Democrat, wrote the Senator: ⁴⁴

I am glad to see you bolted the Republican convention.

³⁹ Leonard to Pettigrew, June 20, 1896, in ibid.

⁴⁰ Sellers to Pettigrew, June 22, 1896, in ibid.

⁴¹ Teibel to Pettigrew, June 23, 1896, in ibid.

⁴² Scott to Pettigrew, June 20, 1896, in ibid.

⁴³ Walts to Pettigrew, June 23, 1896, in ibid.

⁴⁴ Johnson to Pettigrew, June 20, 1896, in ibid.

I am glad you, Teller and the others had the manhood and loyalty to the American people to protest against a system that has empoverished the American people. . . . If a coalition can be made of all the silver men . . . we will be able to sweep out the gold bugs and have prosperity once more.

Pettigrew also received a series of letters from W.S. Bowen, publisher of the Yankton Press and Dakotan. "You have long halted between conscience and party," wrote Bowen on June 19. "Conscience seems to have won out at St. Louis, and the machine is horrified. I believe three-fifths of the state will go for silver."⁴⁵ Three days later Bowen wrote that the best chance of success would be for a bolt of the Republican state convention to be organized:⁴⁶

There will not be a silver majority at the convention, but there will probably be a fairly large silver following. The convention will be controlled by the machine. I have conferred with Populist leaders and they are willing to coalesce on almost any terms. They are well organized in every county and have about 27,000 votes. I suggest you write to trustworthy friends over the state at once and advise a silverite bolt at Aberdeen and the creation of a silver convention in another hall. It might be best to appoint a discreet committee of eight or ten persons to wait upon the Populist convention at Huron and arrange a ticket with that organization.

Bowen soon wrote to Pettigrew again: "The prairies are ablaze with bimetallism and Pettigrewism. There is great enthusiasm for you," wrote the publisher. "The officeholders

⁴⁵ Bowen to Pettigrew, June 19, 1896, in ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., June 22, 1896, in ibid.

do not participate in this and are exceedingly anxious about their tenure. To abandon the platform of the Republican Party means defeat at the next convention. To adhere to the platform means defeat in November."⁴⁷ And in another two days Bowen reported: "The gold standard men oppose you but sympathy for silver is strong among the masses especially farmers. Many leading Germans and Norwegians in this [Yankton] County are behind you. The country areas seem to be wholly for silver."⁴⁸

Thus Senator Pettigrew was bolstered by reports of overwhelming support from his constituents. His sympathy for free silver seemed to have been vindicated in the most gratifying manner, and political success seemed a certainty, as the delegates to the Republican State Convention began to gather in Aberdeen on July 10. True to Bowen's prediction the gold men were in the majority and when a free coinage resolution was introduced by Pettigrew's friend C.H. Palmer of Minnehaha County, it lost by a vote of 499 to 103. Immediately, the silverites left the convention declaring they intended to meet with the Populists later in the month.⁴⁹ The Republicans proceeded to draw up a platform favoring the gold standard. They did, however, insert planks declaring

⁴⁷ Ibid., June 24, 1896, in ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., June 26, 1896, in ibid.

⁴⁹ Yankton Press and Dakotan, July 10, 1896.

themselves to be against trusts and combines, and in favor of stricter railroad legislation.⁵⁰ Their ticket was headed by A.O. Ringsrud of Elk Point for Governor.⁵¹

The Populists convened in Huron on July 14. The Silver Republicans, including Senator Pettigrew met at the same time to decide what course they would pursue. According to previously laid plans, they concluded that if the proponents of free silver from all parties could unite on one ticket, it would be possible to defeat the "gold bug" Republicans. Therefore, the Silver Republicans endorsed the Populist ticket.⁵² On July 15, Senator Pettigrew addressed the convention and the Sioux Falls Press reported that his appearance was the sensation of the day. He would not resign from the Senate, he declared, no matter what charges the Republicans might hurl against him. Their demands that he must abandon his seat for refusal to stand on the party platform would be ignored. "I will continue to fight against Wall Street criminals and gamblers under the banners of Populism," roared the Senator.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid., July 11, 1896.

⁵¹ South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 314.

⁵² Huronite, July 14, 1896.

⁵³ Sioux Falls Press, July 15, 1896.

Meanwhile, the Democratic National Convention had assembled in Chicago on July 7. Unlike the Republicans at St. Louis, they had no idea who they would nominate for President.⁵⁴ Even though the Silver Democrats were in control of the proceedings they never gave serious attention to the candidacy of Senator Teller, since he was, after all, a Republican.⁵⁵ Among the foremost contenders were William C. Whitney of New York, standard bearer of the Democratic hard-money forces, and Richard P. Bland of Missouri, spokesman for the silverites.⁵⁶ However, William Jennings Bryan, former Congressman from Nebraska, had been working hard for the nomination behind the scenes. He had the support of such popular organizations as the National Silver League and the American Bimetallic League, but more important, he had the backing of the silver faction of the Nebraska Democrats.⁵⁷

On the second day of the convention the delegates voted to oust the gold delegation from Nebraska which action

⁵⁴Faulkner, Politics, Reform and Expansion, 192.

⁵⁵Ibid., 193.

⁵⁶Allan Nevins, Grover Cleveland: A Portrait in Courage (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1933), 689-701.

⁵⁷Paxton Hibben, The Peerless Leader, William Jennings Bryan (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1929), 175-177.

assured Bryan a seat. From that point the entire proceeding assumed the form of a polemical society for free silver. After the reading of the platform, which had been prepared by John P. Altgeld, the gold men offered amendments. This, of course, had been expected and the debate which ensued set the stage for Bryan to deliver his well prepared and classic "Cross of Gold" speech. This masterpiece, combined with the months of planning which had gone before, won the nomination for the Nebraskan.⁵⁸

Back in South Dakota the nomination of Bryan and the overwhelming endorsement of silver by the Democrats had certain effects on Populist strategy. At the state convention a resolution was introduced calling for the endorsement of Bryan as Populist candidate for President. This resolution was hotly contested by those who feared that fusion would serve only to destroy the Populist party as an independent political organization. Nevertheless, it was finally carried by the overwhelming vote of 499 to 71.⁵⁹ The South Dakota Populists then instructed their delegates to the Populist National Convention to favor the endorsement of Bryan as the candidate of the party. However, a dispute arose when Pettigrew and several others opposed the acceptance of Bryan in favor of a separate candidate. In order to get an

⁵⁸Faulkner, Politics, Reform and Expansion, 193-196.

⁵⁹Aberdeen Daily News, July 15, 1896.

agreement Senator DuBois summoned Pettigrew to Manitou Springs, Colorado, where they conferred with Teller. After much persuasion DuBois and Teller convinced Pettigrew that supporting Bryan was the correct move.⁶⁰ Teller then wrote to Bryan that he could expect complete support from the Silver Republicans in the West.⁶¹

In South Dakota, however, the Populists controlled the selection of candidates. Here, the positions of the two parties were reversed for it was the Democratic party which fused with the Populists. The most prominent candidate for governor was Andrew E. Lee of Vermillion, a successful merchant. He favored free silver and the regulation of railroads and other corporations by the state. Moreover, he was eager to run. Lee was acceptable to Pettigrew, whose acquiescence was considered necessary,⁶² and with the endorsement of the Senator, he received the nomination.⁶³ Then, shortly after the Populist convention adjourned, the Democratic State Central Committee voted to call off their pending state convention to endorse the Populist ticket.⁶⁴ It seemed quite certain that

⁶⁰Ellis, Henry Moore Teller, 275.

⁶¹Teller to Bryan, August 1, 1896, William Jennings Bryan Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁶²Lee to Pettigrew, June 22, 1896, Andrew E. Lee Papers, State University of South Dakota Museum, Vermillion, South Dakota; also State Historical Society Museum, Pierre, South Dakota.

⁶³Aberdeen Daily News, July 15, 1896.

⁶⁴Yankton Press and Dakotan, August 9, 1896.

the forces of free silver would control the state in the coming elections.

The campaign of 1896 was the most hotly contested in the history of South Dakota. The issues were well defined: free silver versus the gold standard, protection versus free trade, and railroad rate regulation versus laissez faire.. In addition, the forces of prohibition and license were factors which could not be ignored. For the most part the former were with the fusionists and the latter with the Republicans.

The Republican machine was torn apart over the silver issue and was further weakened by the loss of Pettigrew and his followers. In addition, the fusionists hurled the first line of their oratorical forces into the fray. Bryan himself toured the state in September, stopping to speak at Sioux Falls and the farming communities of Salem, Vilas, Huron, Redfield and Aberdeen. His speeches on behalf of silver attracted large crowds of the curious and dedicated who screamed their approval of his oratory with unrestrained enthusiasm.⁶⁵ Pettigrew and Lee also stumped the state in behalf of free silver, speaking to large crowds wherever they went. On October 31, the "Grand Old Man" himself, Henry Moore Teller, appeared to the rejoicing multitudes. Indeed the cause of free silver was well attended.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 45.

⁶⁶G.W. Smith, South Dakota: Its History and Its People (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915), 674-675.

Despite the magnificent efforts of the fusionists they nearly lost the state. Bryan won by only 183 votes.⁶⁷ Lee carried 35 of the 61 counties but defeated Ringsrud by only 319 votes. However, the Republicans won lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor, treasurer, superintendent of public instruction and commissioner of school lands. In the congressional race, Populist Freeman Knowles won a seat in the House by a slim margin, but his colleague John E. Kelley was defeated.⁶⁸ In the legislature the fusionists won a majority of nineteen. Fifty-three Republicans, nine Democrats, and seventy free silverites were elected. The latter category included Populists and Silver Republicans as well as some Democrats.⁶⁹ The Republicans charged fraud in the election and threatened contests, but these never materialized.⁷⁰

Obviously, the election was not an unqualified success for Pettigrew and the Populists. It is interesting to note that the narrow victories of Governor Lee and Knowles came about not because of a significant reduction in the number of Republican votes, but because of the great increase in the

⁶⁷E.E. Robinson, The Presidential Vote, 1896-1932 (Stanford: The Stanford University Press, 1934), 317.

⁶⁸South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 315-321.

⁶⁹Smith, South Dakota, 675.

⁷⁰Aberdeen Daily News, November 17, 1896.

Populist vote. Most of this increase can be accounted for by the combination of the Populist and Democratic parties and one is thus forced to conclude that despite the great propaganda campaign carried on by the silverites, they simply did not succeed in changing the votes of many regular Republicans. Certainly it is true that Pettigrew and many like him were sincerely committed to the principle of free coinage, but apparently the "Battle of the Standards" was not the burning issue among the rank-and-file voters that it has been made by some writers. As they were to demonstrate in the coming months, the fusionists in the legislature were much more interested in railroad regulation than in the currency question and it was for this reason that many of them were elected. This is by no means to say, however, that adherence to the principle of free silver among political leaders was a sham. Pettigrew, for one, did not drop his contention that the existing monetary system was inequitable. Far from it, he became even more convinced of the correctness of his position as time went on.

Although he was disappointed in the results of the election, Pettigrew felt that it might still be possible for the Populists to gain complete control of the state through the manipulation of patronage. This required, however, that another fusionist be elected to the United States Senate. James H. Kyle, whose term was about to expire, was anxious for re-election, but Pettigrew, Lee and most of the other fusionist leaders opposed him, since it had been rumored that

he was negotiating with the Republicans.⁷¹ According to the reports, an understanding had been reached whereby Kyle would receive Republican support for re-election in return for which he would vote with the G.O.P. and receive committee assignments from it in Congress.⁷²

When the balloting began it was evident that the Republicans had united in support of one candidate while the fusionists had not. Congressman John Pickler, now under no political obligation to Pettigrew, was selected as the Republican candidate at a caucus held on January 14, 1897.⁷³ However, when formal nominations opened in the state senate five days later the fusionists presented four candidates: Henry L. Loucks, F.M. Goodykoontz, A.J. Plowman, and Kyle.⁷⁴ The night before they had gone through twenty-nine ballots in caucus but were unable to unite on a single candidate.⁷⁵ Senator Pettigrew was offered the nomination if he would resign the seat he held, but declined. His term of office would not end until 1901 and he was fearful of the outcome of

⁷¹ Lee to T. Gunderson, Centerville, South Dakota, February 2, 1897, Lee Papers.

⁷² Pettigrew Diary, Notes and Comments on Men and Events, January 5, 1897, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷³ Yankton Press and Dakotan, January 14, 1897.

⁷⁴ South Dakota Senate Journal, (1897), 300.

⁷⁵ Aberdeen Daily News, January 18, 1897.

this election due to the split in the fusionist ranks. The Senator was ready, however, with an attack upon the Republicans if they should swing their support to Kyle, since he knew Kyle opposed protection. "The absurdity of the Republicans voting for him is apparent," he wrote, "The excuse that they are doing it to spite me is not placing the party in the state in a very good light."⁷⁶

The senatorial election remained unsettled for several weeks. Pettigrew counselled all the fusionist candidates to drop out of the race and select a new candidate by caucus since control of the state depended on the outcome. Much to his chagrin, only Loucks complied. Shortly after, the situation was complicated further by the introduction of a new factor. The Democratic National Committee, anxious to have a fusionist elected, sent A.C. Johnson of Pierre to help settle matters, and the anti-Kyle men were instructed to place themselves under his orders.⁷⁷ Soon, however, Pettigrew and Lee began to suspect that Johnson was actually working in favor of Kyle, thinking him to be the only fusionist candidate with a chance for election.⁷⁸ Within a week after

⁷⁶ Pettigrew to U.S.G. Cherry, December 18, 1896, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷⁷ Aberdeen Daily News, February 5, 1897; Pettigrew to Loucks, March 2, 1897, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷⁸ Aberdeen Daily News, February 6, 1897.

the arrival of Johnson, Governor Lee was certain that their suspicions were correct. Nevertheless, the Governor assured Pettigrew that Kyle would not win.⁷⁹

During the week that followed, the situation remained unchanged. The fusionists were hopelessly split and the Republicans could not muster enough votes to elect Pickler. Suddenly, however, on February 18, 1897, Kyle was re-elected. In an overnight move he had gained the support of fifty-two of the fifty-four Republicans, in addition to ten Populists and three Democrats.⁸⁰ With a total of sixty-five votes Kyle was victorious over his nearest rivals Goodykoontz and Plowman.⁸¹ Governor Lee was beside himself with anger. "It was the foulest and dirtiest piece of work I have ever seen," he wrote Pettigrew. "In addition to the complete defection of Kyle, the Republicans 'bought' thirteen votes which are now aligned against us on all other questions."

Lee feared that the fusionists would now be unable to gain control of the patronage which he and Pettigrew thought to be so vital to control of the state. Without the support of the thirteen fusionist legislators who had voted for Kyle, Lee would be unable to get his appointments approved. He was most discouraged and felt that his administration was

⁷⁹Lee to Pettigrew, February 11, 1897, Lee Papers.

⁸⁰Aberdeen Daily News, February 18, 1897.

⁸¹South Dakota Senate Journal (1897), 782-787.

doomed to failure. On February 20, 1897, the Populists in the legislature held an indignation meeting and read Senator Kyle out of the party.⁸² But it gained them nothing.

Kyle saw no inconsistency in his position. He claimed that he had in no way surrendered his stand on important public issues by his "understanding" with the Republicans. He denounced the action of a "small clique of selfish men," for attacks upon himself and his friends, and for expelling him from the party "I helped to found." The Populist party could not hope for success, he declared, if left under the "present dictatorship." He predicted the disintegration of the party unless the situation were changed.⁸³

Senator Pettigrew, of course, had watched the senatorial election in South Dakota closely, for upon it his next move depended. If a fusionist had been elected he intended to declare his complete conversion to Populism. As matters stood, however, his confidence in the new party was shaken and he decided to continue as a Silver Republican. Thinking of the election of 1900, Pettigrew wrote to his friends in South Dakota that it was now essential to push the organization of the Silver Republican party throughout the state. "We must organize ourselves," he declared, "and become so strong as to be able to control affairs in the

⁸²Lee to Pettigrew, February 19, 1897, Lee Papers.

⁸³Yankton Press and Dakotan, February 20, 1897.

future. At least we will be able to dictate to the other political parties."⁸⁴ To Governor Lee he wrote emphatically, "Now I see no other course but to thoroughly organize the Silver Republicans."⁸⁵ But Pettigrew and Lee were unable to accelerate the momentum of the free silver bandwagon. Although his fight for railroad rate regulation made Lee personally popular, support for the fusionist forces in general disintegrated. Lee was re-elected in 1898, but he faced a legislature dominated overwhelmingly by orthodox Republicans. As the months passed, most of his support among leading state politicians fell away.

Furthermore, people were now beginning to experience the return of prosperity.⁸⁶ The price of wheat, for example, showed a general incline during the last four years of the decade, and farmers were left with little of the financial issue in their ears save an empty echo.⁸⁷ Also the war with Spain broke out in 1898, and almost the entire population of the country was caught up in the emotional frenzy which accompanied it. Richard Pettigrew, for his part, turned

⁸⁴Pettigrew to H.W. Sawyer, Miller, South Dakota, March 2, 1897, Pettigrew Papers.

⁸⁵Pettigrew to Lee, March 2, 1897, in ibid.

⁸⁶Schell, South Dakota, 239-240.

⁸⁷U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Statistics, 1936, p. 5.

to the question of "Republican Imperialism," and spent much time in violent attacks upon the Republicans "who seek to subject unwilling peoples for material gain."⁸⁸

⁸⁸Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 63.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "ANTI-IMPERIALIST"

Senator Pettigrew's fight against imperialism was his most flamboyant effort in the United States Senate. In his mind Pettigrew saw a clear connection between the forces of economic privilege in the United States and those who favored geographic expansion. To him they were linked in one great conspiracy to rob American farmers and working men of the fruits of their efforts and to subjugate helpless foreigners. He was convinced that the plutocrats of Wall Street sought overseas frontiers for exploitation, and that the vehicle through which they worked was the Republican party.¹

Pettigrew's first contact with the forces of imperialism was occasioned by the outbreak of the Hawaiian Revolution in 1892. The revolt was the work of a group of American residents in the Islands who overthrew Queen Liliuokalani and established a provisional government. American sailors and marines aided in the coup with the tacit approval of

¹R.F. Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 12-24.

Minister John H. Stevens, who justified this action on grounds that American citizens and property were endangered by the incompetency and corruption of the Royal Administration.² The motives of the revolutionaries themselves have been variously interpreted, but it appears that they were driven primarily by a desire for annexation to the United States. Those islanders who opposed the revolution claimed that it was the work of the sugar planters who wanted annexation in order to take advantage of the sugar bounty provided by the McKinley Tariff. Later research shows, however, that most of the planters actually opposed the revolution in the fear that they would be cut off from their cheap supply of Oriental labor by the ~~imm~~igration laws of the United States.³ Nevertheless, with the provisional government in power, a commission was appointed to negotiate with the Harrison Administration for the extension of American sovereignty to the Islands.⁴

The ~~com~~mission consisted of five members, of whom four were Americans and one English by birth. All were wealthy and quite ~~prom~~inent in Hawaiian political affairs.⁵ They were

²Stevens to President Harrison, January 18, 1893, Benjamin Harrison Papers, Vol. 155.

³W.A. Russ, "The Role of Sugar in the Hawaiian Revolution," Pacific Historical Review, XII (December, 1939), 339.

⁴Donald Rowland, "The Establishment of the Republic of Hawaii," Pacific Historical Review, IV (September 1935), 201.

⁵Stevens to Charles A. Foster, January 19, 1893, Benjamin Harrison Papers, Vol. 155. The members of the commission were: Lorrin A. Thurston, a former member of the

led by the able Lorrin A. Thurston who had come to this country previously to stir up public opinion in favor of annexation. He was so successful in this mission that he anticipated little difficulty for the commission in accomplishing this task.⁶ None was encountered in fact and a treaty was signed on February 14, 1893. It was then given to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which reported it favorably to the upper house on February 15. Here opposition developed. The fight was led by a group of anti-expansionist Democratic Senators assisted by the Republican Pettigrew.⁷ The objective of this group was to delay ratification of the treaty until after the inauguration of Grover Cleveland, who opposed it.⁸

The imperialist New York Tribune of Whitelaw Reid cited Senator Pettigrew as one of the leading members of the opposition. His major objections, said the paper, were that a heavy debt would have to be assumed, and that

Hawaiian Cabinet; William C. Wilder, President of the Inter-Island Steamship Company; William H. Castle, an attorney; Charles P. Carter, son of a former United States Minister to Hawaii; and Joseph Marsden, a prominent business man. Marsden was the Englishman.

⁶S.K. Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii (Harrisburg, Pa.: Archives Publishing Co., 1945), 232-233.

⁷Ibid., 235. They were: Gray, Brice, Blackburn, White of Kentucky, White of Louisiana, Coffey, Pugh, Vilas, Daniel, Berry and Palmer.

⁸George H. Knowles, "Grover Cleveland on Imperialism," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVI (September 1950), 303.

annexation would actually endanger the security of the nation by causing jealousy among other powers. To these he added his belief that the American Sugar Refining Trust was behind the drive for annexation.⁹ The Tribune demanded that the treaty be ratified before the inauguration of Cleveland. "Why is the ratification being delayed until after March 4?" asked the editor. "The people of the country are favorable and the advantages of annexation are understood by all." The paper saw great merit in a treaty which purportedly would secure the heavy capital investments of Americans in the Islands, bring the Hawaiians "orderly, honest government," and strengthen the prestige of the United States abroad.¹⁰

The Hawaiian Commission lost hope of immediate annexation in the months following the inauguration of Cleveland, and all except Thurston left the United States for home.¹¹ Meanwhile, the provisional government was faced with the problem of maintaining order while the policy of annexation was pursued. The Hawaiian leaders were convinced that it would be unwise to create a fully representative government immediately. Thus the constitution which they

⁹New York Tribune, February 27, 1893.

¹⁰Ibid., February 25, 1893.

¹¹L.A. Thurston, Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution (Honolulu, 1936), 295-296.

promulgated provided certain property qualifications.¹² The legislature was to be composed of two houses with fifteen members in each. To be eligible for membership in the lower house, the office seeker was to be required to show ownership of property worth \$1000, or show an annual income of at least \$600. Senators were required to show property holdings of at least \$3000, or an annual income of \$1200. The franchise carried even heavier restrictions. Those who desired to vote for senators were required to show ownership of \$1500 in real property, \$3000 in personal property, or an annual income of \$600. In addition, there were literacy qualifications which virtually denied the vote to most Asiatics.¹³ These qualifications proved to Senator Pettigrew's satisfaction that Hawaii was controlled by the "monied interests." Thus, he reviled the constitution. "They established an oligarchy," he wrote. "No one but the planters and their fellow businessmen could vote."¹⁴ To a certain extent these charges were true. Americans were in control of the business and economic activities of the Islands, and while some of the natives were allowed to take part in the activities of government, their

¹² Rowland, "The Establishment of the Republic of Hawaii," 213.

¹³ Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, 272.

¹⁴ Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 317-318.

influence was small.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Cleveland was determined to investigate the part which had been played in the Hawaiian coup by Americans holding official diplomatic positions. The President was especially interested in the activities of Minister John H. Stevens, who, according to rumor, had cooperated actively with the revolutionaries. To arrive at an official decision, Cleveland appointed James H. Blount to investigate, and gave him "paramount" authority regarding all matters pertaining to the Hawaiian affair.¹⁶ Congressional opponents of the Administration later called the legality of the appointment into question, and in a resolution passed December 11, 1893, they inquired whether the investigator had not been commissioned without senatorial consent.¹⁷ Soon after, in a resolution supported warmly by Pettigrew, the Judiciary Committee of the Senate was directed to report on the constitutionality of the appointment.¹⁸ Nothing, however, had been done at the time of the appointment in early 1893 and

¹⁵U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Territories, Report on House Bill 2972 to Provide Government for Hawaii, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., House Report No. 305, February 12, 1900, pp. 4-5.

¹⁶Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, 247.

¹⁷U.S. Congress, Senate, Resolution of Senator George F. Hoar Inquiring Whether Mr. Blount had been Commissioned and Sent to Hawaii Without the Consent of the Senate, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 13, December 11, 1893, pp. 1-3.

¹⁸U.S. Congress, Senate, Judiciary Committee, Resolution Directing the Committee to Report as to the Constitutionality of the Appointment of J.H. Blount, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., January 8, 1894, Senate Document No. 28, p. 1.

Blount proceeded to the islands where he arrived on March 25. His investigations lasted slightly more than four months, and his report, submitted shortly after his return in August, showed that he was in favor of the restoration of the monarchy.¹⁹ Cleveland agreed, but was embarrassed by the fact that restoration would require military operations against a government controlled by Americans. For this reason he contented himself with delegating the entire matter to Congress; and there, for a time, it rested.²⁰

The next step in the controversy as far as Senator Pettigrew was concerned came when the Senate began consideration of H.R. 4864, which came to be known as the Wilson-Gorman Revenue Bill. The measure, as presented to the Upper House, provided for the continuation of Hawaiian reciprocity which Pettigrew heartily opposed. The reciprocity treaty had originated in 1875. It provided that all raw sugar grown in the Islands could enter the United States duty free in exchange for American port privileges at Pearl Harbor. Pettigrew objected to reciprocity because he thought it was simply a device to lower the operating costs of the American Sugar Trust.²¹ He introduced an amendment to the revenue bill which was designed to nullify the treaty. It provided that

¹⁹Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, 248.

²⁰New York Tribune, December 19, 1893.

²¹Congressional Record, 53 Cong., 1 Sess, July 2, 1894, XXVI, 7060.

the reciprocity agreement of 1875, and the convention of 1884 which renewed it, should be repealed effective one year from the date of the passage of the revenue bill.²² This amendment was defeated, whereupon the Senator offered another of a similar nature which was also defeated. Thus, when the bill was finally passed, Hawaiian reciprocity was continued. Pettigrew declared:²³

I did not think the treaty would be abrogated. I did not suppose the Senate would abrogate it because if they did they would have made an insidious exception; they would have struck a blow at one trust, which would have been unfair, for all others are thoroughly taken care of in this bill [the tariff]. Without fear of hesitation the Senate seemed determined to protect every trust which has been organized in the past and . . . to vote the money of the people into the hands of the corporations.

Pettigrew's attitude toward the Wilson-Gorman Tariff Bill represented the remarkable metamorphosis which his thinking had undergone in a relatively short time. Four years before, he took little part in the debates on the McKinley Tariff after his failure to force through the duty on tin. In fact, he did not even bother to vote on the measure. Now, however, in 1894, his objections were loud:²⁴

I believe in protection, but the present bill is excessive and will promote the formation of trusts and combinations. . . . The principles of protection

²² Ibid., 7069.

²³ Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 275.

²⁴ Congressional Record, 53 Cong., 1 Sess., May 29, 1894, XXVI, 5441.

are that a nation should do its own work, and that the building of new factories augments world production, increases competition and reduces prices. But trusts . . . defeat these principles by preventing competition. The Wilson bill is a swindle in every respect.

The Senator's sudden development of an almost psychotic hatred of business combinations is difficult to explain. Reference to the subject appears seldom in his correspondence. But the fact that his changing philosophy came quickly on the heels of great financial losses and his estrangement from the Republican party might explain his growing antipathy toward "eastern financiers" and their representatives in Congress. Furthermore, Pettigrew sincerely believed that the bill would be injurious to the interests of his home state, and this accounts for his rigid opposition to the bounty on sugar. Said the Senator:²⁵

If this bill passes, the market for the South Dakota farmer in his own country will be reduced. In addition duties have been placed on goods our people must buy. The 1.25 cent bounty on sugar amounts to an annual tax of 87.5 cents per capita because each person uses about seventy pounds per year.

In some ways the fact that Pettigrew believed in the "principle of protection" is difficult to understand. Yet many people believed as he did that the tariff, if wisely constituted and administered, was good for the economy. Nevertheless, from the time when he began to suspect that it was really a part of the great conspiracy to swindle the

²⁵Ibid., 5446.

producing classes out of their just returns, Pettigrew's fanatical opposition to it was unceasing. And it must also be remembered that Pettigrew viewed domestic exploitation and expansion as one and the same conspiracy, thinking that imperialism was merely a sham to increase the need for military spending, maintaining a large standing army and navy, and increasing government purchases of armor plate from the steel trust.²⁶

During 1895, annexationist sentiment continued in the Senate. On March 2, an amendment was proposed to the diplomatic and consular appropriations bill providing that \$500,000 be set aside for the construction of a communications cable between San Francisco and Honolulu. Senator Joseph C. Blackburn of Kentucky, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Appropriations, asked that the amendment be defeated. Pettigrew agreed. He believed that the sugar trust was responsible for the proposal and that its purpose was to advance the cause of annexation. "The cable is entirely unnecessary," he declared.

The annexationists favored construction of the cable and tried to show that it would pay for itself. Pettigrew replied that the revenue from its use would probably not even be sufficient to pay for upkeep. "Their immediate aim is to connect Claus Spreckles' plantations with his refineries

²⁶Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 326, 347.

on the mainland," concluded the Senator.²⁷ Ultimately, the project failed, as neither the House nor the Senate could muster enough votes to get it attached to the appropriations bill.

Also in 1895, an abortive revolt against the government of the Republic of Hawaii again brought the subject of American intervention to the attention of Congress. Senator William V. Allen, a Populist from Nebraska, introduced a resolution providing that steps be taken by the United States to annex the Islands.²⁸ There was great opposition to this measure and as matters developed the key vote was cast by Pettigrew. He voted with the administration supporters and thus helped to defeat intervention. For this reason he was reprimanded by his own state legislature, which only a few days before had re-elected him United States Senator on the Republican ticket.²⁹ This event excited some comment from the leading newspapers in Pettigrew's home town. His apologist, the Sioux Falls Press, which only a few days before had lauded his re-election, continued its praise saying it agreed wholeheartedly with Pettigrew's objections to

²⁷Congressional Record, 53 Cong., 3 Sess., March 2, 1895, XXVII, 3077-3090.

²⁸U.S. Congress, Senate, Resolution of Senator William Allen Favoring the Annexation of Hawaii, 53 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Miscellaneous Document No. 71, January 24, 1895, p. 1.

²⁹New York Tribune, January 27, 1895.

expansion.³⁰ The Argus-Leader, on the other hand, noted with some interest that Pettigrew's relationship with the state legislature was not as congenial as it had been at the time of his first election.³¹

Throughout the succeeding months of the election year of 1896, interest in the Islands was rekindled. Speculation mounted as to the status of Hawaii if William McKinley should be elected President. Silver, however, was the primary issue in the campaign and expansion was forced to occupy a back-seat position. Nevertheless, shortly after his inauguration in 1897, McKinley signed an annexation treaty with representatives of the Hawaiian government.³² Immediate ratification, however, was again blocked by the Democrats and it appeared that they would be successful until the sudden rise of "war fever" and the outbreak of hostilities with Spain.³³

Pettigrew, who opposed the treaty, favored war against Spain, and the independence for Cuba. He went further, declaring that the administration should have recognized the belligerency of Cuba from the outset of the revolution. Had

³⁰Sioux Falls Press, January 27, 1895.

³¹Sioux Falls Argus Leader, January 28, 1895.

³²New York Tribune, June 27, 1897.

³³T.A. Bailey, "The United States and Hawaii During the Spanish American War," American Historical Review, XXXVI (April, 1931), 552-560.

this been done, he claimed, Americans could have furnished supplies to the rebels without being declared outlaws, the "Cuban Question" would have been settled, and the "Maine" would not have been destroyed. ". . . If Spain wants war we will fight to the finish," he continued. "We will strip her of every colony in the world." Pettigrew opposed, however, any thought of annexing the Spanish colonies. He would fight that as bitterly as he had fought the annexation of Hawaii.³⁴

War was declared against Spain on April 25, 1898. In the course of the conflict Pettigrew's prophecy became a reality. The colonies of Spain fell before the military power of the United States. Most important to the Hawaiian question, however, was the destruction of the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay on May 1. This exploit gave renewed hope to the proponents of annexation because with the possibility of new possessions in the Pacific, the United States would need adequate bases from which to operate. This view, coupled with the fear of Japanese encroachments in the Islands, resulted in the passage on July 6 of a joint resolution for the annexation of the Island Republic. The measure was introduced in March when war seemed imminent, but it was not until summer when victory was certain that it came to a successful vote. Pettigrew, of course, voted against the

³⁴Pettigrew to Louis McLouth, New York, March 18, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

resolution. McKinley signed it on July 7, 1898.³⁵

In the interim Pettigrew did everything in his power to prevent annexation. He was still convinced that the sugar trust was attempting to turn the situation to its own profit. He argued that the addition of tropical peoples to the nation was foolhardy and unworkable under the Constitution. Such people did not understand the American system and would constitute a danger to its existence.³⁶

More significantly, the Senator feared further extension of the power of the federal government. The wealth and political power of the nation, he repeated, were now in the hands of plutocrats who also manipulated affairs in Washington. They wanted to acquire colonies and enlarge the army and navy, but even more insidious was their desire to divert the attention of the masses from internal grievances. The attention of the people, Pettigrew argued, should not be diverted from the great economic, political and social issues of the time by launching them upon a career of conquest. The energies of the people should instead be directed toward the solution of the problems created by the concentration of power in the hands of trusts and corporations. "Manifest Destiny is the murderer of men," said Pettigrew. "It has committed more crimes and done more to oppress and wrong the

³⁵New York Tribune, July 7, 1898. In the Senate the vote was 42-21.

³⁶U.S. Congress, Senate, Lecture by Fred I. DuBois Against the Annexation of Hawaii, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 82, January 24, 1898, p. 1.

inhabitants of the world than any other attribute to which man has fallen heir."³⁷

Pettigrew offered two amendments to the joint resolution. The first was introduced on June 25 but not considered until July 6, the same day the annexation resolution was passed. It provided for the abolition of contract labor in the Islands and was designed to defeat the "evil purposes" of the sugar trust. This amendment was defeated by the vote of 41-22. The Senator immediately proposed another providing for unlimited manhood suffrage. This one was also defeated by a vote of 48-16.³⁸ Later however, Pettigrew's ideas were accepted as both Asiatic immigration and restricted suffrage were abolished.³⁹

Before the vote on the resolution Pettigrew made one final plea to the proponents of annexation. He declared that the sugar beet industry would be destroyed where it already existed and stifled in other areas, like South Dakota, where hopes were entertained for its development. "Those who vote for annexation will be voting against the sugar beet industry," he continued. "I favor the growth of

³⁷Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., June 22, 1898, XXXI, 6229-6632.

³⁸Ibid., 55 Cong., 2 Sess., June 26, 1898, XXXI, 6341; July 6, 1898, 6709-6711.

³⁹U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Immigration, Report on the Extension of Immigration Laws to Hawaii, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Report No. 1654, February 13, 1899, p. 1.

that industry. I want it to flourish in my state and other states. This cannot be if Hawaii is annexed."⁴⁰

Unfortunately, the administration had anticipated his final pleas. On January 17, the Secretary of Agriculture declared that Hawaiian sugar would not offer serious competition to domestic producers. His report showed that since 1893 Hawaiian sugar had equaled about 9 per cent of the total imported while domestic consumption of beet sugar had increased from 18 per cent to 37 per cent during the same period.⁴¹ Thus Pettigrew's argument was repudiated, and he was finally forced to acknowledge that his position was hopeless. "When the Spanish War fever swept the country I knew the fight on the Hawaiian Treaty was lost," he later wrote.⁴²

Meanwhile the war with Spain led to its swift and inevitable conclusion. An armistice was declared on August 13, and McKinley immediately appointed a commission to negotiate with the enemy. The members of the commission were: William R. Day, Secretary of State; Whitelaw Reid, publisher of the New York Tribune; and Senators Cushman K. Davis of

⁴⁰Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., July 2, 1898, XXXI, 6607-6625.

⁴¹U.S. Congress, Senate, Opinion of the Secretary of Agriculture on the Effect Which the Importation of Hawaiian Sugar Would Have on the Sugar Beet Industry in the United States, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 63, February 17, 1898, pp. 1-4.

⁴²Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 344.

Minnesota, William Frye of Maine and George Gray of Delaware. They were instructed to demand that Spain relinquish Cuba, cede Puerto Rico, certain other West Indian Islands and Guam to the United States, and immediately evacuate all of these areas. In addition Spain was to cede the island of Luzon in the Philippine group to the United States. The door was left open, however, for the commissioners "to take as much as they could get." Reid, Davis, and Frye were in favor of annexing the entire group, Day favored annexing Luzon alone, while Gray opposed all expansion into the Far Pacific. Both Day and Gray were shortly convinced of the efficacy of expansion, however, and the commission presented its unanimous demands to the Spanish representatives. These demands included annexation of the entire Philippine Archipelago in return for which a payment of \$20,000,000 would be made. Spain accepted most of the important demands made by the United States and the treaty was signed December 10, 1898. Secretary Day was immensely proud of the accomplishments of the commission. He wrote to the President that:⁴³

We have an excellent treaty although we did not get an island in the Carolines or a renewal of the stipulation protecting American missionaries there. We do obtain the Philippine Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam and Cuba in trust--a goodly estate indeed! It will bring responsibilities and burdens but the United States is equal to the task.

⁴³Day to McKinley, December 12, 1898, William McKinley Papers, Vol. 22, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

While the commissioners were in session, Senator Pettigrew became the object of a great deal of criticism from his colleague James H. Kyle. Kyle, who was already drifting back toward Republicanism, claimed in an interview to be "deeply grieved" by the "unpatriotic stand" Pettigrew had taken concerning the war. In his opposition to expansion, Kyle declared, Pettigrew had branded McKinley as a coward, and by his accusations against the administration, materially aided the Spanish in delaying negotiations. The Spaniards, he went on, hoped that McKinley's policies would not be sustained in the election. The timing of this publication, of course, was designed to hurt Pettigrew and his Populist allies in the off-year elections of 1898.⁴⁴

When their business was concluded, the commissioners returned home and presented the treaty to the President. He signed it and it was laid before the Senate in January 1899.⁴⁵ At this point opposition developed. The Senate became divided over the efficacy of American overseas expansion, the question turning primarily on the status of the Philippines.

Those who opposed the treaty pointed out that annexation was contrary to the Constitution and the Declaration

⁴⁴Sioux Falls Argus Leader, November 4, 1898.

⁴⁵U.S. Congress, Senate, Papers Relating to the Treaty with Spain, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 148, February 5, 1901, p. 1.

of Independence, that Asiatics would flood the country and debase American standards, and that no great advantage would accrue from active intervention in the Far East.⁴⁶ Senator George F. Hoar of Massachusetts, who had favored the annexation of Hawaii, was most vociferous in his denunciation of the treaty. Hoar took as the basis of his argument the position that the subjugation of an unwilling people was unconstitutional. He spoke at length on this point and his position was wholeheartedly endorsed by Pettigrew.⁴⁷

The proponents of the treaty, led by Senators Lodge and Platt, pointed out that the Constitution sets no limit on American expansion, that great commercial opportunities awaited the nation in Asia, and that "honor, duty, and conscience," demanded that annexation be carried out.⁴⁸

While the fight raged in the Senate, the popular journals of the day took up the question. Journalistic opponents of expansion became concerned with the legality of the cession. Did Spain have good title to the islands during the period of negotiations, or was the government of the

⁴⁶ Julius W. Pratt, Expansionists of 1898 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1936), 345-350. Leading Senatorial opponents were: Pettigrew, Hoar, Hale, Tillman, Gorman and McLaurin; yet Hoar, Gorman, Hale and McLaurin had favored the annexation of Hawaii.

⁴⁷ Congressional Record, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., January 9, 1899, XXXII, 493-502.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 502.

"Philippine Republic" in control?⁴⁹ The writers argued that the imposition of American dominion over a people who withheld their consent was unconstitutional,⁵⁰ and that to stretch the Constitution would be to set a dangerous precedent for the future.⁵¹ Others claimed that imperialism was actually the antithesis of true expansion and that while expansion was the story of the historical development of the United States, imperialism amounted to nothing more than a means of economic exploitation and was a dangerous departure from "the Republican principles of the country."⁵² Following this line of reasoning it was claimed that there was no need to go beyond the borders of the continent for additional land. Americans were advised to concentrate on the development of the contiguous territory of the nation.⁵³ Furthermore, it was shown that territorial expansion would necessitate strengthening the armed forces at the expense of other and

⁴⁹Perry Belmont, "Congress, the President and the Philippines," North American Review, LXIX (December, 1899), 900.

⁵⁰Samuel C. Parks, "Imperialism," The Arena, XXV (January, 1901), 579.

⁵¹William C. McDonald, "Imperialism v. the Constitution," The Nation, LXVIII (January 12, 1899), 25-26.

⁵²E.V. Long, "The Menace of Imperialism," The Arena, XXIII (March, 1900), 321-326.

⁵³J.M. Scanlon, "Expansion - Past and Prospective," The Arena, XXIII (April, 1900), 337-352.

more vital domestic expenditures.⁵⁴ Finally, this country was compared with the Roman Empire in an effort to show that expansion would destroy America as it had destroyed Rome.⁵⁵

Senator Pettigrew was a voracious reader and he quite obviously incorporated many of these arguments into his own speeches. He considered The Arena the ablest magazine of the day exclaiming:⁵⁶

Every issue gives me renewed hope and inspiration to continue the battle we are waging in the interest of free government in this country. The greatest problem in America today is, shall this be a government by and for the people, or shall it continue as it has already become, a plutocracy of artificial persons?

The proponents of administration policy both in and out of Congress were quick to counter these attacks. Whitelaw Reid pointed out that Article IV, Section 3, of the Constitution gave Congress the power to "make all rules, . . . needed respecting the territories and other property belonging to the nation." This clause, he asserted, gave the highest legal sanction to expansion.⁵⁷ Senator William A. Peffer of Kansas argued that a government need not consult

⁵⁴Andrew Carnegie, "Americanism v. Imperialism," North American Review, CLXIX (January, 1899), 1-13.

⁵⁵H. Bonis, "A Contrast and a Parallel," The Arena, XXIII (March, 1900), 321-326.

⁵⁶Pettigrew to J.C. Rippath, Boston, March 11, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

⁵⁷Quoted in Bradley Martin, "American Imperialism," Nineteenth Century, XLIII (September, 1900), 393-406.

the will of the majority of those governed in matters of policy; that our system was admittedly unrepresentative of large segments of the population and that ". . . imperialism is actually a natural growth of our historical development. McKinley is doing just what Jackson and others did . . .," he wrote. "To call American imperialism exploitation is only to creat a mirage in the heated air of politics."⁵⁸

Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, leader of the administration forces, scoffed at the charge that American policy was depriving liberty to the people of the Philippines. Said he:⁵⁹

Their insurrection against Spain, confined to one island, had been utterly abortive and could never have revived or been successful while Spain controlled the sea. We have given them all the liberty they ever had. We could not have robbed them of it for they had none to lose.

Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana went further, claiming that the Philippines were ours forever by right of conquest. Furthermore, he said, the United States was under compulsion to institute a government in the Islands since the Filipinos were utterly incapable of governing themselves.⁶⁰

⁵⁸William A. Peffer, "Imperialism; America's Historic Policy," North American Review, CLXXI (August, 1900), 246-258.

⁵⁹Henry Cabot Lodge, "Philippine Retention and Rule," Men and Issues of 1900 (James P. Boyd, ed., 1900), 190-209.

⁶⁰Albert J. Beveridge, "Policy Regarding the Philippines," Men and Issues of 1900, pp. 256-276.

Despite the capable arguments of men such as these, the ratification of the treaty remained in doubt until, to the surprise and disgust of Pettigrew, William Jennings Bryan appeared in Washington to advocate that it be accepted. Bryan's move was calculated to end the controversy and work to the advantage of the Democrats. By accepting the treaty, this country would end all its difficulties with Spain and would make the most of the opportunity to free the Filipinos. Furthermore, imperialism could be made an issue in the campaign of 1900.⁶¹

Senator Pettigrew was incensed when Bryan broached this proposal to him. If Bryan were willing to abandon his principles so lightly for mere political advantage, Pettigrew declared: ". . . his stand reflected on his character and reputation as a man, and indicated a lack of knowledge of human affairs which must make his friends feel that he was not a suitable person to be President of the United States."⁶² The treaty was ratified 57 - 27 on February 6, 1899, two days after the outbreak of the Philippine Insurrection. Fifteen Democrats, Populists and Independents voted with the Republican majority. Naturally, Senator Pettigrew was not

⁶¹New York Tribune, January 19, 1899; Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 270.

⁶²Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 270-271. Pettigrew was convinced that Bryan did not succeed in changing any votes.

among them.⁶³ As for an explanation for the changed votes on the last ballot; if Bryan was not effective, patronage certainly was. On the day after the ratification of the treaty Mark Hanna wrote to McKinley: "In securing the votes of McEnerney and McLaurin yesterday, I made myself your representative so if either of them should call at the White House today don't fail to express your appreciation of their acts."⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the administration had not been idle. At the suggestion of Commodore Dewey, the President decided to send a fact finding commission to the Philippines to study social and political conditions and to recommend the form of government most suitable to the existing situation. The commission was also to study the legislative needs of the inhabitants and recommend those measures which would best implement the maintenance of order and public welfare.⁶⁵

⁶³New York Tribune, February 7, 1899: Hale (R., Me.), and Hoar (R., Mass.) voted against the treaty. Allen (Pop., Nebr.), Butler (Pop., N.C.), Clay (Dem., Ga.), Faulkner (Dem., W.Va.), Gray (Dem., Dela.), Harris (Pop., Kan.), Fenney (Dem., Dela.), Kyle (Ind., S.D.), Lindsay (Dem., Ky.), McEnerney (Dem., La.), McLaurin (Dem., S.C.), Morgan (Dem., Ala.), Pettus (Dem., Ala.), Sullivan (Dem., Miss.), and Teller (S.R., Colo.), voted aye.

⁶⁴Hanna to McKinley, February 7, 1899, McKinley Papers, Vol. 25.

⁶⁵U.S. Congress, Senate, Communications from the Executive Department to Aguinaldo and Papers Dealing with Other Matters, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 208, March 5, 1900, pp. 002-04.

McKinley called upon Jacob Gould Schurman, President of Cornell University, to head the commission. Schurman accepted with some reservations which were accentuated by the fact that his arrival in the Philippines coincided approximately with the outbreak of the Aguinaldo insurrection.⁶⁶

Nevertheless, the investigation proceeded and after several months Schurman was able to report that in his opinion most responsible Filipinos were opposed to immediate independence. The insurrection, he continued, was being fanned by innate distrust on the part of the natives for white men, by the "personal and selfish ambition of the Tagalog leaders," and by misrepresentation of American purposes.⁶⁷ In addition Schurman made more specific suggestions concerning the legislative needs of the Filipinos which were later followed very closely by William Howard Taft.⁶⁸

At the same time, Senator Pettigrew had been trying to discredit the administration by his incessant attacks on its Philippine policy, on the specific activities of the military occupation, and on the Schurman Commission. The Senator charged that the American naval forces under Dewey

⁶⁶G.A. Grunder and W.E. Livezey, The Philippines and the United States (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), 54.

⁶⁷U.S. Congress, Senate, Final Report of the Philippine Commission, 1899-1900, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 138, January 31, 1900, pp. 82-84.

⁶⁸Henry F. Pringle, The Life and Times of William Howard Taft (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939), I, 177.

had been aided by the forces of the navy of the "Republic of the Philippines." He further charged that Dewey had recognized the flag of the "Republic" making that government an ally of the United States. Later, Pettigrew charged that General William Otis, commander of American ground forces in the Philippines, had used the army of the "Republic" to help reduce Manila and then had refused to allow it to occupy a portion of the city. In addition the Senator claimed that Otis had sought to deceive the Filipinos into thinking they were to be granted independence.⁶⁹

Whether or not there had been intentional deception, it is true that apathy and delay marred American relations with the Filipinos. Months of needless uncertainty passed from Dewey's victory until McKinley's final decision as to our relationship with the insurgents.⁷⁰ In January, 1899, the President wrote to General Otis:⁷¹

I desire that conflict be avoided. The insurgents will come to see that our purposes are benevolent. Tact and kindness are essential. I am sure you can be trusted to accomplish the purposes of this government without discord. We accepted the Philippine Islands with high duty to their people.

⁶⁹R.F. Pettigrew, The Course of Empire (Chicago: Boniwright, 1920), 255-256.

⁷⁰Grunder and Livezey, The United States and the Philippines, 23.

⁷¹McKinley to Otis, January 8, 1899, McKinley Papers, Vol. 23.

But even more time elapsed before McKinley announced officially the American intention to annex the Philippines,⁷² and Pettigrew charged that Otis deliberately altered the wording of interim messages sent him by the President so as to deceive the Filipinos.⁷³

Furthermore, there was some question as to which side had fired the shots which began the insurrection. Pettigrew charged that American troops were responsible and demanded an investigation. He submitted a resolution on this question which was tabled. Senator Hoar then introduced a resolution asking the President to submit all communications concerning the insurrection to the Senate for examination. This resolution passed.⁷⁴

McKinley complied with the Hoar Resolution on March 5, 1900. The documents showed that the charges made by Pettigrew were based on fact, but that there was no basis for an accusation of malfeasance. It was true that American military and naval forces had received cooperation from the Filipinos, but the American commanders never granted tacit recognition to the government of the erstwhile "Republic of the Philippines." General Otis specifically informed

⁷²Grunder and Livezey, The United States and the Philippines, 207-208.

⁷³Pettigrew, The Course of Empire, 296.

⁷⁴Congressional Record, January 16, 1900, XXXIII, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., 853.

Aguinaldo that he had no power to recognize the government of the "Republic" in the absence of orders from Washington. During the entire course of the insurrection, moreover, Otis refused to treat as official any diplomatic representatives of the "Republic" and informed Aguinaldo that he could only negotiate with the Filipino commissioners as personal representatives. Further, the General admitted his alteration of the Presidential Proclamations, but explained that this was done to avoid confusion. "The Filipino leaders," he said, "have little idea of the meaning of constitutional government and their people have none. They cry for independence and protection not knowing the meaning of the terms." Commodore Dewey, for his part, denied categorically that he had recognized the Philippine flag, and declared that had he been left to his own devices, he would have given Aguinaldo no naval protection at all.⁷⁵

Senator Pettigrew next tried to get a pamphlet purportedly written by Aguinaldo printed in the Congressional Record. This document attempted to explain the position of the insurgents and to justify their actions. It contained a declaration that the Filipinos had not started the war and had repeatedly asked for a truce which was refused. Henry Cabot Lodge successfully objected to the printing of

⁷⁵U.S. Congress, Senate, Communications from the Executive Department to Aguinaldo and Papers Dealing with Other Matters, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 208, March 5, 1900, pp. 28-50.

the document on the basis of a letter he had received from Dewey referring to the pamphlet as a "tissue of falsehoods."

Pettigrew next assailed the Schurman Commission for attempting to bribe the insurgents to surrender. According to Pettigrew, the attempted bribe was made by Schurman himself who offered a bounty to all Filipinos who would lay down their arms. Said Schurman: ". . . had such a preposterous statement been made anywhere else, I would have ignored it, but as it was made on the floor of the United States Senate I desire to say that it is absolutely false."⁷⁶ There is no evidence available to the contrary.

Meanwhile, the task of providing operative civil government for the new island possessions proceeded. Two matters of vital importance were involved here. First was the question of the status of trade between the United States and the Islands and second was the problem of providing adequate revenues for local government. The Senate Committee on Puerto Rico and the Pacific islands first considered these matters in December 1899. Pettigrew, who was a member of this committee, opposed free trade and the "medieval economic system" which he thought existed on the Islands, especially Puerto Rico.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 261-263. Pettigrew quotes Schurman to demonstrate that the Commissioner was "a liar."

⁷⁷Everett Walters, Joseph Benson Foraker: An Uncompromising Republican (Columbus: The Ohio University Press, 1951), 311.

In the hearings before the committee, representatives of Puerto Rican agricultural interests appeared to plead for free trade. Shortly after, the representatives of competing interests on the mainland appeared to demand protection. Herbert Myrick, President of the League of Domestic Producers declared that his organization opposed any attempt by congress to pass legislation beneficial to growers in the tropics who might compete with domestic growers or agricultural laborers on the mainland. Henry T. Oxnard and H.J. Frye, representing the sugar beet growers of California and the New England Tobacco Growers' Association respectively concurred. When this testimony had been heard, the committee again questioned the representatives from Puerto Rico. Pettigrew asked Lucas Amadeo of the Agricultural Society of Puerto Rico whether American Army officers had promised the Puerto Ricans free trade at the time of the conquest. Amadeo replied that they had been promised only "moral and material progress," ". . . but it was understood," he continued, "that the island would have that free trade from the moment the Constitution of the United States covered the island."⁷⁸

During the course of the hearings, Chairman Joseph B. Foraker of Ohio prepared a bill which came to be known as the

⁷⁸U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Pacific Islands and Puerto Rico, Hearings on Senate Bill 2264 to Provide Government for the Island of Puerto Rico, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 147, February 5, 1900, pp. 129-134, 142-143, 161.

Organic Bill for Puerto Rico. It provided for the establishment of civil government, for the reduction of duty rates 85 per cent on all goods entering the United States, and for the inauguration of free trade on or before March 1, 1902.⁷⁹

The testimony he heard before the committee, plus his own position as an uncompromising opponent of the administration, compelled Senator Pettigrew to oppose the Foraker Bill. The measure, he said, was a "sop" thrown to the public for the support of the Republican party due to demands that the party carry out its pledges. "We pledged free trade to the Puerto Ricans," he charged, "and now we try to break that pledge due to the clamor of the cigar makers and the tobacco growers. The present bill is to allay that excitement."⁸⁰

After surmounting great difficulties, the Foraker Bill passed on April 3, 1900.⁸¹ Almost immediately its constitutionality was challenged in the case of Downes v. Bidwell, and it was referred to the highest court in the land. On May 27, 1901, the Court declared:⁸²

⁷⁹Walters, Joseph B. Foraker, 161-170.

⁸⁰Congressional Record, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., March 15, 1900, XXXIII, 2927.

⁸¹Walters, Joseph B. Foraker, 169; Congressional Record, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., April 3, 1900, XXXIII, 3667-3698. Senator Pettigrew did not vote.

⁸²Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 244.

. . . the Constitution is applicable to the territories acquired by purchase or conquest only when and so far as Congress shall direct. . . . We are therefore of the opinion that the Island of Puerto Rico is a territory appurtenant and belonging to the United States, but not a part of the United States within the revenue clause of the Constitution; that the Foraker Act is Constitutional, so far as it imposes duties upon imports from such island.

But by that time annexation was an accomplished fact, and its opponents had been repudiated.

During his battle against the expansionists, Pettigrew was given a great deal of moral support by the Washington City Anti-Imperialist League. This small group was founded during the war by William Augustus Croffut, a Washington journalist, and its meetings were held in his home. Pettigrew and Croffut became close friends during this period and the Senator occasionally wrote to Croffut expressing his sentiments toward the Republicans. The most vituperative of these pronouncements offers a very good summary of Pettigrew's feelings toward the administration, expansion, and all those who supported them: "These fawning sycophants without brains who act as McKinley's advisers are disgusting in the extreme. They want to carry out the idea that their President is a sort of emperor and that loyalty to him is the only way of expressing loyalty to flag and country."⁸³ The League also acted as a clearing house for

⁸³Pettigrew to Croffut, October 28, 1899, William Augustus Croffut Papers, Box 2, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

the distribution of Pettigrew's speeches to various sympathetic groups around the country.⁸⁴ The object of this was to keep the issue of imperialism alive throughout the coming presidential campaign of 1900. Although they worked diligently, little was accomplished, for by the time the Foraker Bill was passed the cause of anti-imperialism, like free-silver, was dead. The protagonists of these great causes, however, did not yet realize their loss. Therefore, they continued to level savage attacks at the "barbarian imperialists" of the Republican party in a vain effort to sway the emotions of the fickle American people. But there was no hope. All the old shibboleths of reform had lost their magic before the onslaught of prosperity. Anti-imperialism, free-silver, the Populist party; once rallying posts for the champions of the down-trodden agrarian masses, were now the tarnished, laughable icons of wild-eyed radicals and stubborn politicians, like Richard Pettigrew and William Jennings Bryan. Still they could not admit defeat. They would battle for the right as long as breath availed. But the battle tide turned implacibly against them and nothing they might do could hold it back.⁸⁵

To go against the tenets of the all-victorious Republicans in 1900 was to commit political suicide, and there

⁸⁴Pettigrew to Croffut, October 13, 1900, in ibid.

⁸⁵T.A. Bailey, "The Election of 1900--Mandate for Imperialism?" Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXIV (March, 1937), 43-52.

was plenty of corroborating evidence for the observant man to see and heed. But Senator Pettigrew was blind to such evidence. He was guided only by his belief in the panacea of free silver and his hatred of exploitive policies of the party in power. It must be defeated. He felt that the very survival of America depended upon it. For him there could be no turning back.

CHAPTER IX

THE BEGINNING OF THE END: AND THE END

The candidacy of William Jennings Bryan in 1896 on both the Populist and Democratic tickets caused a severe split in the ranks of Populism, and heralded its end. Those who opposed the fusion of the two parties, calling themselves "midroad Populists," demanded immediately after the election that the combination be terminated. The mid-roaders, acting through a committee which met at Girard, Kansas in April, 1897, issued an address to all Populists which contained a call for a national party conference to assemble at Nashville, Tennessee on the Fourth of July.

Most of those who attended the Nashville Conference were from the southern states and it became clear at once that they were predominantly opposed to fusion. Moreover, they also appeared to have lost their enthusiasm for free silver and it was suggested that the silver plank be removed from the party platform. No action was taken on this suggestion, however, as the most important consideration remained that of fusion. A committee was formed consisting of three delegates from each state represented at the conference. The task of this body was to prevent fusion in

all subsequent elections and it amounted, in fact, to the creation of a separate mid-road Populist organization.

By 1898 the orthodox Populists were forced to recognize the threat posed by the mid-road group which styled itself the National Organization Committee. Marion Butler, chairman of the regular Populist National Committee, called his group together in Omaha on June 15, 1898, to consider what should be done. It was a very stormy meeting because the National Committee contained within its own membership many who were sympathetic to the position of the mid-road element. After a good deal of wrangling a sub-committee consisting of three fusionists and three mid-roaders was appointed to agree upon a compromise. The deliberations of this body resulted in the so-called "Omaha Contract" which provided that the National Chairman should decline to give aid in any future election where fusion should occur.

Unfortunately, the "Omaha Contract" did not completely satisfy the National Organization Committee. The call went out from this group for a convention to be held in September to restate the Populist creed and name candidates for the election of 1900. The convention gathered in Cincinnati on September 4, 1898. Even though the delegates were few in number and represented the extreme left wing of Populism, they could not agree among themselves on the question of Presidential nominations. About half of them named Wharton Barker of Philadelphia for President and Ignatius Donnelly

of Minnesota for Vice President. The rest of the delegates deserted the convention hall and condemned the nominations on grounds that it was much too early to name candidates.¹

Senator Pettigrew followed these events with great interest. He sympathized with the fusionist element of the party and he had written to Barker early in the year pleading for unity. Pettigrew declared that under existing political conditions fusion was the only practical course to be followed by the Populists. Pettigrew, who still claimed to be a Silver Republican, wrote Barker that he believed wholeheartedly in the principles of Populism, but would advocate fusion in all subsequent elections as a political necessity.² This position, added to his close cooperation with Populists in South Dakota, made Pettigrew for all practical purposes one of their number.

The mid-term elections of 1898 were a crucial test for Populism and the failure of the party to meet this test was catastrophic. In the South, where the race issue added to their difficulties, the Populists were overwhelmingly defeated by the Democrats. In the West, however, the Populists struggled valiantly to maintain fusion with the

¹John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1931), 380-386.

²Pettigrew to Wharton Barker, Philadelphia, January 21, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

Democrats, knowing it was their only chance to remain in office.³

The situation in South Dakota was in many ways typical of the problems faced by western Populists. In that state the position of the fusionists had been severely weakened by the defection of Senator Kyle to the Republicans and it was felt that only by a determined effort could control of the state be maintained. The Populist Central Committee met in Huron on March 17, 1898, to set a date for the state convention. With Pettigrew and Governor Lee in control of the proceedings, a resolution was introduced favoring the continuance of fusion with the Democrats. Despite an emotional speech of opposition by Henry L. Loucks who represented the mid-roaders of the state, the resolution was passed overwhelmingly.⁴

The Democrats and Silver Republicans met in Mitchell some weeks later and voted to stand by the resolution of the Populist Committee. Each group asserted its belief that it was most important to the welfare of the state that they remain united throughout the campaign.⁵ Later, when the Fusionist State Convention assembled, it appeared that

³Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 393-395.

⁴Lee to Arthur Linn, March 18, 1898, Lee Papers.

⁵Lee to Linn, April 18, 1898, in ibid.

complete unity had been attained. Governor Lee reported to Pettigrew that the mid-roaders were given every opportunity to express themselves, but made no concerted attempt to disrupt the proceedings. Lee predicted that the success of fusion in South Dakota meant victory in the election. But he could not have been more greatly mistaken, for Lee himself was the only fusionist candidate elected to a major office. He won his second term as governor by the paper-thin margin of twenty-five votes over his Republican opponent, Kirk Phillips.⁶

Senator Pettigrew offered several explanations for the defeat. First, he accused the railroads of lavish spending in support of Republican candidates. He also accused them of importing voters.⁷ No doubt the first accusation is true. The companies were in the midst of a vigorous fight against the Lee Administration due to the Governor's advocacy of rate controls. They would have gladly spent a great deal of money to insure his defeat. However, Pettigrew's second assertion was probably an exaggeration. Although some ineligible voters no doubt participated in the election, their numbers could not have been significant. Moreover, the Republicans themselves threatened to contest the gubernatorial

⁶South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 331, 649.

⁷Pettigrew to August Peterson, November 26, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

vote on the very same grounds, but their threats were never carried out. A canvassing board disclaimed accusations of fraud on both sides and issued Lee his certificate of election.⁸

To Senator Pettigrew, the most important single cause of the defeat was the failure of the Populists and Democrats to achieve complete fusion at the county level. Pettigrew reported to Senator Fred J. Cannon of Utah that in some counties Democrats combined with Republicans rather than Populists.⁹ In at least eight counties, declared the Senator, there was no fusion at all, again resulting in the defeat of Populist candidates. Pettigrew was greatly discouraged by the outcome of the election: "We have no chance to win in 1900 unless we have complete fusion," he wrote. "If we don't get it I shall not campaign hard for the Senate because I won't win, but will fight hard for the issues."¹⁰

The "issues," Pettigrew thought, had been an important factor in the election. He felt that South Dakota Populists had erred in not making their stand on national issues such as government ownership of railroads and free silver. He

⁸Hendrickson, "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," 62.

⁹Pettigrew to Cannon, Ogden, Utah, November 26, 1898, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁰Pettigrew to A.J. Troth, Bijou Hills, South Dakota, January 27, 1899, in ibid.

was convinced that if free silver alone had received more attention, the outcome might have been different.¹¹

Senator Pettigrew's analysis of the situation was only partially correct. Certainly the failure of complete cooperation between Populists and Democrats had injured fusionist hopes in certain areas of the state, but it is questionable whether greater emphasis on free silver would have altered the results of the campaign in any measureable degree. Unfortunately for the Populists, 1898 was a year which saw the people of South Dakota and the nation turn their attention away from domestic troubles to concentrate, at least momentarily on the war with Spain. This worked to the advantage of the Republicans at the very time when the Populist party was desperately in need of a victory to salvage its sagging prestige. Then, too, farm prices climbed ever higher making it easier for agriculturalists to forget the emotional demands for equity which they had made in the recent past.

During the year 1899 Pettigrew devoted most of his time to the preparation of scathing attacks upon the McKinley Administration and its foreign policy. By the opening of the new year 1900 the Senator was completely disgusted with the manner in which the representatives of both major parties had handled the issue of imperialism. But

¹¹Pettigrew to C.T. Jeffers, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, November 30, 1898, in ibid.

even more important, he was fearful of his own defeat at the hands of the South Dakota Legislature in the following year. For these reasons he began to take even more active interest in the non-partisan New England Anti-Imperialist League. This organization, founded late in 1898, boasted such members as Grover Cleveland, John Sherman, Carl Scurz, Samuel Gompers, Andrew Carnegie and Charles Francis Adams.¹² Their association with the group seems to have been of a nominal nature, however, as it was primarily a literary movement.¹³

Pettigrew was attracted by rumors that a third party might spring from the League to oppose both the Democrats and the Republicans in the campaign of 1900. Whether these rumors were true is difficult to say, but Senator Pettigrew accepted them at face value. He attended a conference of the League held on January 6, 1900. At this conference, claimed Pettigrew, the decision was made to found a third party. Unfortunately, there is no way to substantiate this claim because Pettigrew is the only man known to have left a written account of the meeting.¹⁴ He declared that Andrew Carnegie pledged \$25,000 to its support. The others in

¹²Faulkner, Politics, Reform and Expansion, 253-255.

¹³F.H. Harrington, "The Literary Aspects of the New England Anti-Imperialist League," New England Quarterly, X (June, 1937), 650-657.

¹⁴F.H. Harrington, "The Anti-Imperialist Movement in the United States," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII (September, 1935), 211.

attendance promised to match that amount and the conference broke up in general accord. Shortly, however, Carnegie changed his mind and informed Pettigrew that he wanted nothing more to do with the third party movement. Eventually, he threw his support to McKinley.

The Senator was enraged when he discovered the perfidy of Carnegie. He accused the steel magnate of selling out his convictions for great personal profit. He charged that a "committee" representing the steel industry had come to Carnegie and insisted that he drop the scheme; that unless he did, the proposed steel trust would not be consummated.¹⁵ This accusation, however, cannot be proved from available sources. Carnegie does not mention the episode in his Autobiography, nor does anyone else mention it who was concerned with the Anti-Imperialist Movement.

After the failure of the Anti-Imperialist Party Movement in early 1900, Senator Pettigrew once again turned his full attention to Populist politics, hoping for success through a spirited fight on that ticket. By this time he found himself in a rather difficult situation. Although he favored fusion between Populists and Democrats in South Dakota, and the candidacy of William Jennings Bryan for President, he believed that the Populist party should retain its identity in the national campaign by nominating its own

¹⁵Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 324.

candidate for Vice President.¹⁶ Here, he worked at cross purposes with Bryan who was determined to let the Democratic National Convention name his running mate.

The Populist forces were further weakened by the fact that the breach with the mid-roaders had not healed. Still voicing determined opposition to any degree of fusion, the "left-wing" element held its convention in Cincinnati where Wharton Barker and Ignatius Donnelly were once more named to the national ticket. On the other hand, the fusionist element of the party set its convention for Sioux Falls, South Dakota in May. The nomination of Bryan for President was, of course, a foregone conclusion, but there was much disagreement over the choice for second place.

Some weeks before the opening of the Fusionist Convention, Bryan wrote Pettigrew setting forth his desire that the party leave the naming of a Vice-Presidential candidate to the Democrats. Pettigrew replied immediately:¹⁷

I have read your letter with care, but fear the convention will not follow your advice. It will want to nominate a full ticket and adopt a platform. I favor Towne. If the Kansas City convention does not adopt our ticket serious consequences might follow. The best way to avoid this would be to form a joint committee with power to act with the Silver Republicans and Democrats at Kansas City

¹⁶Pettigrew to C.F. Taylor, Philadelphia, January 12, 1900, Pettigrew Papers.

¹⁷Pettigrew to Bryan, April 19, 1900, in ibid.

Pettigrew referred to Charles A. Towne, leader of the Silver Republican party of Minnesota. Towne's candidacy also had the approval of Marion Butler, Chairman of the Populist National Committee. Together, Pettigrew and Butler hoped to force his nomination through the Sioux Falls Convention. On the other hand, the extreme fusionists, led by Senator William V. Allen of Nebraska, were preparing to fight the nomination of Towne on the floor.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the people of Sioux Falls prepared for the convention which would open on May 9. The townspeople were ready for what they thought would be the largest gathering ever to assemble in the state. A huge tent 300 by 106 feet was procured, capable of accomodating 12,000 persons. The tent required the services of an expert and a large crew of roustabouts to erect. The progress of its assembly was the main topic of conversation for several days. Other specialists were summoned to decorate the streets and public buildings of the city. All the hotels were held in readiness to accomodate the mighty throng, and rooms in private homes were promised to handle the expected overflow. New sidewalks were laid all over town; merchants redecorated their stores and hired extra help. Restaurants stocked up on food so as to be able to serve adequately the hosts of delegates and visitors. As a sidelight, citizens were warned to bank their

¹⁸Allen to Bryan, April 28, 1900, William Jennings Bryan Papers, Box 24, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

extra money and hide their valuables since the convention was certain to attract a large number of thieves.

The large crowds, however, failed to materialize. Only some 1,500 visitors appeared and of this number about 400 were delegates. Fifty more were newsmen and the remainder were curiosity seekers from nearby. Only a handful of persons came from more than one-hundred miles away as spectators. There were delegates on hand from twenty-eight states and Alaska, but the disappointingly small turnout was a stern reminder to all that the Populist party was dying.

Governor Lee of South Dakota gave the opening address in the big tent. Speaking before a tiny, but enthusiastic audience, Lee reviewed the principles of the party and declared that it stood for the rights of the people and should continue to exist along with the other major parties. As though inspired by "Pettigrewism," the Governor denounced the policies of the Republican Administration with a particularly devastating attack on imperialism. He declared that "thinking people" could not allow another four years of "McKinleyism," because it would "destroy the country." His words were received with an ovation so mighty as to bely the size of the assemblage.¹⁹

As had been expected, William Jennings Bryan received the Presidential nomination by acclamation. The anticipated

¹⁹Files of the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, May 2-10, 1900.

battle for second place also developed. When Town's name was placed in nomination, a verbal encounter ensued led by Senator Allen for the extremists and Pettigrew and Butler for the moderates. After five hours of skirmishing a compromise was reached. Towne received the nomination subject to the condition that he withdraw if his candidacy proved unacceptable to the Democratic convention in Kansas City.²⁰

The platform favored free coinage of silver, denounced the Administration's monetary policy, opposed expansion, and favored the initiative and referendum, the direct election of United States Senators, and more stringent immigration laws.²¹ Pettigrew was pleased with the outcome. "We have Bryan and Towne and a good platform," he wrote. "I feel that the preservation of American institutions as we know them depends upon our success."²² Furthermore, the Senator remarked publicly that all the factions of the Populist party except the mid-roaders were now in accord and that Bryan was "delighted" with the nomination of Towne. Unfortunately, neither Towne nor Bryan shared his views. The Minnesotan, as a matter of fact, was embarrassed by the position in which he found himself. He wrote to the Commoner

²⁰ Willis J. Abbott, Press Manager of the Democratic National Committee, to Bryan, May 12, 1900, Bryan Papers, Box 24.

²¹ Sioux Falls Argus Leader, May 11, 1900.

²² Pettigrew, to Walter Price, Milford, South Dakota, May 15, 1900, Pettigrew Papers.

somewhat apologetically:²³

The convention should have appointed a committee. I said so to everyone in advance. But the vast majority wanted a nomination and there was no stopping them. The chief reason was that if they adjourned without doing anything, they would be open to jibes from the Cincinnati Crowd and there would be serious losses in states where the Populist vote is crucial. I am in an awkward position, but will make the best of it. I deeply regret any embarrassment to you, but your nomination at Kansas City is certain and few Democrats will vote against you because of me.

Far from being embarrassed, Bryan was furious with the outcome of the convention. He wrote to Pettigrew demanding that his name not be associated with that of Towne in South Dakota:²⁴

. . . Please do not use my name in connection with the endorsement of Towne by Democrats in your state as I have no way of knowing whether it would be wise to endorse him. This will depend upon the way Democrats feel about it and so far I have heard from few. . . . I have been working four years to keep the reform forces together. The Sioux Falls Convention has made my work much harder than it would have been. I hope you will not further handicap me by attempting to state my wishes. Let the Democrats do what they think best. They can confer with the Populists and Silver Republicans, in Kansas City and decide whether it will be Towne or someone else. . . .

It was to be "someone else." Although Andrew Lee of South Dakota and several other prominent Populists made personal appeals to the Democrats, they repudiated Towne and instead named Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois.²⁵ True to his earlier

²³Towne to Bryan, May 15, 1900, Bryan Papers, Box 24.

²⁴Bryan to Pettigrew, May 29, 1900, Pettigrew Papers.

²⁵Lee to William H. Kidd, July 2, 1900, Lee Papers.

agreement, Towne withdrew and the Populists accepted the Democratic nominee as gracefully as possible.²⁶ Even Senator Pettigrew was forced to accept the inevitable. Bryan sent him a letter of conciliation at the conclusion of the Democratic convention, declaring his delight that Stevenson was "acceptable" in South Dakota. "Towne has increased the devotion of his friends by the manner in which he has taken his defeat," wrote the Commoner. Then he concluded: "I am as much interested in your being elected to the Senate as I am in carrying South Dakota. You must leave no stone unturned to secure your election and I will urge the National Committee to give you all possible aid."²⁷

The matter of Populist nominations for the campaign of 1900 cannot be dropped without one further comment on the mid-road elements of the party. Their convention in Cincinnati was also rather dismal, and the impact which they made upon the campaign was negligible. In fact, it might well be forgotten except for a remarkable and pathetic letter which Wharton Barker addressed to President McKinley on August 11, 1900. What Senator Pettigrew's reaction might have been had he seen the letter is only a matter of conjecture, but to stimulate the imagination of the reader it is here reproduced

²⁶Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 400.

²⁷Bryan to Pettigrew, July 17, 1900, Pettigrew Papers.

in its entirety:²⁸

You and your associates can no more force 16 to 1 as the paramount issue than can Mr. Bryan force imperialism. Conditions make issues. If the campaign was between you and Bryan I would say your chances of defeat were good, but there are three candidates in the field. I hope to wage an aggressive campaign and capture the electoral votes of Georgia and possibly Texas and Alabama. I can also receive 10,000 votes in West Virginia, 50,000 in Kentucky, 60,000 in Indiana, 50,000 in Missouri, 5,000 in South Dakota and some in many other states. Many votes cast for me will be by men who voted for Bryan in 1896. I cannot wage an aggressive campaign without money and it cannot be obtained from Populists. It must come from your friends and your campaign fund as we agreed when I saw you at the White House in April.

I met Hanna in New York last week and he said he did not yet have a fund for me nor did he know what he would do along the lines I suggested. He said he thought I could not carry any southern states but that the vote I might get in West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Nebraska and South Dakota might be important. You have the power to instruct Hanna to furnish the money. I shall fight both you and Bryan with spirit but would much prefer to see you re-elected than Bryan elected. But I do not ask you to act along the lines I suggest in any spirit of blackmail.

This remarkable document asserts with vigor the moral and financial bankruptcy of Populism, at least the mid-road variety. Whether the alledged "April Agreement" ever in fact was consummated cannot be shown with available sources; however, the "aggressive campaign" which Barker hoped to wage netted not a quarter-million, but only 50,000 votes.²⁹ On

²⁸Barker to McKinley, August 11, 1900, William McKinley Papers, Vol. 58, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁹Dictionary of American Biography, I, "Wharton Barker," 607.

the other hand, it is well to point out that Barker was correct in his pronouncement that "conditions make issues." Fusionists of the ilk of Bryan and Pettigrew could not be convinced that the fighting issues of the past--free silver and imperialism--no longer appealed to the people. Prosperity was returning without drastic changes in the monetary system; and the acquisition of the Spanish colonies was an accomplished fact. Yet the fusionist leaders refused to budge from their position. Bryan asserted himself emphatically in a letter to national chairman James K. Jones: "I believe that a reaffirmation of the Chicago platform, no matter how explicit, would be regarded as evasive of the money question if we reiterated other things in the platform and fail to reiterate the silver plank."³⁰

And Pettigrew, in a campaign letter distributed in South Dakota declared:³¹

I am not a candidate for re-election as a Republican because this is a battle between Man and the Dollar; between wealth concentrated in the hands of a few and the masses who produce wealth but who are unable to enjoy what they produce.

The Republican party has been captured by evil elements, by the great transportation companies and money trusts; thus it seeks to perpetuate that legislation which has produced the present situation in regard to the distribution of wealth.

³⁰Paul W. Glad, The Trumpet Soundeth (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960), 59-60.

³¹Pettigrew to X, July 24, 1900, Pettigrew Papers.

Thus in spite of the fact they rode a sinking warship, the leaders of Populism and the Democracy steeled themselves for battle with the Republican Leviathan. And none was more vigorous, more feared and hated in this struggle than Richard F. Pettigrew of South Dakota.

Since 1896, when he left the party, Pettigrew had devoted most of his time and energy in the Senate to spirited criticisms of leading Republicans. Indeed, no man who advocated Republican policy or voted Republican on the floor was safe from Pettigrewian tongue lashings. There was one, however, for whom Pettigrew reserved a special and personal hatred, for whom no insult was too mean, no epithet too cruel. This man was "Mr. Republican" himself; Marcus Alonzo Hanna. Senator Pettigrew held Hanna personally responsible for the failure of the Great Crusade in 1896. From that time onward, his personal malice toward the Ohioan grew until some declared it had driven him mad. He would believe any charge made against Hanna no matter how absurd. To discredit the man's public image became an obsession.³²

The climax of the Pettigrew-Hanna "vendetta" came on June 5, 1900, shortly after Pettigrew's return to Washington from South Dakota. On that day he delivered a speech in which he accused the Republican party of fraud in obtaining campaign funds in 1892. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason

³²Thomas Beer, Hanna, 223.

he turned upon Hanna and charged him with bribery in connection with his election to the Senate in 1898. The incident began when Senator Augustus O. Bacon of Georgia referred to a statement Pettigrew had made a few days before to the effect that a shipbuilder named Crawl gave \$400,000 to the Republicans in 1892 with the understanding that the money would be returned in the form of government contracts. Bacon wanted to know why no one had replied to the charge. Senator Hanna rose, and directing his remarks to Pettigrew, declared that he considered such a ridiculous assertion unworthy to be dignified with an answer. Pettigrew immediately regained the floor, his usually palid face now livid with rage. He screamed that Crawl had told him the story because the money was not spent as Hanna had promised it would be. Then, suddenly dropping the subject of the election, he produced a document purported to be a report from the State Senate of Ohio concerning charges of bribery in connection with Hanna's election. It was the report of a minority in the Senate's Committee on Privileges and Elections, asking an investigation of the story that one of the assemblymen had been influenced to vote for Hanna by unfair means. The evidence contained in the report was scattered and inconclusive, in fact there was no real evidence of bribery in it. Nevertheless, Pettigrew used it as the basis of a ten-minute verbal attack upon Hanna which was remarkable only for its savagery and lack of content. When he had finished

and sat down, the Senators expected no reply. However, Hanna did reply, and men who had left the chamber during Pettigrew's tirade hurried back to listen. They saw a man visibly shaken and heard him level an indictment against Richard Pettigrew that left nothing to the imagination. While the Dakotan sat huddled in his chair, Hanna never taking his eyes from the back of Pettigrew's head, denounced the report as so much humbug, questioned his assailant's sanity, and concluded by challenging Pettigrew to prove the vicious insinuations he had made. Physically exhausted from this emotional outburst, Hanna leaned upon his desk, close enough to Pettigrew to reach out and strike him if he wished. "Let the Senator speak," he rasped. "Let him tell what he knows. And then;" the words were clipped and measured and murderous in their intonations, "and - then - I - will - tell - what - I - know - about - him."³³

From this time onward Hanna was determined to end the political career of Richard Pettigrew. Immediately following the altercation in the Senate, Hanna went to McKinley to inform the President that he would not allow such insults as had been heaped upon him to go unnoticed. Secondary evidence

³³C.W. Thompson, *Party Leaders of the Time*, 91-92; Beer, *Hanna*, 222; *Congressional Record*, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., June 5, 1900, XXXIII, 6582-6588.

indicates that Hanna told President McKinley that Pettigrew had to be eliminated from public office.³⁴ The time came in October. Despite the pleas of his colleagues that he drop the issue, Hanna went on a whirlwind speaking tour of the West, the brunt of which was aimed at Pettigrew. C.H. Grosvenor, prominent Ohio Republican, reported to McKinley on efforts to dissuade Hanna from his objective:³⁵

I laid your views carefully before Hanna, but he is unwilling to forego his trip to South Dakota and on reflection you will agree there is wisdom in his view. He says so much as already been said about it that if he should fail it would be called a back down.

And so, accompanied by Senator William P. Frye of Maine, Vice-Presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt and several others, Hanna set forth in search of vengeance. The tour began in Chicago on October 15, 1900. After two short stops in Wisconsin and five in Minnesota, the party fulfilled forty-four speaking engagements in South Dakota.³⁶ During this extended visit the name "Pettigrew" was never mentioned. Hanna later explained:³⁷

Some of my friends here thought I was gunning for pretty small game [Pettigrew], but I wanted that hide--and I got it. What makes Pettigrew most angry, probably, is

³⁴Beer, Hanna, 223.

³⁵Hanna to McKinley, October 14, 1900, McKinley Papers, Vol. 67.

³⁶Grosvenor to McKinley, October 8, 1900, McKinley Papers, Vol. 66.

³⁷New York Evening Sun, November 8, 1900. (Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.)

that when Senator Frye and I went into his state we never mentioned his name. We had an agreement and we kept it. That hurt him worse than anything we could have said about him.

Pettigrew had his own version of the tour. He claimed that Hanna set aside over \$500,000 of the Republican campaign fund to buy votes in South Dakota. With this money special trains were chartered for the tour, and farmers were taken to local banks, given ten dollars and promised ten more if Pettigrew were defeated. Moreover, claimed the Senator, Hanna called his political secretary by phone from Cleveland at 10 p.m. on election night when he learned that the Republicans had carried South Dakota. "I wanted to accomplish two things in this election," Hanna was supposed to have said, "to elect McKinley and to beat Pettigrew, and I did not know which I wanted worse." For the rest of his life Richard Pettigrew declared this to be the most striking compliment ever paid him.³⁸

Meanwhile, the campaign against Pettigrew by South Dakota Republicans was carried on with equal vigor. On November 3, 1900, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader carried a front page article entitled "The Case Against Pettigrew."

This article summed up for South Dakota voters the reasons why Pettigrew should not be returned to the Senate. Most of the material used against him concerned his role as an opponent of Philippine annexation. The article declared

³⁸Pettigrew Manuscript, "The Election of 1900," Pettigrew Papers.

in part:

His statement that he is ashamed of his country and wishes he could blot out the history of the last two years; his reference to the "Puny President" when speaking of McKinley; his statement that the Stars and Stripes are "only a rag, a piece of cloth," his statement that the McKinley Administration is the most corrupt in history, his support of Aguinaldo, his charges against Otis and Dewey; are some of the most reckless and irresponsible utterances by a public figure in many years.

In addition to this indictment, however, the paper went on to point out some Pettigrewian character defects which were all too true to be amusing. It argued that Pettigrew's continued use of personal abuse against his political enemies had so reduced his prestige in Washington that he was no longer capable of securing beneficial legislation for his state.

"During the last three years," declared the paper, "Pettigrew has made himself conspicuous, but the voting record shows that his speeches have carried little weight."³⁹

Four days later was election day, and by evening it had already become clear that the Republicans would carry South Dakota. The headline of the Argus Leader read: "McKINLEY WAS RIGHT--PETTIGREW WAS WRONG" and a front-page story on the election gave a good deal of space to the defeat of the Senator. Included was a copy of a telegram purportedly sent to South Dakota Republicans by H.C. Payne of the Republican National Committee. It was reminiscent of the sentiments expressed by Mark Hanna: "To Pettigrew a long

³⁹Sioux Falls Argus Leader, November 13, 1900.

farewell. There were three important things in this campaign: to beat Pettigrew, to elect McKinley and to carry Nebraska. We have done all three."

In the same issue of the paper there was a long editorial entitled, "The Passing of Pettigrew," which rivalled anything Pettigrew had ever said for its vicious invective. "As a factor of importance in the politics of South Dakota," it began, "R.F. Pettigrew has finally and completely passed from view. Never again will his name excite even a passing riffle of interest." The editorial went on to accuse Pettigrew of every imaginable form of malfeasance, misfeasance and nonfeasance in connection with his public career. Finally, it concluded, "Pettigrew had great ability and a chance for fame and success, but from the very beginning of his career he has demonstrated duplicity and treachery such as have seldom been equalled in American politics."⁴⁰

Of course the Pettigrew-Hanna vendetta and the "crusade" of the Republican party against Pettigrew were only minor factors in the crushing defeat suffered by the forces of agrarian reform in the election of 1900. William Jennings Bryan and most of his allies were defeated primarily because they were pulling against the tide. As Thomas A. Bailey has asserted; "The issue which beat Bryan was 'Bryanism'; the fear that he would overthrow the gold

⁴⁰Ibid., November 7, 1900.

standard and thus destroy prosperity."⁴¹ In South Dakota, where the issue of free silver had never enjoyed an electric appeal, the rural voters swarmed back to the "party of stability" leaving men like Pettigrew and Andrew Lee alone and virtually without support. The statistics are mute but eloquent evidence of the trend. While the Populists in South Dakota made no gains over their return in 1898, the Republicans increased their vote by more than fifty-five per cent.⁴² Yet Pettigrew, like Bryan himself, never comprehended the reasons for his defeat, even after the results had been announced. Late in November, 1900, he wrote Bryan:⁴³

I cannot understand the labor vote of this country, neither can I understand how the farmers of this country are willing to submit to the taxation which must come from a large standing army, to the rule of trusts, which heretofore have fixed the price of everything they have to sell. It seems to me that the laborers and the farmers are being ground out of existence by pressures from both directions and therefore I cannot understand their vote.

It was the same with the issue of imperialism. Both Pettigrew and Bryan had expected to make something of it in the campaign but when the time came they found themselves confronted by an obvious lack of interest on the part of the

⁴¹T.A. Bailey, "Was the Election of 1900 a Mandate for Imperialism?" Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII (1937), 43.

⁴²South Dakota Legislative Manual (1911), 341-352.

⁴³Glad, The Trumpet Soundeth, 211.

public. This lack of interest has often been interpreted as the result of the facts that the islands taken from Spain had already been annexed, and that the nation was too busy, prosperous and complacent to take up the missionary zeal of the reformers. In short, Bryan and those who followed him had miscalculated.⁴⁴ But Pettigrew did not understand. Years later he wrote: ". . . I did all that a man could do to prevent the American people from taking this fatal step [expansion]. As a reward for my efforts I was denounced, vilified and condemned."⁴⁵

The repudiation of Pettigrew by the legislature of South Dakota came as something of an anti-climax to the campaign and election, since his defeat was by then a foregone conclusion. The balloting occurred on January 22, 1901. Pettigrew was renominated by one of the few Populists left in the legislature. His opponent was R.J. Gamble of Yankton, and ex-friend and follower. The issue was decided quickly, for on the first ballot Gamble received 113 votes while Pettigrew polled thirteen. Newspapers gave the election only cursory attention.⁴⁶ Two days later, however, the Argus Leader published a large front page cartoon depicting

⁴⁴Bailey, "Was the Election of 1900 a Mandate for Imperialism?" 48.

⁴⁵Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 344.

⁴⁶Sioux Falls Argus Leader, January 22, 1901.

Pettigrew as a mongrel hound baying at a moon whose face looked like William McKinley. Tied to the hound's tail was a tin can labeled, "South Dakota Republican Majority." The public career of Richard Franklin Pettigrew had come to an end.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Ibid., January 24, 1901.

CHAPTER X

THE "HAS BEEN" POLITICO

After the loss of his Senate seat Pettigrew maintained his legal residence in South Dakota. However, he actually spent most of his time living in New York City. During this period Pettigrew maintained an active interest in politics, now identifying himself with the Democratic party. He also engaged in the practice of law and invested large sums of money in mining ventures. Luck was with him and he recouped the fortune which had been lost while he served in the Senate. Little is known of his professional activities, but there is some evidence extant of his rather colorful business enterprises, which led him to invest in several copper mines and engage in a scheme to collect on \$240,000 worth of repudiated bonds issued by the state of North Carolina.

Shortly after he settled in New York, Pettigrew entered into an agreement with several others to collect on the repudiated North Carolina bonds through court action. His associates in the scheme were interesting. They included R.W. Stewart, head of the Republican machine in South Dakota, Daniel Lindsay Russell, former governor of

North Carolina, Charles H. Herreid, Republican Governor of South Dakota, and Marion Butler, former United States Senator from North Carolina and ex-chairman of the Populist National Committee.¹ The "plot" was pending for several years, but, unfortunately, the "conspirators" fell out due to a misunderstanding, and no recovery was made.² Disappointed, Pettigrew and Russell accused each other of incompetency and stupidity in handling the deal, and threatened each other with law suits. However, nothing ever came of these threats, and after letting off considerable steam, the would-be promoters dropped the scheme.³ The odd part of the entire transaction was the willingness of the extremely radical Pettigrew to associate himself with men like Stewart and Herreid, leaders of the hated Republican party. Perhaps the incident is a good example of the fact that Pettigrew, like many radicals of his day, had a dual standard of conduct. In politics, his malevolence toward the Republicans went unchecked, while in personal and business transactions he was quite willing to deal with the same men he criticized on another plane.

Pettigrew's mining interests flourished in the years

¹Pettigrew to Russell, July 28, 1905, Daniel Lindsay Russell Papers, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

²Pettigrew to Russell, February 7, 1901, in ibid.

³Russell to Pettigrew, July 16, 1905, in ibid.

after he left the Senate. He became owner or part owner of copper mines in California and Arizona.⁴ The Arizona mine was located near Yuma and was known as the "Del Monte." Pettigrew seems to have had a controlling interest in the corporation which owned this mine. Stock sold for three dollars and about 100,000 shares were offered for sale. Of these, Pettigrew had personal control of a bloc of 12,000, some of which he sold for his own profit.⁵ The other mine was known as the "California King" and was also located near Yuma, Arizona. Its lode was somewhat inferior to "Del Monte," but by the summer of 1903, was yielding 300 tons of ore per day to treatment. Although he encountered temporary financial setbacks from time to time, Pettigrew made large profits, and estimated that in the long run he cleared \$500,000 from his investments.⁶

Pettigrew's successful business activities did not alter his political views as failure in business had done ten years before. He continued to advocate the tenets of Populism, though he sought to achieve these principles through the Democratic party. He also maintained his political connections in South Dakota, despite the fact that he resided

⁴Pettigrew to James H. Drake, Morgan Park, Illinois, March 14, 1902, Pettigrew Papers.

⁵Pettigrew to W.A. Means and Company, New York, March 14, 1902, in ibid.

⁶Pettigrew to D.H. Henry, Chamberlain, South Dakota, August 17, 1903, in ibid.

in New York, and was able to secure a seat on the state delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 1904.⁷ He preferred William Randolph Hearst for the nomination in 1904, considering him vastly more acceptable than Judge Alton B. Parker of New York. The Democratic party, he found, was divided into two factions as the campaign approached; those, like Parker, who were willing to abandon the silver plank in the party platform; and those, like Hearst, who were not. In December 1903, Hearst called on Pettigrew in New York City, asking for support from the South Dakota delegates at the forthcoming convention.⁸ After due consideration the Senator decided to lend Hearst his personal support, and began inquiring as to the popularity of the publisher throughout the party. By the middle of January 1904, Pettigrew was convinced that Hearst could easily win the nomination and defeat Theodore Roosevelt in the election.⁹ He had discovered that Tammany Hall was at best lukewarm in its support of Parker and that Hearst had a devoted following in the West.¹⁰ On January 20, Pettigrew issued a statement

⁷Pettigrew to W.H. Sawyer, Sioux Falls, February 3, 1904, in ibid.

⁸Pettigrew to E.S. Johnson, December 28, 1903, in ibid.

⁹Pettigrew to H.F. Miller, Fargo, North Dakota, January 4, 1904; Pettigrew to Frank Parsons, Philadelphia, January 14, 1904, in ibid.

¹⁰Pettigrew to H.W. Sawyer, Sioux Falls, January 18, 1904, in ibid.

to South Dakota Democrats explaining his position:¹¹

I support Hearst. He is rich, but has made his money selling newspapers and by inheritance from his father who was in mining. He and his mother own one-third of the Homestake Mine but their sympathies are with the working man. He opposes trusts and favors government ownership of railroads. He will be an aggressive candidate.

The year 1904 was one of unrest in South Dakota politics and the wily Richard Pettigrew sought to take full advantage of the situation. Coe I. Crawford moved against the Kittridge machine and nearly succeeded in gaining control of the Republican convention. On the other hand, Pettigrew appealed to state Democrats for support on grounds that the only chance for the Progressive Movement lay within that party. It was on this basis that he hoped to line up the state for William Randolph Hearst.¹²

The State Democratic Convention met in Sioux Falls on March 30. The seven-hundred delegates attending were divided almost exclusively into two factions; the "old guard," and the "raw recruits," or those members who had entered the party after 1896. It appeared from the outset that the "raw recruits" were in the majority and that they were under the personal control of Richard Pettigrew. This impression was confirmed the night before the official proceedings began

¹¹ Pettigrew to Harry Wentxy, Chairman, South Dakota State Democratic Committee, undated, Pettigrew Papers.

¹² Schell, South Dakota, 259-260.

when the state central committee met to elect temporary officers. The "raw recruits" nominated Pettigrewite S.A. Ramsey of Woonsocket for the chair, while the "old guard" named John Martin of Codrington County. Ramsey won easily by a vote of 28 to 19.¹³

On the floor of the convention the "raw recruits" had it all their own way. Hearst banners and pictures of the great man bedecked the hall. Pettigrew and seven other Hearst men were named delegates to the national convention, and the climax of the whole affair was an address by Pettigrew himself who had arrived from New York to experience the full measure of his triumph. The Senator began by declaring himself to be a Democrat and expressing his happiness over this fact. He was greeted with a wild ovation. He then lauded William Randolph Hearst in true Pettigrewian style. The Publisher, he declared, had made his money honestly by selling newspapers at one cent per copy. The fact that the New York Journal had the largest circulation in the world, Pettigrew went on, proved that Hearst had ability. He would be nominated and would make a great President. Again there was an extended ovation. Pettigrew's speech was liberally sprinkled with what the newspapers called "socialist doctrine." He advocated municipal and government ownership of public utilities and promised to introduce a truly progressive

¹³Sioux Falls Argus Leader, March 30, 1904.

platform to the resolutions committee at St. Louis. At the conclusion of his address Pettigrew was given a standing ovation and shortly after, the proceedings of the convention were concluded by electing him chairman of the state delegation.¹⁴

The Hearst-for-President boom was actually a home made affair. It gained most of its impetus from Hearst's own employees and newspapers working through his National Association of Democratic Clubs and through political leaders like Pettigrew anxious to gain the favor of his newspapers. Nevertheless, his candidacy struck a responsive chord among people who knew his interest in reform and over two-hundred newspapers around the nation commended the ambitions of the "great advocate of popular welfare." Despite the great personal wealth of Hearst himself, his campaign fund was small and in some cases nonexistent. However, when delegates began to arrive in St. Louis it was discovered that Hearst had carried the state conventions of South Dakota, California, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wyoming. Counting other stragglers, the Publisher had 104 instructed delegates on opening day.¹⁵

¹⁴Ibid., March 31, 1904.

¹⁵John K. Winkler, William Randolph Hearst (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1928), 189-191.

Even though his partisans were vocal, Hearst never had much chance to win the nomination from Alton B. Parker. Enemy newspapers derided his candidacy, and even those which might have been friendly could not muster very much enthusiasm once the convention got under way.¹⁶ Hearst was further injured by the announcement on July 5 that Tammany Hall was withdrawing opposition to Parker. Later that same night when key states such as Pennsylvania caucused and the tide moved inexorably in favor of Parker, the Hearst Headquarters at the Hotel Jefferson became enveloped in gloom.¹⁷

Meanwhile, Richard Pettigrew was more concerned with the treatment of his suggested platform by the resolutions committee. The only plank in his platform to receive serious consideration by the committee, however, was the one calling for government ownership of public utilities. It was the most radical of his proposals and also the one closest to his heart.¹⁸ Nevertheless, after a short discussion, the committee

¹⁶New York Times, July 6, 1904; Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 2, 1904.

¹⁷Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 5, 1904.

¹⁸R.F. Pettigrew, "Platform Submitted to the Democratic National Convention, St. Louis, 1904." The planks were as follows: 1. Equal taxation. 2. Government ownership of all public utilities. 3. All money to be issued directly by the government rather than through banks. 4. Postal Savings Banks. 5. No bank to be allowed to deposit in another bank and call it "reserve." 6. Prohibition of speculation in stock and bonds, and farm products, and the closing of such "gambling houses as the New York Stock Exchange and the Chicago Board of Trade." 7. Initiative, referendum and recall. 8. Graduated income and inheritance

rejected the Pettigrew Plank as impracticable. In the end, the only victory scored by the anti-Parker forces on the resolutions committee was achieved by William Jennings Bryan who succeeded in having the gold plank in the platform stricken out.¹⁹ This was also the high point of the entire convention for the Hearst forces because when news of Bryan's victory was relayed to Parker, he wired the convention threatening to withdraw as a candidate. The receipt of this message forced a showdown vote on the floor of the convention on the question: gold or no gold. Pettigrew and his colleagues from South Dakota joined with 182 others in voting no on the demands of Parker, but the Judge did not withdraw and was nominated on the first ballot.²⁰ With both his candidate and platform repudiated, Pettigrew returned to New York in disgust.

In the years which followed, Pettigrew maintained his affiliation with the Democrats even though his views were those of an extremely radical socialist. In 1908 he once more served on the South Dakota delegation to the Democratic

taxes. 9. Repeal of tariff on all articles manufactured or sold by trusts. 10. Exclusion of trust controlled items from interstate commerce. 11. Reorganization of the federal courts--short terms for judges. 12. Life and fire insurance to be controlled by the states. 13. Exemption of land improvement from taxation. 14. Old age pensions. 15. Withdrawal of remaining government lands from sale.

¹⁹Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 8, 1904.

²⁰Winkler, W.R. Hearst, 193; New York Times, July 10, 1904; Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 9, 1904.

Convention at Denver, and lent his support to Bryan. Before the convention met, Bryan contacted Pettigrew asking him to see Charles F. Murphy of Tammany Hall, and Roger B. Sullivan of the Chicago machine. Pettigrew's mission was to elicit support from these organizations for the Commoner in exchange for a promise of "fair treatment" from him if he were elected. Pettigrew was successful in Chicago, but was unable to crack the solid opposition of Tammany to Bryan.²¹ Nevertheless, Bryan was in complete control of the Denver convention, and dictated his own nomination.²² Later, Pettigrew did a little campaigning for the Democrats, and after their defeat Bryan addressed him a letter of thanks:²³

Thank you for your help and service during the campaign. We are naturally disappointed at defeat but cannot lay down our arms merely because we have lost a battle. The things we advocate are worth fighting for and I shall continue to fight. With the cooperation of men like you we shall succeed.

As time wore on, Pettigrew became more and more interested in socialism, but he never joined the Socialist party. He also began to address himself to the problems of American workers. In a letter to Samuel Gompers dated August 8, 1911, Pettigrew declared that the land and all

²¹Bryan to Pettigrew, 1908 (The exact date is obliterated), Pettigrew Papers.

²²M.R. Werner, Bryan (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929), 158.

²³Bryan to Pettigrew, December 18, 1908, Pettigrew Papers.

instruments of production should be cooperatively or publicly owned, and that laboring men would never receive what they deserved until this came about.²⁴ The letter was meant to be a criticism of Gompers for whom Pettigrew had very little regard. In an unpublished manuscript written at about the same time Pettigrew declared that Gompers was the tool of capitalists and had been a party to their methods of exploitation since the beginning of his career.²⁵

By this time, the Senator was known as one of four self-styled "chief radicals" in the Democratic party, and in this role he attempted a comeback to public life which came within an ace of success. In January, 1912 he went home to South Dakota to assume the leadership of the "Champ Clark for President Movement."²⁶

On January 31, 1912, a convention of Democrats met in Pierre to select delegates to the national convention and to issue instructions to these delegates. Pettigrew attended, was named a delegate, and declared himself for Speaker Clark. Pettigrew's group filed for the preferential primary to be held later, under the heading, "Champ Clark for President." One month later, on March 1, 1912, E.S. Johnson, a candidate

²⁴Pettigrew to Gompers, August 8, 1911, in ibid.

²⁵R.F. Pettigrew, "Capital and Labor," unpublished manuscript, in ibid.

²⁶Arthur S. Link, Wilson: The Road to the White House (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1917), 380.

for Governor of South Dakota, made up another ticket of ten delegates to the national convention under the motto, "The Wilson-Bryan Progressive Democracy." He filed this ticket with the South Dakota Secretary of State for participation in the primary. These groups represented the two dominant factions in South Dakota. Later, however, a third ticket was placed in the field which also purported to be a Clark faction. The purpose of this ticket was to split the Clark vote in the hope that Wilson would receive a plurality. The trick was successful and the primary in May gave a small preference to Wilson.²⁷

Meanwhile, Pettigrew was busily engaged in his campaign for Clark. On March 13, 1912, he wrote to the Speaker outlining his position: "As a Progressive I wish you would come out in favor of Government ownership of railroads, abolition of the federal courts, and withdrawing all public lands in Alaska from sale. . . . Announce your position in these matters soon so that Roosevelt will not steal all our Progressive matter."²⁸ Pettigrew then went on a speaking tour for his candidate which took him to all parts of the state. He meant to do all that he could for Clark in the hope that he would be amply rewarded. By June he completed

²⁷ Legal Deposition of R.F. Pettigrew, July 3, 1912, in ibid.; Sioux Falls Argus Leader, June 27, 1912.

²⁸ Pettigrew to Clark, March 13, 1912, in ibid.

local preparations and journeyed to Baltimore for the national convention. At about the same time an article on him appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, and a portion of it was later reprinted in the Sioux Falls Argus Leader. "The lean, cadaverous, saturnine R.F. Pettigrew of South Dakota is one of the leaders of the Champ Clark Movement," declared writer S.G. Blyth. He went on to describe Pettigrew's career, his "disappearance" from politics in 1901, and his attempted comeback in 1912. "If Clark is successful," declared the author, "much of the credit will be due R.F. Pettigrew. He is one of the guiding lights of the Clark surge at Baltimore."²⁹

Unfortunately, "the Clark Surge at Baltimore" fizzled. The first act in the fiasco was called by the newspapers, "The South Dakota Steal." Two reports were submitted to the floor by the credentials committee. The majority report favored Pettigrew's Clark delegation while the minority report was for Wilson. Even though the Democratic National Committee had already approved the Wilson delegation, the credentials committee unseated them on grounds that the two Clark tickets combined had polled more votes in the preferential primary. However, when the matter was submitted to the floor of the convention for debate, it was found that the rank and file delegates were sympathetic to

²⁹ Sioux Falls Argus Leader, June 27, 1912.

Wilson. Even though charges of fraud were levelled by Pettigrew and others, the convention voted to accept the minority report by a vote of 633 1/2 to 437.³⁰

"The South Dakota Steal," however, was really only a minor scene in the over-all picture which developed. It began to take shape during the night and early morning of June 27 and 28 when the nominations for President were made.³¹ There were several favorite sons, but the significant candidates were Clark, Wilson, Oscar W. Underwood, and Governor Judson Harmon of Ohio. The first ballot was taken on the morning of June 28. Clark led with 440 1/2 votes; followed by Wilson with 324; Harmon, 148; and Underwood, 117 1/2. The stage was now set for a momentous struggle, and the convention adjourned.³²

The convention went through nine ballots the following day with little change until on the tenth, Charles F. Murphy of Tammany Hall shifted his state's votes from Harmon to Clark. This gave Clark 556 votes and a majority. The Speaker, in his Washington office, prepared a telegram of acceptance which he would send as soon as the requisite two-thirds majority was reached. But Clark never received the

³⁰Ibid., June 29, 1912.

³¹Link, Wilson: The Road to the White House, 445.

³²Ibid., 447-448.

necessary votes. During the demonstration which followed the Tammany switch, Wilson's managers pleaded with the Underwood men not to go over to Clark. On the eleventh ballot the Underwood votes held firm, the expected Clark landslide failed to materialize, and the convention adjourned.³³

The climax had now been reached and passed. By convincing the supporters of Underwood to stay with their man, Wilson's managers successfully defeated Clark's bid for the nomination. From this point onward the outcome was only a matter of time. On the ballots which followed the next day, there was little change in the voting. Then on the fourteenth ballot the next important step in the drama unfolded. William Jennings Bryan gained the floor and declared to the astonished delegates that Nebraska would never vote for Clark so long as he had the support of Tammany Hall. This declaration by Bryan nearly caused a riot, but in the long run had little to do with the outcome of the convention. After the confusion had subsided, the voting continued once again, ballot after ballot, with little noticeable change until the forty-third round when Illinois swung to Wilson. This gave him a majority for the first time and precipitated his nomination. However, his managers were still fearful that unless he gained the support of the Underwood delegates, he could not win. They now pleaded with Underwood's managers

³³Ibid., 448-450.

to release his votes, and finally, on the forty-sixth ballot, an agreement was reached. Shortly after, the Clark and Harmon votes were released and on the afternoon of July 2, 1912, Woodrow Wilson became the Democratic nominee for President of the United States.³⁴

Although Bryan's dramatic gesture had little to do with Clark's defeat, Pettigrew and the Speaker both thought it was the key. Pettigrew was said by many to be nearly irrational with rage, but he finally calmed down enough to issue a statement to the press in which he indicted Bryan for rank hypocrisy and treachery. In his statement, Pettigrew made public the story of how he had acted as liaison man between the Commoner and the Democratic machines of New York and Illinois in 1908. "Bryan doesn't want any Democrat elected now," the Senator raged, "because it would cost him the party leadership and with that would go the advertizing which makes his lectures and writing so profitable. In this role he is the best asset the Republicans have."³⁵ Later, Champ Clark wrote Pettigrew thanking him for services rendered:³⁶

I am obliged for your unselfish support. It did me much good in receiving the large vote I got at Baltimore. . . . I know how you feel about the

³⁴ Ibid., 460-462.

³⁵ R.F. Pettigrew, "The Campaign of 1912," Pettigrew Papers.

³⁶ Clark to Pettigrew, August 17, 1912, in ibid.

Baltimore outrage, but after all Wilson was nominated according to the rules. The two-thirds rule should have been abolished long ago. I have always been a progressive and will continue so to the end.

The "Baltimore outrage" marked the end of Pettigrew's twelve-year affiliation with the Democratic party. On July 10, 1912, he journeyed to Oyster Bay, New York, for a conference with the one whom he called "that strenuous little man who always wants to kill something." At this conference Pettigrew cast his lot with Theodore Roosevelt.³⁷ The Senator explained to Roosevelt that he had left the Democratic party because of the continual perfidy of Bryan, but more than that, because the party had nominated Wilson whom Pettigrew considered innately conservative. "I refused to support Parker in 1904," he wrote, "because he was a conservative of the Cleveland school. And I will not support Wilson because he is even more conservative than Parker. Wilson's platform is not a progressive document. They declare against the Aldrich bill as the only plank on money and they back down from their former position on the Philippine Islands."³⁸

Pettigrew tried to induce the "strenuous little man" to adopt an extremely radical platform studded with some

³⁷ Telegram from New York World to Pettigrew, April 28, 1915; Telegram from Pettigrew to New York World, April 20, 1915, in ibid.

³⁸ Pettigrew, "The Campaign of 1912," in ibid.

of the old line Populist demands, and a few new ones. He wanted Roosevelt to come out in favor of government ownership of railroads and all other means of communication. But Pettigrew also asked Roosevelt to declare that he favored the abolition of the Federal District and Circuit Courts, and a radical reduction in the power of the United States Supreme Court, all of which Pettigrew believed to be controlled by the "trusts." "I am not interested in reform," wrote the Senator, "but in revolution which will change the entire social and economic system and establish equal opportunity for all."³⁹

Roosevelt, however, was not so willing as Pettigrew to burn all his political bridges behind him. Although he now headed the "Progressive Movement," he was certainly no Socialist.⁴⁰ At Columbus, Ohio, where he "threw his hat into the ring" on February 21, 1912, Roosevelt made one of the most radical pronouncements of his career, which was said by many observers to be designed specifically to publicize his political aspirations.⁴¹ In this speech he declared in favor of the initiative and referendum, and the recall of judicial decisions, but he said nothing about the abolition

³⁹Pettigrew to Roosevelt, July 19, 1912, in ibid.

⁴⁰Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), 234-235.

⁴¹Ibid., 233.

of the court system. At the same time, he repeated his oft-stated views on trusts and corporations, which were much less radical than those of Pettigrew. Existing anti-trust legislation, Roosevelt declared, was inadequate because it did not distinguish between honest, efficient businesses and those guilty of unfair, monopolistic practices. Roosevelt said the real progressive was one who endeavored to shape the policy of the government so as to encourage legitimate and honest business while at the same time moving against crookedness and injustice. All businesses, he concluded, into which the element of monopoly might enter, should be carefully regulated by the administrative branch of the government. However, honest efficiency should not be penalized.⁴² Concerning the suggestions of Pettigrew, Roosevelt commented:⁴³

I shall run square on the Columbus program but you must not ask me to go far beyond it. I have had enough trouble educating people to the position I took there. We can ask for government ownership of railroad and telegraph lines in Alaska, however. It is a good place to experiment.

It seems incredible that Pettigrew could have been sincere in his hatred of big business and yet have chosen to support the New Nationalism over the New Freedom, but such

⁴²New York Times, February 22, 1912.

⁴³Roosevelt to Pettigrew, July 25, 1912, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Letters Sent, Vol. 67, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

is the case. The only plausible explanation for his stand is that his hatred of Wilson and Bryan for having defeated his bid for a serious political comeback overshadowed his devotion to principle. As will be seen, however, within a very short time the situation was altered as his devotion to radical reform became an obsession with him which governed his every move.

The Senator now made his permanent home in Sioux Falls, and here on Labor Day, 1912, he made a campaign speech before the workers of the city. "Laboring men should go into politics," he declared, "and insist on just legislation to insure a just relationship between labor and capital. Furthermore, the stock markets should be abolished and the thieves who run them thrown into jail." He went on to repeat his usual demands for government ownership of railroads and communications, abolition of federal courts and the establishment of postal savings banks.⁴⁴ It was speech of a much more radical nature than Theodore Roosevelt would have approved.

Despite his feelings, Pettigrew accepted the platform of the Progressive party. In October, Roosevelt wrote the Senator expressing his gratitude. "I am glad you like the platform," he said, "It does not go as far as I myself am

⁴⁴R.F. Pettigrew, "Manuscript of Speech to Workers of Sioux Falls," Pettigrew Papers.

willing to go or as far as all of us will go four or eight years hence. But it is better that these movements proceed step by step."⁴⁵

The platform firmly reiterated Roosevelt's Columbus speech of several months before. Thus at the time Pettigrew was forced to accept the idea that the Progressives must proceed "step by step" and that the Columbus program was as far as the Colonel could go.⁴⁶ In any event, Pettigrew continued the campaign and considered himself in large measure responsible for the fact that Roosevelt carried South Dakota in the election. "We carried the state," he wrote, "but it was not easy as the influence of the two great railroads was behind Wilson, in addition to the influence of the Homestake Mine people."⁴⁷

The campaign of 1912 marked the last serious engagement of Richard Pettigrew in politics. From this point to the end of his life he isolated himself from both major parties as well as from the mainstream of American radicalism, and proclaimed loudly that no existing protest movement was radical enough to do what was needed for the American people. An excellent example of his attitude was

⁴⁵Roosevelt to Pettigrew, October 29, 1912, in ibid.

⁴⁶New York Times, August 8, 1912.

⁴⁷Pettigrew to Roosevelt, November 8, 1912, Pettigrew Papers.

his brief association with the Non-Partisan League. In December, 1916, Pettigrew attended a meeting in Aberdeen which was called by A.C. Townley, founder and leader of the League in North Dakota. Later, he wrote of this meeting: "I found that I had not been called to a conference, but had been called there for the purpose of endorsing what Mr. Townley had already decided to do."⁴⁸ It developed that Townley had decided to organize the League in South Dakota and was testing the sentiments of men who had formerly been prominent in the farm movement. However, Pettigrew concluded that Townley was little more than a profiteer who was determined to swindle the people of his state. "I found that \$8.20 of every \$16.00 received by Townley went into his own pocket," wrote the Senator. He suggested that Townley be ignored and that a South Dakota League be organized independently by himself, Andrew Lee, Henry L. Loucks and several others.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, although the Non-Partisan League was later active in South Dakota politics, Pettigrew apparently had nothing to do with it. On May 5, 1917, he wrote to socialist author Charles Edward Russell that he had no further interest in such an organization.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Pettigrew to Charles Edward Russell, July 14, 1923, in ibid.

⁴⁹ Pettigrew to James E. Kelly, Pierre, January 1, 1917, in ibid.

⁵⁰ Pettigrew to Russell, May 5, 1917, in ibid.

Meanwhile, contemporary events continued to affect Pettigrew's political philosophy. After the outbreak of the World War in 1914, he expended a good deal of time and energy denouncing it as a capitalist scheme to create huge profits for the rich,⁵¹ and urging that the United States remain strictly neutral. He was an avowed opponent of preparedness,⁵² and he publicly advised all young men to refuse to enlist in the national guard. "Why should those who have no property go to war to protect property owned by others but which they have not produced," said Pettigrew. He believed that the national guard was being organized to suppress revolt among the nation's laborers. "They will be sent from state to state," he wrote, "to kill protesting workers and innocent women and children."⁵³

After the United States entered the war, Pettigrew went too far in his denunciations of government policies. On October 6, 1917, in an interview which appeared in the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, Pettigrew repeated his views as to the origins of the war and advised young men to do everything in their power to avoid the draft. Within ten days after the appearance of the interview he was

⁵¹Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 382-383.

⁵²Pettigrew, "On Universal Military Training," Manuscript found in Pettigrew Papers.

⁵³Pettigrew to Sioux Falls Argus Leader, August 11, 1916, in ibid.

indicted by a grand jury under the provisions of the Espionage Act of April 6, 1917, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. The indictment charged that Pettigrew had uttered false and malicious statements against the government of the United States; that he had obstructed the enlistments and recruitment of military personnel, and that he had incited insubordination and mutiny among members of the armed forces.⁵⁴ The Senator was in Chicago at the time of his indictment and a federal marshal was dispatched to bring him home. However, he appeared before a federal court in Chicago, posted bond of \$5000, and was allowed to remain free. Meanwhile, he secured attorneys in Sioux Falls, and they began to prepare his defense.⁵⁵ Pettigrew was to be defended by C.O. Bailey and G.F. Williams of Sioux Falls, and by the illustrious Clarence Darrow of Chicago. Their plan was to delay the case by all possible means and then avoid all mention of the war itself when the Senator should finally be put on trial. ". . . Our line of defense should be the Senator's many years of radical attacks on financial abuses," wrote Williams. "If he could show the jury that for many years he has fought the great financial interests he could

⁵⁴Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 371.

⁵⁵George F. Williams to Joe Kirby, Sioux Falls, November 20, 1917, Pettigrew Papers.

justify most of his statements without prejudicing the jury or the court."⁵⁶

Pettigrew became very unpopular during the time he was under indictment. On April 5, 1918, a mob gathered in downtown Sioux Falls, proceeded to Pettigrew's office, and painted it yellow. The Senator was still in Chicago at the time and Williams advised that he had better stay there.⁵⁷

Fortunately, for Pettigrew, the case never came to trial. After more than a year of delay, his attorneys filed a demurrer which, much to their surprise, was granted. As a result, the charges against the Senator were dropped.⁵⁸ The indictment, however, became one of Pettigrew's most treasured possessions; a symbol of his defiance. He hung it on the wall of the study in his home between the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and there, by order of his will, it hangs today.⁵⁹

It was during the same period that the Russian Revolution of 1917 occurred. This event had a profound influence on the mind of Richard Pettigrew, who wrote:

⁵⁶Williams to Bailey, September 3, 1918, in ibid.

⁵⁷New York Times, April 5, 1918; Williams to Pettigrew, May 1, 1918, Pettigrew Papers.

⁵⁸Bailey to Pettigrew, September 18, 1918, in ibid.

⁵⁹R.F. Pettigrew, "Last Will and Testament," in ibid.

⁶⁰Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 388.

The Russian Revolution is the greatest event of our times. It marks the beginning of the epoch when the working people will assume the task of directing and controlling industry. It blazes a path into this unknown country where the workers of the world are destined to take from their exploiters the right to control and direct the economic affairs of the community.

Although Pettigrew claimed to be a serious student of Russian affairs, his explanation of the causes of the Bolshevik Revolution reveals that he had little or no real understanding of the situation. "The war was an affirmation of capitalism," he wrote. "The Russian Revolution was the answer of the workers. The demands of the Russian people were very simple. They asked for work, bread and peace-- those things that the capitalist system in Russia was unable to provide--hence the revolution." The Senator went on to say that the Russians had wisely abandoned the precedent of copying the American Constitution, "which permits the economic masters to carry on their work of exploitation with impunity," and had written a constitution based upon the proposition that the exploitation of one man by another must cease.⁶¹

Pettigrew now came to believe that the only chance for civilization was a general movement among the workers of the world patterned upon his concept of the Russian Revolution. The workers must organize, he thought, seize possession of their jobs, assume direction of all economic

⁶¹ Ibid., 384.

policy, and take the full value of everything they created for themselves. He believed, however, that his dream could perchance be accomplished without resort to violence through the organization of a political party of workers.⁶²

The Senator spent most of his time in the years after 1917 preparing the manuscripts of his two books. The first one to be published was The Course of Empire, which appeared in 1920. It was a compendium of Pettigrew's anti-imperialist speeches made while he was in the Senate. The second volume appeared in 1922 and was given the intriguing title, Imperial Washington. It was supposed to be a record of Pettigrew's fifty years in politics in which he traced the reasons for his hatred of the American system. He attempted to show how leading politicians had "sold out" to Wall Street and how the ideals of the American Revolution had been prostituted by the profit motive and the unchecked spoliation of the American working class. Pettigrew was very proud of this book, and he sent several copies to Lenin and Trotsky with the request that his work be translated into Russian. He was informed that it would be; however, the Library of Congress Catalogue gives no indication that such a translation exists.⁶³

⁶²Ibid., 425.

⁶³Pettigrew to Leon Trotsky, May 9, 1923; L. Lotievia to Pettigrew, August 24, 1923, Pettigrew Papers.

Meanwhile, the Senator continued to seek answers to the problems which he thought were facing the American people. In June 1920, he was in Chicago, and studied as closely as he could the activities of the Republican National Convention. Later, in an unpublished manuscript, he described these proceedings:⁶⁴

I was there from June 2 to June 12 and saw the whole operation. The representatives of the great interests arrived in a body and took charge of the convention from the start. It was the first time they have ever done this. There was Gary of the steel corporation; Davidson and Lamont of Morgan and Company; H.F. Allen of Lee Higgins and Company; Atterbury, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad. . . . They took no chances. They came, wrote the platform, and nominated the candidates. They would have been willing to take Lowden or Wood, but Borah said he would bolt the convention if they did. They were holding Knox, Hoover and Harding in reserve. . . . They settled on Harding; they needed Ohio to win and he was solid on the question of commercial conquest of the earth by the United States. Their full determination is to envelope all the oil, iron and coal of the world and exploit the natural resources of North America, South America, Asia and Africa.

Such a pronouncement by the Senator only illustrates in grandiloquent style the fact that now, at an advanced age, he had little understanding of contemporary affairs. He still dwelt in a Hobsonian world of intrigue in which all political matters were controlled exclusively by the financiers who were compelled by the capitalistic system to seek new markets and sources of raw materials, or perish.

Still, Senator Pettigrew continued his search for a

⁶⁴R.F. Pettigrew, "The Republican Convention of 1920," Manuscript found in Pettigrew Papers.

new political body which would meet his desires. In July, 1920, he attended the national convention of the newly organized Farmer-Labor party, which also met in Chicago.⁶⁵ Although he was not a delegate and took no active part in the proceedings of the convention, Pettigrew believed this group came close to fulfilling his wishes for a third party of workers and farmers which could offer substantial opposition to the "tools of Wall Street." The convention nominated Parley P. Christensen of Utah for President and Pettigrew supported him in the campaign. He published a broadside in the Sioux Falls Press exhorting the voters of South Dakota to carry the state for the Farmer-Laborites, and then:

" . . . take possession of the state government, and establish state banks and deposit all the money of the state in them where it will be available to help maintain the crops and carry prices. . . ."

Pettigrew declared that the basis of the farmers' problems was that they were forced to sell their crops for less than it cost to produce them to middle-men who in turn were controlled by Eastern financiers. Farmers were then forced to borrow from the banking community in order to operate and thus remained at the mercy of the exploiters. If all the money in the state of South Dakota could be controlled by the farmers themselves, he thought, the problem would be

⁶⁵New York Times, July 15, 1920.

solved.⁶⁶

In the Sioux Falls Press of October 17, 1920, Pettigrew published another double-page broadside condemning the candidacy of both Harding and Cox. "I suppose one or the other of these pygmies will be elected," he lamented, "but I shall vote for neither of them because they are both 'tools of Wall Street.'"⁶⁷ Later, the Senator recorded his impressions of the election in his book, Imperial Washington. "The great war is over. Peace has been restored. Sanity is supposed to have replaced the hysteria of the war frenzy. Yet Harding is in the White House, while Debs, the champion of economic emancipation, is in the Atlanta penitentiary."⁶⁸ Apparently, Pettigrew took little comfort from the fact that Parley Christensen polled 37,000 votes in South Dakota, one of his best showings in the nation.⁶⁹

Pettigrew maintained his affiliation with the Farmer-Labor party, attending most of its conventions in the years which followed. In May, 1922, he attended a gathering in Chicago at which seventy delegates representing seventeen

⁶⁶Sioux Falls Press, No date, Clipping, Pettigrew Papers.

⁶⁷Ibid., October 17, 1920.

⁶⁸Pettigrew, Imperial Washington, 402.

⁶⁹Nathan Fine, Labor and Farmer Parties in the United States (New York: Rand School of Social Science, 1928), 395.

states laid plans for the off-year elections. That fall he saw the party poll about 46,000 Congressional votes in South Dakota.⁷⁰ In July, 1923, Pettigrew attended another convention of the National Farmer-Labor party in Chicago.⁷¹ Here, he saw the party organization infiltrated and captured by the Workers' party of William Z. Foster.⁷² He was very much opposed to this event, however, because he was suspicious of the motivations of Foster.

After the July convention of 1923, the Farmer-Labor party rapidly disintegrated, and two distinct groups emerged; the Federated Farmer-Labor party, and the old National Farmer-Labor party. The former organization, however, existed only on paper and was controlled by the communists of the American Workers' party. The latter, now divested of all vitality, soon gave way to the leadership of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party. This group, in an effort to pull all the dissident factions together, called a national convention to meet in St. Paul on June 17, 1924.⁷³ Pettigrew attended the convention and once again saw the communists gain control. The sight did not please him, however, because of

⁷⁰Ibid., 429.

⁷¹Pettigrew to Cherup Spic Dovick, June 25, 1923, Pettigrew Papers.

⁷²New York Times, July 6, 1923.

⁷³Fine, Farmer and Labor Parties in the U.S., 433.

his dislike for Foster. "The . . . party has a few sincere communists," he wrote, "but they are controlled by a man named Foster and a man named Kennedy, who are self-seeking scoundrels, and may be purchased for cash or other personal advantage."

Disgusted with the leadership of the Worker's party, Pettigrew corresponded with leaders of other left wing organizations in an effort to find more "sincere communists." He found them all lacking, however, and was especially critical of the National Peoples' Progressive party and its presidential candidate, R.P. Painter. "His platform is the usual dodge," wrote the Senator. "The [sic] declare for as little as possible in order to get all the radicals on something. There is no principle involved."⁷⁴

Pettigrew became devoted to the idea that "every man is entitled to all he produces," and his devotion was not subject to compromise. No longer was he interested in politics as an art. Only his principles were important, and thus he denounced the candidacy of William Z. Foster in 1924 and spent the remainder of his time leveling bitter attacks not only at the American system, but at its radical opponents as well. He died on October 5, 1926, at the age of 78, with his dreams for reform as yet unrealized.

In the final analysis it must be concluded that

⁷⁴Pettigrew to Henry L. Loucks, April 17, 1924, Pettigrew Papers.

Richard Pettigrew had lost contact with reality. During the last fifteen years of his life, he demonstrated a complete inability to adjust to the great changes which were occurring in American society. Early in his career he showed a keen sensitivity to public needs, especially when they coincided with his own ambitions. Later, however, he adopted a rigid set of principles from which he would not depart. He refused to admit that others were concerned with the economic inequities of American life. He was blind to the positive work of reform accomplished by men like Woodrow Wilson. He even repudiated most American radicals, claiming to doubt their sincerity and integrity. Furthermore, his personal vindictiveness became even worse as he grew older, and he came to view all men who disagreed with him as scoundrels. Thus his final years were something of a tragedy, for had his energies been channeled into more useful endeavors, he might have accomplished much.

On the day of Pettigrew's death, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, so long his bitter critic, published an extremely sympathetic front-page obituary outlining the Senator's political philosophy. "He was a communist of a peculiar variety," declared the paper. "He compromised with no one, and in recent years had devoted all his time to attacks upon economic inequity."⁷⁵ But it was also recounted

⁷⁵ Sioux Falls Argus Leader, October 5, 1926.

that in his youth he was a pioneer, and he helped to build the very system which in his age he could not find the weapon to destroy.

EPILOGUE

The life of Richard Pettigrew is an intriguing one. Like most men he was certainly affected by the time and place in which he lived. However, in surveying his political career, it becomes clear that he reacted to his environment in two distinct ways during two separate periods of his life.

As a young man in Dakota Territory, Pettigrew's ambition and ability soon carried him to a position of leadership within the Republican party. When he entered the United States Senate in 1889, he was undeniably the most powerful man in South Dakota. From this point onward, however, his political career began to decline. Pettigrew's biased attitude toward the federal government and his clash with the Harrison Administration over patronage and the tariff raised questions concerning his loyalty in the minds of Republican leaders. His position on the Hawaiian question likewise caused doubts as he joined with the Democrats to block ratification of the first annexation treaty. Finally, his position on the silver question completely alienated him from the party and caused him to leave it in 1896.

In examining Pettigrew's bolt of the Republican party,

it is necessary to inquire whether he was actuated by political motivations or sincere belief in the efficacy of free coinage. The answer is, both. Pettigrew sincerely believed by 1894 that the Populist Movement in South Dakota was powerful enough to take political control of the state and sustain it for an indefinite period. He believed this because he thought the Populists had struck a responsive chord among the people, and hit upon the correct answer to the problems of the agrarian elements of the state. On the other hand, Pettigrew was a professional politician, and was determined to stay in office. Thus it was only natural for him to switch parties at the proper juncture.

Pettigrew's change-over was not a betrayal of principle because he was committed to the idea that free and unlimited coinage of silver was a panacea which would mitigate all the economic ills of the country. This can only be explained by saying that Pettigrew read the literature of free silver, and believed it. This belief, combined with his desire to remain in office, made his desertion of the Republican party virtually inevitable.

From 1896 onward, Pettigrew the shrewd politico rapidly gave way to Pettigrew the emotional zealot. During his anti-imperialist crusade he burned his bridges behind him and made return to the G.O.P. impossible. When he left the Senate, however, he maintained an interest in politics and for several years contemplated a return to public office.

In his thinking, however, he rapidly drifted away from the practical and into the realm of idealism, from which he never returned. This drift was complete by 1912, after which Pettigrew was little more than a political curiosity. His love for the Russian Revolution, his connection with the Farmer-Labor party, and his final conversion to communism mark the path of a "wild-eyed" radical, not a serious politician.

His radicalism was all too sincere, however. There is little doubt that Pettigrew believed every word he spoke and wrote about economic inequity. Oddly, much of what he said was true. Other thinkers recognized the problems which confronted American society, and endeavored to correct them. But the fact that Pettigrew thought all men who disagreed with him were evil, insincere and incompetent marked him as an outcast from the mainstream of American reform.

Nevertheless, Richard Pettigrew was one of those fortunate individuals destined by fate to leave his footprint on the sands of time. His contributions to the material development of Dakota were significant. Had he not been stymied by the depression, they would have been incalculably greater, for his dream of making Sioux Falls the hub of a trans-continental railway system came within an ace of success.

On the national scene, Pettigrew's most important

contribution was his backhanded support of forest reservation and administration. The law of March 3, 1891, which he helped to formulate became the basis for the national forest system of the United States. Furthermore, his amendment to the Sundry Civil Bill of 1897 provided for the administration of the forests at a most crucial juncture. Had he not altered the measure as he did and secured the support of needed western votes, the bill might have failed of passage indefinitely.

Senator Pettigrew's greatest shortcoming was his habitual use of biting sarcasm, invective, and slander in criticizing his political foes. This habit hastened the end of his own career as a public servant while he was still in the prime of life. Of course, it is impossible to say what the outcome would have been had he ever been elected to Congress again, but in any event, it cannot be denied that Pettigrew was a colorful figure, and a delightful example of political Americana. When he died, most people agreed that an irreplaceable facet had passed from the scene.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscripts Collections

Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

William Jennings Bryan Papers, William Augustus Croffut Papers, Benjamin Harrison Papers, William McKinley Papers, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, and the John Sherman Papers.

National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory, 1871-1884.

Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 60, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received.

Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 49, Dakota Territory, Miscellaneous Letters Received.

Pettigrew Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Richard Franklin Pettigrew Papers. This collection includes Pettigrew's private and official correspondence for the years he was in the Senate in carbon letter books. It also includes a filing cabinet filled with miscellaneous correspondence, and a number of unpublished manuscripts written by Pettigrew. Among these are papers dealing with Pettigrew's early experiences in Dakota Territory, his position on the money question, a short diary of events in 1897, the election of 1912, preparedness, the World War, and the election of 1920. The collection also includes manuscripts of Pettigrew's books, The Course of Empire, and Imperial Washington. Also included are a number of scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings which date from the eighteen-eighties and early nineties. The bulk of these clippings deal with the election of 1892.

South Dakota State Historical Society Museum, Pierre, South Dakota

Arthur C. Mellette Papers.

Andrew E. Lee Papers.

State University of South Dakota Museum, Vermillion, South Dakota

Andrew E. Lee Papers. This collection of official correspondence became divided. The major portion of the collection remained in the possession of the family and was later donated to the State University of South Dakota.

University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Daniel Lindsay Russell Papers.

Public DocumentsFederal

Bureau of the Census. Ninth Census of the United States, 1870. Population. Vol. II.

_____. Historical Statistics of the United States, 1960.

Congressional Record. 47th Congress, 49th-50th Congresses, 52nd-56th Congresses.

Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 244.

U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Territories. Report on House Bill 2972 to Provide Government for Hawaii, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., House Report No. 305. March 5, 1900.

_____. Report of the Secretary of the Treasury. 51 Cong., 1 Sess., Executive Document No. 2. December 2, 1889. lxxiv-lxxxii.

U.S. Congress, Senate. Papers Relating to the Establishment of Forest Reservations, 55 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 21. April 5, 1897.

_____. Resolution of Senator George F. Hoar Inquiring Whether Mr. Blount Had Been Commissioned and Sent to Hawaii Without the Consent of the Senate, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Miscellaneous Document No. 13. December 11, 1893.

- Memorial From Fred T. DuBois Remonstrating Against the Annexation of Hawaii, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 28. December 17, 1897.
- Lecture by Fred T. DuBois Against the Annexation of Hawaii, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 82. January 24, 1898.
- Committee on Immigration. Report on the Extension of the Immigration Laws of the United States to Hawaii, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Report No. 1654. February 13, 1899.
- Resolution of Senator William V. Allen Favoring the Annexation of Hawaii, 53 Cong., 3 Sess., Senate Miscellaneous Document No. 71. January 24, 1895.
- Opinion of the Secretary of Agriculture on the Influence which the Importation of Hawaiian Sugar Would Have on the Beet-Sugar Industry in the United States, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 63. January 17, 1898.
- Papers Relating to the Treaty with Spain, 56 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate Document No. 148. February 5, 1901.
- Communications from the Executive Department to Aguinaldo and Papers Relating to Other Matters, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 208. March 5, 1900.
- Preliminary Report of the Philippine Commission, 1899-1900, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 138. January 31, 1900.
- Committee on Pacific Islands and Puerto Rico. Hearings on Senate Bill 2264 to Provide Government for the Island of Puerto Rico, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., Senate Document No. 147. February 5, 1900.

South Dakota

Journal of the Senate of the Second Legislature of the State of South Dakota, Regular Session, 1891.

Journal of the Senate of the Fourth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, Regular Session, 1895.

Journal of the House of Representatives of the Fourth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, Regular Session, 1895.

Journal of the Senate of the Fifth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, Regular Session, 1897.

Report of the Dakota Railroad Commission, 1886. Bismarck: The Tribune Publishing Co., 1887.

State of South Dakota. Legislative Manual, Twelfth Session of the Legislature, 1911. Sioux Falls: Mark D. Scott Co., 1911.

Legislative Manual, Seventeenth Session of the Legislature, 1921. Sioux Falls: Mark D. Scott Co., 1921.

Territory of Dakota. Session Laws of 1885. Passed by the Regular Session of the Sixteenth Legislature. Yankton, Dakota Territory: Bowen and Kingsbury, Public Printers. The Press and Dakotan, 1885.

Newspapers

South Dakota

Aberdeen Daily News, 1890, 1896, 1897.

Huronite, 1890-1892, 1895-1896.

Sioux Falls Argus Leader, 1887, 1889, 1895, 1896, 1898, 1900, 1901, 1904, 1912, 1926.

Sioux Falls Press, 1880, 1886, 1887, 1889, 1892, 1895, 1896, 1920.

Yankton Press and Dakotan, 1875, 1878, 1879, 1881, 1883, 1892, 1896, 1897.

New York

New York Times, 1904, 1912, 1920, 1923.

New York Tribune, 1881, 1888, 1893-1899, 1920.

Books

Bailey, D.R. History of Minnehaha County. Sioux Falls: Brown and Saenger, 1899.

Barnes, J.A. John G. Carlisle. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1931.

- Beer, Thomas. Hanna. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929.
- Boyd, James P. (ed.). Men and Issues of 1900. New York: Private, 1900.
- Connelley, W.E. The Life of Preston B. Plumb. Chicago: Browne and Howell, 1913.
- Dunn, A.W. From Harrison to Harding. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1922.
- Ellis, Elmer. Henry Moore Teller. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1941.
- Faulkner, H.U. Politics, Reform and Expansion. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959.
- Fine, Nathan. Labor and Farmer Movements in the United States. New York: The Rand School of Social Science, 1928.
- Glad, Paul W. The Trumpet Soundeth. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960.
- Grunder, G.A. and Livezey, W.E. The Philippines and the United States. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951.
- Hepburn, A.B. A History of Currency in the United States. New York: The McMillan Co., 1924.
- Hicks, John D. The Populist Revolt. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960.
- Hofstadter, Richard. The American Political Tradition. New York: Vintage Books, 1960.
- Hyde, G.E. A Sioux Chronicle. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956.
- Ise, John. The United States Forest Service. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920.
- Kingsbury, George W. History of Dakota Territory, 2 Vols. Chicago: J.S. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915.
- Lamar, Howard R. Dakota Territory. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956.
- Laughlin, J.L. The History of Bimetallism in the United States. New York: Appleton and Co., 1896.

- Leech, Margaret. In the Days of McKinley. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959.
- Link, Arthur S. Wilson: The Road to the White House. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947.
- Malone, Dumas (ed.). Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946.
- McKee, Thomas. The National Conventions and Platforms of the Political Parties. Baltimore: The Friedenwald Co., 1906.
- Nevins, Allan. Grover Cleveland: A Portrait in Courage. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1933.
- Pettigrew, R.F. Imperial Washington. Chicago: Charles Kerr and Co., 1922.
- _____. The Course of Empire. Chicago: Boniwright, 1920.
- Pratt, J.W. Expansionists of 1898. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956.
- Pringle, H.F. The Life and Times of William Howard Taft. 2 Vols. New York: Ferrar and Rinehart, 1939.
- Richardson, J.D. Messages and Papers of the Presidents. 11 Vols. New York: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1909.
- Robinson, Doane. History of Dakota Territory and South Dakota. 2 Vols. New York: American Historical Society, 1930.
- Robinson, E.E. The Presidential Vote, 1896-1932. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1934.
- Sage, Leland L. William Boyd Allison. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1956.
- Schell, Herbert S. History of South Dakota. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961.
- Smith, D.H. The Forest Service. Washington: The Brookings Institution for Government Research, Service Monograph No. 58, 1930.
- Smith, G.W. South Dakota: Its History and Its People. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915.
- Stevens, S.K. American Expansion in Hawaii. Harrisburg, Pa.: Archives Publishing Co., 1945.

- Thompson, C.W. Party Leaders of the Time. New York: G.W. Dillingham and Co., 1906.
- Thurston, L.A. Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution. Honolulu: Private, 1936.
- Walters, Everett. Joseph Benson Foraker: An Uncompromising Republican. Columbus: The University of Ohio Press, 1951.
- Werner, M.R. Bryan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929.
- Winkler, John. William Randolph Hearst. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1928.
- White, Horace. Money and Banking. Boston: Ginn and Co., 1911.
- Zimmermann, E.W. World Resources and Production. New York: Harper Brothers, 1951.
- Annual Register, 1883. London: Rivington's, 1884.

Articles

- Bailey, T.A. "The United States and Hawaii During the Spanish-American War," American Historical Review, XXXVI (April, 1931), 552-601.
- _____. "The Election of 1900--Mandate for Imperialism?" Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXIV (March, 1937), 43-52.
- Belmont, Perry. "Congress, the President and the Philippines," North American Review, LXIX (December, 1899), 894-911.
- Bland, Richard P. "The Boons and Banes of Free Silver," North American Review, CLVI (February, 1893), 171-177.
- Bonis, H. "A Contrast and a Parallel," The Arena, XXIII (March, 1900), 321-336.
- Carnegie, Andrew. "Americanism v. Imperialism," North American Review, CLXIX (January, 1899), 1-13.
- Godkin, E.L. "The Silver Debate in the Senate," The Nation, XL (May 22, 1890), 403.

- Harrington, F.H. "The Literary Aspects of the New England Anti-Imperialist League," New England Quarterly, X (June, 1937), 211-222.
- _____. "The Anti-Imperialist Movement in the United States," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII (September, 1935), 211-230.
- Jones, John P. "What the Remonetization of Silver Would do for the Republic," The Arena, XVI (October, 1896), 736-742.
- Knowles, George H. "Grover Cleveland on Imperialism," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVI (September, 1950), 303-304.
- Leavitt, Samuel. "India Silver, Wheat and Cotton," The Arena, X (July, 1895), 192-200.
- Leech, E.O. "The Menace of Silver Legislation," North American Review, CLII (March, 1891), 299-310.
- Long, E.V. "The Menace of Imperialism," The Arena, XXIV (October, 1900), 337-357.
- Martin, Bradley. "American Imperialism," Nineteenth Century, XLVIII (September, 1900), 393-406.
- McDonald, William C. "Imperialism v. the Constitution," The Nation, LXVIII (January 12, 1899), 25-26.
- Parks, Samuel C. "Imperialism," The Arena, XXV (January, 1901), 577-587.
- Peffer, William A. "Imperialism: America's Historic Policy," North American Review, CLXXI (August, 1900), 246-258.
- Rowland, Donald. "The Establishment of the Republic of Hawaii," Pacific Historical Review, IV (September, 1935), 201-220.
- Russ, W.A. "The Role of Sugar in the Hawaiian Revolution," Pacific Historical Review, XII (December, 1939), 339-350.
- Scanlon, J.M. "Expansion--Past and Prospective," The Arena, XXIII (April, 1900), 337-352.
- Stark, E.D. "Silver Coinage," The Arena, XXX (January, 1891), 202-205.
- Stewart, W.M. "Silver and the Need for More Money," The Forum, XI (June, 1891), 429-437.

Thomas, C.S. "Bimetallism and Legislation," The Arena,
XI (February, 1895), 378-389.

Unpublished Materials

Drake, Lois Malvina. "The Influence of Newspapers of Dakota Territory Upon the Administration of Governor Nehemiah G. Ordway." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Missouri, 1941.

Hendrickson, K.E. "The Populist Movement in South Dakota," Unpublished Master's thesis, State University of South Dakota, 1959.

Parkinson, R.O. "The Early Career of Richard Franklin Pettigrew," Unpublished Master's thesis, State University of Iowa, 1938.