

midwestern populist leadership and edward bellamy:

"looking backward" into the future

christine mchugh

At the founding convention of the People's party in 1891, Minnesota Populist Ignatius Donnelly remarked that Edward Bellamy was an author "whom not to know is to argue one's self unknown."¹ Donnelly's compliment was typical of those expressed by midwestern Populist leaders, prominent agrarian reformers and newspaper editors, who read Bellamy's utopian novel, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* (1888). The author's vision of equality and brotherhood in a cooperative commonwealth found a responsive audience among agrarians burdened with economic hard times in the depression-ridden 1890s.

In the novel Julian West, a wealthy Bostonian, falls asleep on the evening of May 30, 1887, and awakes in an unrecognizable world 113 years later. A young woman named Edith discovers a sealed chamber with Julian magically preserved alive inside. Edith, her mother and her father, Dr. Leete, nurse Julian back to health. With gentleness and concern, they explain to Julian the long lapse of time and introduce him to the marvels of the New Nation, where he learns of a vast social transformation that has revolutionized human life.

Looking Backward describes a New Nation freed from competition, exploitation, poverty and unemployment. A nonviolent revolution has transformed America, indeed the entire world, into a cooperative commonwealth of industrious citizens who share equally in the nation's affluence. A nationalized economy insures a more efficient and rational system that guarantees every man, woman and child material security.² The elimination of the struggle to survive has ended social strife, class conflict, and personal anxiety, all of which Bellamy saw as the fruits of the nineteenth century's greedy, competitive, socio-economic order. The

citizens of the New Nation live harmoniously in a country dedicated to realizing the idea of the spiritual oneness of humankind. This recognition of the universal bond of brotherhood had inspired late nineteenth-century Americans to abandon an immoral social order and to substitute an egalitarian system infused with the spirit of mutual love and respect.

After its publication in January 1888, Edward Bellamy's novel became a best seller. The sales of *Looking Backward* catapulted Bellamy to national fame and later to international prominence when the novel was translated into several foreign languages.³ By 1891 the Nationalist movement, a loose association of clubs interested in disseminating the ideas contained in the novel, had appeared with chapters from Maine to California.⁴ *Looking Backward* has continued to engage the attention of succeeding generations. Perhaps the lists compiled by John Dewey, Charles Beard and Edward Weeks of the twenty-five most significant books published after 1885 were the finest tribute to the novel. Independently each man ranked *Looking Backward* second only to Karl Marx's *Capital*.⁵

The enduring influence of *Looking Backward* has been the subject of considerable comment, but few scholars have documented its precise impact on the Populist movement.⁶ Generally, historians have noted but not established that *Looking Backward* was an important source of inspiration for Populists.⁷ Some scholars have relied on scattered references to *Looking Backward* by Populists, while others have included farmers among the diverse social sectors that read the novel. Given the novel's impact, there is little reason to doubt that agrarians were as much enthralled with the New Nation as were Americans from other walks of life. Two historians have noted that the novel's national success was duplicated in agrarian America. To cultivate an educated and articulate constituency, Alliance and People's party leaders encouraged the reading of reform books including *Looking Backward*. "In the Farm Belt," John L. Thomas has observed, "a fifty-cent paperback edition [of *Looking Backward*] quickly became a bestseller." Elizabeth Sadler had made the same point in 1944, noting that the novel received a warm welcome in precisely those areas where Populism arose:

It is interesting to observe that the People's Party rose during the period of the growth of Nationalist clubs and that it had its main strongholds in the trans-Mississippi states, in the newly admitted states and territories, and on the Pacific coast—all areas where the reception of *Looking Backward* had been most general and enthusiastic.⁸

Many agrarians evidently read library or borrowed copies of *Looking Backward* while others imbibed Bellamy's ideas through word-of-mouth. Discussing southern Populism, C. Vann Woodward has remarked that many reformist tracts circulated in this manner: "Thumbed copies of Donnelly's *Caesar's Column*, Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and numberless pamphlets, tracts, and books were circulated from hand to hand.

Those who did not read them heard them quoted by those who had." In his biography of L. L. Polk, a North Carolinian whose presidency of the Southern Alliance made him a national figure, Stuart Noblin reiterated the point that "the famous *Looking Backward*, by Edward Bellamy, and *Caesar's Column*, a novel by Ignatius Donnelly, were widely read and talked about."⁹

Scholarly accounts that have mentioned the affinity between Nationalism and Populism have emphasized the ideological, class, and programmatic similarities between the two movements. John L. Thomas has focused on the agrarian crusade's moralism and on its "revivalistic politics" as postures shared by Bellamy and his Populist comrades. By making "Nationalism the ideological spearhead of the Populist attack on the two major parties," Bellamy indicated his empathy with the Populist stance and became an agrarian champion. The ideological congruence helps to explain why Nationalists and Populists joined forces in electoral campaigns.¹⁰

Another school of thought has located the novel's success in its middle class perspective. Louis Filler has described *Looking Backward* as a middle class dream that appealed to a bourgeoisie in desperate search of meaning during the crisis-prone decades of the late nineteenth century. Howard Quint, who comments on the popularity of *Looking Backward* among Populists, has claimed that the novel's middle class bias insured it a favorable response among Americans and farmers were no exception. *Looking Backward* articulated middle class fears and projected a middle class utopia of material abundance, psychic security and social harmony that appealed to late nineteenth-century Americans. The novel's genteel tone, its evolutionary, nonviolent approach to social change, and the absence of a class analysis or of any working class characters constitute Quint's examples of Bellamy's bourgeois frame of reference. Literary surveys by Walter Fuller Taylor and Granville Hicks have advanced a similar argument. According to Taylor, Edward Bellamy "gave completest voice to the American middle-class protest against plutocracy," while Hicks noted that proletarian characters were omitted in the novel. "It is significant," Hicks wrote, "that social conditions in the year 2000 are presented exclusively through the eyes of professional men, doctors, teachers, or ministers; we are told of the happy lot of the working man, but we never see the new order from his point of view."¹¹

Other studies have noted that Bellamy's ideas, disseminated through *Looking Backward* and through proselytizing activities by Nationalists, played a key educational role in shaping the Populist program. As the novel circulated among agrarians, the rhetoric and program of the Alliances and the People's party reflected the spread of Nationalist doctrine. "Bellamy's ideas," Walter T. K. Nugent has noted, "as well as [Henry] George's appeared in Alliance speeches." When Populists launched a presidential ticket at Omaha, Bellamy's ideas and followers were present. "If Populism is to be considered an important third party in the election

of 1892," John Hope Franklin has stated, "it must be remembered that the Nationalists contributed both ideas and supporters to the cause."¹²

The programmatic overlap between Nationalism and Populism offers additional evidence of *Looking Backward's* influence among farmers. The Southern Alliance's "anti-monopoly program," Theodore Saloutos has written, "was cut of the same cloth as the single-tax theories of Henry George and the nationalist views of Edward Bellamy." Agrarian demands for nationalization, fiat currency, and the initiative and referendum echoed Bellamy's positions. According to Sidney Fine, "Nationalists were . . . instrumental in getting the Populist party to espouse public ownership of the railroads, telegraph, and telephone."¹³ Such references are helpful, but they lack the close analysis which the relationship between Edward Bellamy and Populism deserves.

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There is no infallible way to gauge influence. Consequently, this study does not attempt to establish a causal relationship, but rather to document that midwestern Populist leaders were influenced by Edward Bellamy and to offer several explanations for their ideological affinity. Although this study is confined to Populist leadership, there is reason to suspect that Bellamy's influence also extended to the rank and file particularly if the Populist press is used as an index of grass roots sentiment.

Many midwestern Populist leaders were familiar with Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* and the Nationalist movement. Alliance and Populist luminaries encouraged the reading of Bellamy's novel and many agrarian newspaper editors offered a free copy of it with a yearly subscription to their organs. Such influential Populists as Ignatius Donnelly, author of the preamble to the 1892 national platform, and William A. Peffer, a prominent national figure from Kansas, invoked Bellamy's name in awe and admiration. Finally, Populism's opponents often revealed the depth of Bellamy's influence when they claimed that the novelist had instigated the farmers' crusade.

Edward Bellamy's ideas permeated the midwestern Populist heartland. In a remembrance written in 1924, W. P. Harrington, a veteran of Kansas Populism, spoke of the "flood of literature" that had inundated agrarian locales in the 1890s, and he mentioned *Looking Backward* as one of the era's most popular works. Many sub-Alliances and People's party clubs established small libraries. In a brief memoir, Mary L. Jeffery recalled the Nebraska Farmers' Alliance to which her parents belonged and remembered that the library contained copies of *Looking Backward*, *Progress and Poverty* (1879) and *Coin's Financial School* (1894).¹⁴

Although *Looking Backward* was among dozens of reformist tracts that Populist editors urged their readers to "buy, read, and circulate," from time to time the novel was singled out as worthy of special attention.¹⁵ In 1889, the *Farmers' Alliance* (Lincoln, Neb.) described *Looking Backward* as "wonderful" and offered the novel as a premium with a

year's subscription to the newspaper. For one-half the regular price (\$1.25), a reader received the *Farmer's Alliance* and a copy of *Looking Backward*. The novel's sales impressed the editor, and he encouraged agrarians to read the book: "Every person interested in progress and reform, and every student of the social problems which now claim so large a share of public attention, should read this book. The sale it is having is almost unprecedented. Since the phenomenal sale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* no book has had so wide a sale." The *Dakota Ruralist* (Huron, S.D.) offered its readers a complimentary copy of *Looking Backward* or a similar reform book if they remitted one dollar for a year's subscription.¹⁶

Populist editors were major agents in disseminating Bellamy's ideas. Articles by Bellamy and by prominent Nationalists appeared in agrarian newspapers, and some editors published excerpts from *Looking Backward* and devoted space to efforts to organize Nationalist clubs.¹⁷ Bellamy's ideas also received currency in agrarian circles through reprinted articles that originally had appeared in the *New Nation* (Boston), a weekly newspaper founded by Bellamy in 1891. *New Nation* articles appeared in the movement's most influential weeklies: papers owned or edited by Populist leaders and official party publications. Ignatius Donnelly's *Representative* (Minneapolis), H. L. Louck's *Dakota Ruralist*, and the *American Nonconformist* (Indianapolis), published by the Vincent brothers, were the organs of men who shaped the party's destiny. Respected by thousands of farmers, these individuals wielded considerable power on the state and national levels. To the extent that Bellamy's ideas, in the form of *New Nation* reprints, appeared in their publications, Nationalism received the tacit endorsement of major Populists.¹⁸

The official organs of state Farmers' Alliances and state People's parties afforded another avenue of influence. *New Nation* articles appeared in newspapers that carried the official endorsement of Alliance and Populist organizations. The *Farmers' Alliance* of Lincoln, Nebraska, and the *Advocate* of Topeka, Kansas, exercised great influence as official People's party organs in their respective states. Their large circulations offered Nationalist ideas a sizeable audience. The *Farmers' Alliance* claimed 23,000 subscribers, while the *Advocate* peaked at a circulation of 80,000. The *Dakota Ruralist* and the *Representative*, both official Alliance organs, also reprinted *New Nation* articles.¹⁹ Another important weekly was William A. Peffer's *Kansas Farmer*, organ of the Northern Alliance in the Sunflower state. When the *New Nation* ceased publication in 1894, the editor wrote a fitting obituary. He spoke of the honest exposition that Bellamy had pursued in his weekly and of *Looking Backward's* humanitarian socialism. The editor praised Bellamy's unique combination of idealism and practical reform and concluded by describing him as "the brilliant and courageous author and editor [who] has started and promulgated thoughts which will not die and which will make men better."²⁰

The case of the *Farmer's Alliance*, the leading Populist newspaper in Nebraska and the official organ of the state Alliance, is instructive. For most of its life as a Populist paper two Nationalists, Jay Burrows and later George H. Gibson, edited it. Burrows edited the *Farmers' Alliance* from 1889 to 1892, and he held a leadership position in the state Alliance, serving on the executive committee. During the same years, he became a convert to Nationalism for in 1890 he was listed as a member of Nationalist Club Number I in Lincoln, Nebraska. After Burrows quit as editor, he proselytized for Nationalism throughout the Lincoln area. His former newspaper published a lengthy address delivered by Burrows in which he reiterated Bellamy's positions on nationalization and on the liquor question.²¹

When George H. Gibson assumed the editorship of the *Alliance-Independent* in 1893, he, like Burrows, was an active Nationalist.²² Agrarians who read the newspaper imbibed Nationalist ideas through Gibson's editorials. Apparently Burrows' Nationalist club had met with limited success for three years later another club was founded. George Gibson belonged to this new club and the first vice-president, a Mr. LeFevre, was a prominent state Populist. LeFevre served on several People's party committees in Nebraska and would shortly become a county delegate to the 1894 state convention.²³ Men like Burrows, Gibson and LeFevre typified a certain element in the People's party, individuals with dual loyalties who espoused both the Populist and Nationalist causes.

William A. Peffer, a Kansas Populist elected to the United States Senate in 1891, Lorenzo D. Lewelling, Populist governor of Kansas (1893-95), H. L. Loucks, a South Dakotan who assumed the presidency of the Southern Alliance after Polk's death, Cuthbert Vincent of the *American Nonconformist* and Annie L. Diggs, Populist writer and lecturer, were among the well-known midwestern leaders who voiced appreciation for Bellamy's utopia and gave currency to his ideas. Peffer spoke before Nationalist organizations and suggested that "nationalist" should be the name of a new party which he predicted would come into existence in 1894. Lewelling, a *New Nation* reader, echoed similar sentiments:

I am a nationalist myself. I might differ with Bellamy and [William Dean] Howells as to the details of the system, but they are at work on the right principles. The governments must themselves be the administrators. Out of the nationalist party some great party will yet arise—perhaps it will be called the national party. That is the name I was in favor of the populists adopting, and still think it would have been an appropriate name for the great party which is to stand for the rights of the people.²⁴

When Ignatius Donnelly's doomsday utopia, *Caesar's Column*, appeared in 1890, H. L. Loucks reviewed the book and compared Donnelly's jaundiced view of human nature to Bellamy's. Noting the marked contrast between the two novels, he described *Looking Backward* as a "wonderfully graphic and happy picture of what might be accomplished

by the judicious use of the ballot.”²⁵ Cuthbert Vincent cited Bellamy along with Ignatius Donnelly and Hamlin Garland as key leaders who had sparked critical thought in America.²⁶ Annie L. Diggs was an inveterate Bellamyite. Describing her as a “socialist agitator,” the *New York World* reported on a trip Diggs had made to Colorado to aid in establishing a Nationalist colony on government land. As late as 1898, Ms. Diggs continued to promote the cause. With several other women she organized a political club to boost Populist campaigns in Kansas. In conjunction with their political activities, the group held a series of educational meetings based on the lessons contained in Bellamy’s last book, *Equality*.²⁷

Anti-Populist literature is an important index of Edward Bellamy’s prestige among midwestern Populists. When *Looking Backward* was cited as a subversive book and Nationalism was castigated as an insidious “ism” infecting agrarian America, anti-Populists inadvertently revealed the depth of Bellamy’s influence. Opponents haphazardly lumped Populists and Nationalists together under the rubric of unwelcomed radicals. The *St. Louis Chronicle* claimed that Ignatius Donnelly and “other cranks of his school” were trying to establish Nationalism in Minnesota and nationwide. As the journalist Frank Basil Tracy watched the pandemonium that accompanied the adoption of the Omaha platform, he held Bellamy partly responsible for the convention’s “social lunacy,” describing the platform as “that furious and hysterical arraignment of the present times, that incoherent intermingling of Jeremiah and Bellamy.”²⁸

Several midwestern authors of anti-Populist diatribes singled out Edward Bellamy as the father of agrarian discontent. A hostile newspaper report referred to him as “one of the originators of the People’s party,” while a Kansas opponent spoke of the mischievous effects of *Looking Backward*. “You, my republican brother, and democratic friends,” he charged, “are to blame for the strength of the people’s party, because you permitted the publication and reading of Bellamy’s book.” Bellamy was not arraigned as the sole cause of unrest, but some commentators contended his influence was particularly pernicious. Another critic wrote, “these [agitators] are also aided by such treasonable publications as ‘Looking Backward,’ by that idle theorist, Edward Bellamy, which is creating a wide discontent at fancied wrongs, which have no existence except in the vivid imaginations of these stirrers up of strife.”²⁹

Populism provoked the wrath of Joseph K. Hudson, Republican editor of the *Topeka Capital*. During the 1893 Kansas “legislative war” for control of the state government, Hudson wrote a series of letters to Populist Governor Lorenzo D. Lewelling. In one letter he accused Bellamy of initiating the ferment which had culminated in the election of the first state People’s party government. Hudson declared the Lewelling government to be the product of “Bellamyism”; his condemnation also included four others, three well-known state Populists and the German anarchist, Johann Most. The Lewelling administration, Hudson wrote,

was “created by Bellamyism, nursed by the principles of [Frank] Doster and Herr [Johann] Most, and made ridiculous by [Jerry] Simpson and [John] Willits.”³⁰

Populists like Frank Doster and Jerry Simpson were accustomed to the Bellamyite label. Simpson advocated the single tax, a cause often confused with Nationalism, and Doster had experienced criticism several years earlier. When he ran for judicial office in 1891, Doster’s opponents attacked him as an exponent of Bellamyism. His critics urged Kansans to vote for Doster’s rival, a man who was “not afflicted with all the ‘isms’ that are born of the vaporings of a Bellamy or a Tolstoi.” One commentator attributed Doster’s role in the party’s 1893 legislative victory to the teachings of Bellamy and other socialists: “Mr. Doster’s Socialistic views have been expressed in language plain and startling. He is a disciple of Karl Marx and Louis Blanc, Edward Bellamy and other authors, ancient and modern, who have taught that property is wrong.”³¹

Looking Backward captured the agrarian imagination primarily because it described the outlines of a futuristic social vision which Populism itself did not generate. The movement’s leading partisans were political activists who spoke through tracts, newspapers, and stump oratory. It was Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* which articulated the utopic American commonwealth that nationwide Populist victories would allegedly occasion. The closest rival to *Looking Backward* was Ignatius Donnelly’s *Caesar’s Column*, but the trends that the Minnesota Populist witnessed in the late nineteenth century led Donnelly to predict the ruin of civilization and the victory of despotic forces by 1988. His novel describes the collapse of the world under the onslaught of the brutal Caesar and his Brotherhood of Destruction. Caesar’s “column” is a rising mound of human dead, a gruesome monument to the thoroughness of the holocaust. The few who escape the deluge retreat to a remote region in Africa where they live in thankful isolation from the chaos and horror that engulf the rest of the globe. *Caesar’s Column* certainly did not inspire Populist yearnings for a cooperative commonwealth. Though Populist leaders like Donnelly grasped both present realities and clung to a Jeffersonian past, they formulated no positive vision of America’s future. Edward Bellamy shared the Populist views of the present and the past, and his novel offered the agrarian crusade a hopeful future.

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Producer values that focused on the virtue of creative toil supplied Populists with an understanding of the present. The republican ideology that affirmed the legitimacy of political protest supplied them with a “usable” past. In *Looking Backward*, Edward Bellamy subscribed to this value system which explains the overlap in ideology, program and membership shared by Populism and Nationalism. This conjunction accounts for the appreciative reception accorded *Looking Backward* by midwestern Populist leaders.

Producerism defined the way Populists viewed themselves in the present—as productive workers engaged in worthwhile toil for the benefit of themselves and the nation.³² Work was an economic necessity, a social duty and a psychic exigency. They believed that every American had a “natural right” to gainful employment. According to James B. Weaver, Populist presidential candidate, every child entered the world with the “natural rights” God had bestowed on Adam, the first cultivator: “Liberty to occupy the soil in his own right, to till it unmolested as soon as he has the strength to do so and to live upon the fruits of his toil without paying tribute to any other creature.”³³ At the same time, all citizens had a social duty to labor and contribute to the collective storehouse of wealth as past generations had done for the present generation. Finally, toil was a vital expression of the human condition, conferring meaning and dignity to people’s lives.

Populist producerism focused on work, irrespective of ownership or occupation. Individuals who labored, that is, those who created needed goods and services through toil were producers; they transformed nature’s raw materials into useful commodities. Work was not a curse but a divine blessing bestowed on humankind by the Creator. All recognized the necessity to labor for physical survival, but producerism endowed required tasks with a religious sanctity. The “law of God,” wrote James B. Weaver, “requires that every man shall eat his bread in the sweat of his own face.” W. Scott Morgan, Populist author and lecturer, expressed similar sentiments: “‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.’ This decree was uttered 6,000 years ago. It is as immutable as time itself. Labor is man’s proper function. The word of God has made it honorable. . . . Whoever works performs the natural functions of mankind.”³⁴

Populist economic grievances—low commodity prices, usurious interest rates, arbitrary transportation costs, heavy mortgage payments and a scarce money supply—echoed producer values.³⁵ Middlemen, land speculators, bankers and railroad magnates might work, but they did not produce. In Populist parlance these individuals were bloodsuckers—they lived off the labor of others. Time and again Populists voiced the complaint that a parasitic clique robbed the people of the fruits of their toil. Why, William Peffer asked, should certain persons “be permitted to prey upon their fellow-men, and make out of their toil greater profits than the toilers themselves?”³⁶

Populist leaders complained that nonproductive forces in the market place had the power to devalue labor. Middlemen and the railroad industry were the subjects of relentless criticism. Populists charged them with appropriating an unreasonable proportion of the value of the goods created by the producers. Middlemen gained their livelihoods by interposing themselves between the producers and the consumers. In *The Riddle of the Sphinx* (1890), which included a laudatory discussion of Nationalism, Farmers’ Alliance author N. B. Ashby drew a typical agrarian picture of a vast army of middlemen draining profits from the toilers

“like a bucket-brigade at a fire.”³⁷ The railroad industry was accused of an array of abuses: charging excessive or arbitrary freight rates, watering stock, entering illegal rebate agreements and bribing public officials. “Only poor devils,” complained the *American Nonconformist*, “who are not in positions to favor railroad companies by their official acts, must pay full fare or walk.”³⁸ Such grievances reflected a producer work ethic that was enunciated in the preamble to the Omaha platform: “The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few.”³⁹

For Populists, the purpose of toil transcended self-interest; labor constituted a social act. Economic pursuits had a crucial social dimension which nonproducers refused to acknowledge; their concerns were solely pecuniary. They had no interest in toil as a creative endeavor, nor did they take any pride in the integrity of particular goods or services. Populist leaders, on the other hand, believed that labor validated personal worth and, equally important, defined a national purpose.

A democratic nation should afford its citizens equal opportunity for gainful reward. From this perspective, influential Populists looked critically at an economic system which benefited the “parasites” at the expense of the producers. “The manner in which capital arrogates all advantages,” one agrarian charged, constituted “plain robbery of the people at large of their rights to opportunity.”⁴⁰ Government had the responsibility to keep economic channels open in order to benefit the industrious. The demands of the Omaha platform which called for a return to the traditional role of government responsibility for the general welfare reflected producer ideals. “We seek,” Populists proclaimed at Omaha, “to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of ‘the plain people,’ with whose class it originated.”⁴¹ Producer values structured the agrarian critique and provided the basis from which Populist advocates demanded political redress.

In *Looking Backward*, Edward Bellamy articulated a similar view of producerism to which Populist leaders responded. Julian West personifies the nonproducer whose living is gained at the expense of the laboring classes. Before the fateful night when Julian retired for his 113 year sleep, he had been a member of New England’s privileged class, secure in wealth and social position. He enjoyed the life of a cultured gentleman engaged to a lovely woman who complemented his genteel manners. West dined at clubs, employed a valet and never worked a day in his life, deriving his support from a hereditary estate that kept “three generations in idleness.” Describing his life style, Julian acknowledges its parasitic, indulgent aspects: “Living in luxury, and occupied only with the pursuit of the pleasures and refinements of life, I derived the means of my support from the labor of others, rendering no sort of service in return.” This condition was made possible, Julian relates, because the social system permitted “shifting the burden of one’s support on the shoulders of others.”⁴²

In *Looking Backward*, producer values prevail for they were central to Bellamy's vision of the good life. With Populists, he celebrated the virtues of labor that transcend personal or pecuniary goals. In the novel Bellamy has endowed toil with a sanctity characteristic of producer ideals, and he has peopled his utopia with diligent workers. Every able-bodied citizen is a member of the Industrial Army, the national work force, until he or she reaches the retirement age of forty-five years. Each is a producer who fashions needed goods or dispenses vital services; there are neither superfluous individuals nor superfluous commodities in the New Nation.

Like his Populist counterparts, Bellamy exhibited a producer bias which recoiled from viewing labor as a commodity. Comparing the treatment accorded labor in the New Nation with that of the nineteenth century, Julian notes, "If I were asked to name the most distinguishing felicity of this age [2000 A.D.], as compared to that in which I first saw the light, I should say that to me it seems to consist in the dignity you have given to labor by refusing to set a price upon it and abolishing the market-place forever."⁴³ Since every healthy citizen serves as a "common laborer" for three years, the equitable distribution of menial tasks eliminates the pejorative status that had accompanied them in the nineteenth century. In the New Nation the word *menial* is anachronistic, and Julian must define it for Edith Leete. She is shocked when she learns that those who performed disagreeable but necessary tasks were held in contempt. Dr. Leete informs Julian that in the new society citizens never accept services which they "would be unwilling to return in kind," and he recalls his earlier days as a waiter in the common dining halls.⁴⁴ In the New Nation individuals who perform odious functions on a regular basis are compensated by shorter work hours, for the nation recognizes that its collective unwillingness to select certain occupations necessitates making these jobs more attractive.

By defining work as service, Bellamy actualized producer values. In *Looking Backward* he transformed toil from a coerced task to an instinctual expression of national life. Work, Dr. Leete assures Julian, has become "so absolutely natural and reasonable that the idea of its being compulsory has ceased to be thought of."⁴⁵ The social dimension of work, implicit in Populist producerism, is explicit in the New Nation's economic system. Work has become a collective endeavor. Members of the Industrial Army labor for the commonwealth, and no one is the wage slave of another. "The individual," Dr. Leete states, "is never regarded, nor regards himself, as the servant of those he serves, nor is he in any way dependent upon them. It is always the nation which he is serving."⁴⁶

There are no idlers in the New Nation, and no one expropriates the labor of another. The parasites who, Populists charged, fattened off the producers, have vanished. The waste and inefficiencies of the nineteenth-century economic structure that permitted middlemen to interpose themselves between producers and consumers have been eliminated. Most

importantly, Bellamy has depicted a society where the hallmarks of economic prosperity and rewarding work are a daily reality. By placing producer values in a utopian setting, Bellamy has elevated them from the contemporary arena of Populist economic grievances to the future realm of creative labor for all in a producers' commonwealth.

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As producerism provided Edward Bellamy and the Populists with an understanding of their contemporary difficulties, the republican ideology of the nation's formative years supplied them with a "usable" past. Republican political theory and the Declaration of Independence functioned as historical precedents which Bellamy and the Populists appropriated to affirm the righteousness of their cause and to condemn the politicians and monopolists.

Republican political theory offered a rich source of historical documentation on the tyranny implicit in political power. Political corruption and the toadyism of legislators who abandoned the national welfare in favor of power and personal enrichment were major Populist grievances. Most politicians, agrarian leaders charged, were sycophants for Corporate America. While the nation languished in depression, politicians took bribes, ignored vital legislation, and spent the people's money on frivolous projects. When President Benjamin Harrison toured the nation by rail in 1891, Annie L. Diggs noted that his caravan included five lavishly appointed railroad cars and a bevy of servants. His train was equipped with a library, a smoker, and sundry drawing rooms all impeccably designed for his comfort. "Who made all these beautiful things?" Diggs asked. "Labor did every stroke of the work. Who enjoys the fruits of all this labor? Those who TOIL NOT."⁴⁷ The people's representatives had betrayed the public trust, used public monies for their personal aggrandizement, and abused their power in flagrant violation of republican principles.

The events surrounding the American Revolution provided Populist leaders with a wealth of material to document their charges against the monopolists and their political allies. The nation's first revolutionaries had been unalterably opposed to tyranny, privilege and every form of "slavery." Populist leaders urged their fellow citizens to emulate the republic's original revolutionaries. In 1893 Ignatius Donnelly wrote:

There isn't anything advocated by the people's party that George Washington and Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry and John Adams and Benjamin Franklin would not vote for if they were alive to-day. We are doing in our generation just what they did in theirs,—destroying oppression, establishing liberty and lifting up humanity—. Let the influence of their example penetrate into our souls and lives. Let the spirit of 1776 be wedded to the material conditions of 1893.⁴⁸

In this manner, midwestern Populists referred to their cause as a re-

vitalization of the republican ideology that had been employed to justify independence from England, and they favorably compared themselves to the colonials who had battled British redcoats. "Our cause is the same as our forefathers fought for," declared an article in the *Peoples Advocate*. "Our forefathers faced the English army that was organized and manipulated to rob them and enslave their children. We are organized to face the money[-]hunting, blood[-] sucking, cormorants who organized to rob us and enslave our posterity."⁴⁹

As the seminal document of American republicanism, Populist leaders praised the Declaration of Independence and editors quoted from it often.⁵⁰ In 1891, the *Farmers' Alliance* issued a "New Declaration of Independence" that paraphrased the original document and substituted a litany of corporate usurpations for those of George III.⁵¹ Anticipating that history would repeat itself, the organizers of the Omaha convention set the date for July 4, 1892, with 1,776 official delegates. The preamble to the Omaha platform duly noted that the convention had assembled on the Declaration's one-hundred and sixteenth anniversary.

The Declaration of Independence justified an anti-authoritarian position that Populists used against monopolists. Operating under the auspices of privilege and functioning as tyrants in the economic realm as George III had in politics, the "money kings," Populists charged, deserved the same fate accorded the British Crown. "Monopolies," the *Central Advocate* declared, "have no more right to rule than King George had in 1776."⁵² In 1891, the People's party National Committee issued an address which explicitly stated the links between British political tyranny of the Revolutionary era and contemporary economic tyranny: "The times that try men's souls are here once more. The descendants of the British tories of 1776, and other European and American capitalists have bound our country with chains more galling and more dangerous than the political bonds that oppressed the colonies, because they are more subtle and more corrupting in their influences." In a statement reminiscent of Bellamy the address continued, "The political independence which the fathers of the country secured through seven years of bloody war, is but a shallow sham unless our country can secure industrial independence."⁵³

Bellamy made many of the same points in *Looking Backward*. In the New Nation politicians have become as extinct as the corruption on which they thrived. A governing board consisting of a president and ten lieutenants oversees the operation of the economic apparatus including the Industrial Army. This body simply administers the system, and the nation sets the policy. The nation's officials function according to republican standards; they are "the agents and servants of the people."⁵⁴ Promotion within the Industrial Army is based exclusively on merit; political patronage and bribery have disappeared.

In the novel Bellamy also argued that the cooperative commonwealth was the logical extension of the Declaration's egalitarian posture applied

to the economic system. Explaining how a nationalized economy came into existence, Dr. Leete states: "In a word, the people of the United States concluded to assume the conduct of their own business, just as one hundred odd years before they had assumed the conduct of their own government, organizing now for industrial purposes on precisely the same grounds that they had then organized for political purposes."⁵⁵ Bellamy's socialism emanated from the radicalism implicit in the Declaration of Independence. He, like the Populists, had no doubt that the Declaration sanctioned their cause and that Thomas Jefferson would have blessed their efforts. "If Thomas Jefferson lived to-day," Bellamy wrote, "he would be a nationalist, for he would recognize in this movement toward industrial self-government . . . a strictly logical and necessary development of the principles laid down in the Declaration of Independence."⁵⁶

Populism lacked one element necessary to sustain any social movement—a future, a projection of a new order. *Looking Backward* filled this vacuum. Bellamy's utopia infused the Populist crusade with a vision of a New Nation liberated from economic deprivation, class conflict and power politics. In the cooperative commonwealth of 2000 A.D., a comfortable standard of well-being has replaced poverty and want, while a socialized economy insures a level of affluence befitting the human condition. Bellamy's utopian construct has ended the heartless struggle for existence that was the lot of nineteenth-century producers: "No man any more has any care for the morrow, either for himself or his children, for the nation guarantees the nurture, education, and comfortable maintenance of every citizen from the cradle to the grave."⁵⁷ Society is no longer the victim of politicians and monopolists who preyed on the producers. An equitable credit system has replaced money so there is no need for the bankers and financiers whom Populists loathed. In the cooperative commonwealth all citizens are social and economic equals. When Julian questions Dr. Leete as to what principle determines the basis of each person's share of wealth in the New Nation, the Doctor replies, "His title . . . is his humanity. The basis of his claim is the fact that he is a man."⁵⁸

Work has been transformed from pitiless drudgery to collective service. Conflict is absent for each citizen sees himself and herself as an equal participant in the life of the nation, realizing that the destiny of each is intimately tied to the welfare of all. As Dr. Leete explains to Julian, "The solidarity of the race and the brotherhood of man, which to you were but fine phrases, are, to our thinking and feeling, ties as real and as vital as physical fraternity."⁵⁹ The producers in Bellamy's utopia inhabit "a paradise of order, equity, and felicity."⁶⁰

When Edward Bellamy died on May 22, 1898, little remained of the Populist movement, but a number of former Populist leaders paused to remember Bellamy and to pay tribute to his social vision. Men and women who had devoted years to the cause returned to the scene where it had all begun, the State House in Topeka, Kansas. Here Populists had

set the state on fire with their agitation and had won their greatest victories. The old crusaders gathered again but this time to eulogize Bellamy. Among them were Frank Doster, Annie L. Diggs, and William A. Peffer.

Speaking before a filled house, the Populist veterans recalled the importance of Bellamy's dream of a cooperative commonwealth that recognized the equality and humanity of each citizen. Frank Doster remembered the spell that *Looking Backward* had cast on his life. As a young man he had been troubled by the evils of the world and depressed by the misery around him. Doster then read *Looking Backward* which, he said, gave "my vague, nebulous thought . . . form and substance." Everyone in the audience rose in silent endorsement of Annie Diggs' memorial to Bellamy as an "apostle" who had held before the world a "noble ideal" of social life. Diggs spoke of Bellamy's "large, sweet service to his fellow-men" in demonstrating the path to a kingdom of heaven on earth.⁶¹

This was the great service that *Looking Backward* performed for Populists. The novel crystallized the rage agrarians felt as victims of economic injustice and political tyranny, and it offered an alternative social vision that reflected Populist longings for material security, social harmony, and human dignity. *Looking Backward* was an affirmation of the human spirit that Populism's inflammatory rhetoric did not provide. The novel, declared one Populist obituary, was "an idea equipped for battle, the other [Populism] an army organized to fight for the idea." The Populist movement, the article continued, represented more than demands for free silver or government banks; it stood for a principle—"industrial equality—the very thing set forth in Bellamy's book."⁶²

University of South Carolina at Sumter

footnotes

A version of this paper was read before the 1975 MASA convention. I wish to thank Mary Gerber and Professor Burton J. Bledstein for their helpful comments.

1. Donnelly's comment is from Mason A. Green, "Edward Bellamy: A Biography of the Author of *Looking Backward*," unpublished Manuscript in the Edward Bellamy Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University and quoted in Arthur E. Morgan, *Edward Bellamy* (New York, 1944), 278; and John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party* (n.p., 1961), 214-15. Until the recent appearance of Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America* (New York, 1976), Hicks' book, originally published in 1931, was the standard history of the Populist movement.

2. Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Robert C. Elliott (Boston, 1966), 5. All references to *Looking Backward* are from this edition.

3. Sylvia E. Bowman, *The Year 2000: A Critical Biography of Edward Bellamy* (New York, 1958), 115, 121; James D. Hart, *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Taste* (Berkeley, 1961), 170-71; Frank Luther Mott, *Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States* (New York, 1947), 168-71; and Sylvia E. Bowman, et al., *Edward Bellamy Abroad: An American Prophet's Influence* (New York, 1962).

4. For a succinct, informative discussion of Nationalism see John Hope Franklin, "Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement," *New England Quarterly*, 11 (December 1938), 739-72. Also see Frederic Cople Jaher, *Introduction to the Nationalist* (New York, 1968); and two brief

histories by the Boston Nationalist Cyrus Field Willard, "The Nationalist Club of Boston," *Nationalist*, 1 (May 1889), 16-20; and "A Retrospect," *Nationalist*, 2 (December 1889), 37-40.

5. Robert L. Shurter, *Introduction to Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, by Edward Bellamy (New York, 1951), xv. Also see Robert L. Shurter, "The Literary Work of Edward Bellamy," *American Literature*, 5 (1933-34), 229-34.

6. For historians who have documented but not systematically explored the relationship between Bellamy and Populism see James C. Malin, *A Concern About Humanity: Notes on Reform, 1872-1912, at the National and Kansas Levels of Thought* (Lawrence, Ks., 1964), 166-68, 189; Levi Leland Lengel, "The Righteous Cause: Some Religious Aspects of Kansas Populism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1968), 288-90, 295; and William F. Zornow, "Bellamy Nationalism in Ohio, 1891 to 1896," *Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, 58 (April 1949), 152-70.

7. See e.g., Russel B. Nye, *Midwestern Progressive Politics: A Historical Study of Its Origins and Development, 1870-1958* (n.p., 1959), 58-59, 75, 78; Rush Welter, *Popular Education and Democratic Thought in America* (New York, 1962), 139, 169; Eric F. Goldman, *Rendezvous with Destiny: A History of Modern American Reform*, rev. ed., (New York, 1956), 35; Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 131-32; Daniel Aaron, *Men of Good Hope: A Story of American Progressives* (London, 1951), 130; Carleton Beals, *The Great Revolt and Its Leaders: The History of Popular American Uprisings in the 1890's* (New York, 1968), 5, 100-101, 141; Erich Fromm, *Forward to Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, by Edward Bellamy (New York, 1960), vi; Chester McArthur Destler, *American Radicalism, 1865-1901* (Chicago, 1946), 14; and Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 329.

8. John L. Thomas, Introduction to *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, by Edward Bellamy (Cambridge, Ma., 1967), 1; and Elizabeth Sadler, "One Book's Influence: Edward Bellamy's 'Looking Backward,'" *New England Quarterly*, 17 (December 1944), 537.

9. C. Vann Woodward, *Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel* (New York, 1963), 139; and Stuart Noblin, *Leonidas LaFayette Polk: Agrarian Crusader* (Chapel Hill, 1949), 263. Also see Beals, *Great Revolt*, 100. The influence and membership of the Southern Alliance was not confined to the South. The Alliance engaged in national organizing drives and gained adherents from every geographic region including key midwestern Populist states like Kansas. See Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 173-76.

10. Thomas, Introduction to *Looking Backward*, pp. 79-82. Also see Howard H. Quint, *The Forging of American Socialism: Origins of the Modern Movement* (Indianapolis, 1953), 96.

11. Louis Filler, "Edward Bellamy and the Spiritual Unrest," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 8 (April 1949), 239-49; Quint, *Forging of American Socialism*, 72-102; Walter Fuller Taylor, *The Economic Novel in America*, 184-213; and Granville Hicks, *The Great Tradition: An Interpretation of American Literature Since the Civil War* (Chicago, 1969), 141. For additional comments on the middle class nature of *Looking Backward* see Aaron, *Men of Good Hope*, 92-132; Daniel Aaron, "Bellamy—Utopian Conservative" in *Edward Bellamy: Novelist and Reformer* (Schenectady, 1968), 7-15; and Vernon Louis Parrington, Jr., *American Dreams: A Study of American Utopias*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1964), 69-70, 75.

12. Walter T. K. Nugent, *The Tolerant Populists: Kansas Populism and Nativism* (Chicago, 1963), 66; and Franklin, "Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement," 769.

13. Theodore Saloutos, *Farmer Movements in the South, 1865-1933* (Berkeley, 1960), 69; and Sidney Fine, *Laissez Faire and the General-Welfare State: A Study in Conflict in American Thought, 1865-1901* (Ann Arbor, 1956), 301.

14. W. P. Harrington, "The Populist Party in Kansas," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society*, 16 (1924), 409; and Mary Louise Jeffery, "Young Radicals of the Nineties," *Nebraska History*, 38 (March 1957), 29-30.

15. For a sample of reform literature available to agrarians see Advertisement for the Wealth Makers Publishing Company of Lincoln, Ne., in *Wealth Makers* (Lincoln), July 12, 1894; "Economic Library," *American Nonconformist* (Indianapolis), January 19, 1893; and *Agitate, Educate, Organize. Price Catalogue of Books, Documents and Periodicals*, undated Pamphlet issued under the name of John W. Briedenthal, Chairman, State Central Committee of the Kansas People's Party in the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Ks. Hereafter cited as KSHS.

16. *Farmers' Alliance* (Lincoln), December 21, 1889; and *Dakota Ruralist* (Huron), September 5, 1891. Also see *Advocate and Topeka Tribune* (Topeka), December 13, 1893; and *Great West* (St. Paul, Mn.), December 13, 1889.

17. For an excerpt from *Looking Backward* see e.g., *Alliance*, November 23, 1889. For a reprinted article by Bellamy which originally appeared in the *Boston Traveller* see "The Unemployed," *Kansas Farmer* (Topeka), November 22, 1893. For articles by Nationalists appearing in the Populist press see e.g., *Dakota Ruralist*, December 10, 1891; *Farmers' Alliance*, December 20, 1890; and an article by Mason Green, Bellamy's close associate, which originally appeared in *Donahoe's* magazine and was reprinted in *Representative* (Minneapolis), April 25, 1894; *Advocate*, April 4, 1894; and *American Nonconformist*, April 19, 1894. On Nationalist clubs see e.g., *American Nonconformist*, February 9, 1893; *Farmers' Alliance*, May 17, 1890, October 26, 1893; *Advocate*, March 6, 1890 and *Great West*, December 6, 1889, March 28, 1890.

18. For a sample of reprinted articles from the *New Nation* see *Representative*, September 13, 1893; *Dakota Ruralist*, December 10, 1891; *Peoples Advocate* (McPherson, Ks.), May 29, 1891, December 4, 1891; *New Era* (Wahoo, Ne.), May 14, 1891; and *American Nonconformist*, February 9, 1893.

19. See e.g., *Farmers' Alliance*, July 9, 16, 23, 1891; *Advocate*, November 4, December 16, 1891, July 20, 1892; *Dakota Ruralist*, December 10, 1891, April 28, 1892; *Representative*, August 23, 1893, September 13, 1893; and *American Nonconformist*, February 2, 1893, March 30, 1893. On circulation figures see Samuel Walker, "George Howard Gibson, Christian Socialist Among the Populists," *Nebraska History*, 55 (Winter 1974), 367; and Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 175.

20. *Kansas Farmer*, February 14, 1894. For an impressive study of Peffer's career see Peter H. Argersinger, *Populism and Politics: William Alfred Peffer and the People's Party* (n.p., 1974).

21. *Farmers' Alliance*, May 17, 1890, March 10, 1892.

22. *Morning World Herald* (Omaha), July 4, 1892; and *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 4, 1892. On Gibson's career see Walker, "Gibson," 553-72. The *Alliance-Independent* is the same newspaper as the *Farmers' Alliance* and the *Wealth Makers*; it went through five name changes in six years.

23. *Alliance-Independent*, October 26, 1893, August 9, 1894. Although Walker, "Gibson," 553-72, does not mention Gibson's interest in Bellamy, his description of the editor's Christian Socialism certainly complemented Gibson's Nationalist sympathies.

24. On Peffer see *New Nation* (Boston), November 25, 1893, April 18, 1891; Argersinger, *Populism and Politics*, 83; and *Topeka Daily Capital*, May 30, 1898. On Lewelling see *New Nation*, September 16, 1893; and quoted in *New Nation*, December 9, 1893.

25. Loucks quoted in *Farmers' Alliance*, May 17, 1890. For additional comparisons between *Looking Backward* and *Caesar's Column*, see e.g., "Book Notices," *Kansas Farmer*, April 15, 1890; and "Caesar's Column," *Farmers' Alliance*, May 17, 1890. In a letter to the Houghton Mifflin Company, Donnelly compared his novel to *Looking Backward*. See Donnelly to Houghton, Mifflin & Co., September 30, [188]9, in Letter Book dated September 14, 1889-April 3, 1890, Ignatius Donnelly Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Mn. Martin Ridge, *Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of the Politician* (Chicago, 1962) remains the standard biography of Donnelly. The Populist content of Donnelly's fiction is discussed in Walter B. Rideout, Introduction to *Caesar's Column: A Story of the Twentieth Century*, by Ignatius Donnelly (Cambridge: 1960), vii-xxxii; David W. Noble, Introduction to *The Golden Battle* by Ignatius Donnelly (New York, 1968), v-xxii; and J. Wayne Baker, "Populist Themes in the Fiction of Ignatius Donnelly," *American Studies*, 14 (Fall 1973), 65-83.

26. *Alliance-Independent*, June 8, 1893.

27. "Colorado Colony on Bellamy Plan," undated Newspaper Clipping from *New York World* in John H. Josselyn Papers, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Ne. Hereafter cited as NSHS. "Populist Women Organize," *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 14, 1898. Also see *Advocate and Topeka Tribune*, March 21, 1894, June 1, 1898; *New Nation*, September 16, 1893; and *Topeka State Journal*, May 30, 1898.

28. *Chronicle* quoted in *Representative*, May 31, 1893; and Frank Basil Tracy, "Menacing Socialism in the Western States," *Forum*, 15 (May 1893), 322. Also see Frank Basil Tracy, "Rise and Doom of the Populist Party," *Forum*, 16 (October 1893), 241.

29. "Bellamy is Looking Forward," undated Newspaper Clipping in Josselyn Papers, NSHS; Kansas opponent quoted in Green, "Edward Bellamy," 158; critic quoted in *Farmers' Voice* and reprinted in *Advocate*, May 14, 1890; and see response in *Advocate*, June 4, 1890. For other hostile comments see e.g., Green, "Edward Bellamy," 161-62; "What the Populists Did," undated Newspaper Clipping from *New York Daily Sun* in Josselyn Papers, NSHS; S. S. King, *Bond-Holders and Bread Winners: A Portrayal of Some Political Crimes Committed in the Name of Liberty* (Boston, 1892), 4; and *American Nonconformist*, March 20, 1890.

30. J. K. Hudson, *Letters to Governor Lewelling* (Topeka, 1893), 14. Also see *New Nation*, September 19, 1891.

31. *Chase County* (Ks.) *Leader*, September 24, 1891; and E. W. Hoch, et. al., "The Late Conflict," *Agora*, 2 (April 1893), 281.

32. No study of nineteenth-century producerism exists. The best discussion is found in Walter T. K. Nugent, *Money and American Society, 1865-1880* (New York, 1968), 28-32, 54-55, 186-88, 205-210. For more limited accounts see Marvin Meyers, *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics & Belief* (New York, 1960), 18-24; Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York, 1956), 64-65; Gerald N. Grob, *Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement, 1865-1900* (n.p., 1961), 37, 58-59, 91, 133; and David Herreshoff, *American Disciples of Marx: From the Age of Jackson to the Progressive Era* (Detroit, 1967), 119. For accounts arguing that Populists subscribed to socialist not producer values see Norman Pollack, *The Populist Response to Industrial America: Midwestern Populist Thought* (New York, 1962), 43, 97, and passim; and Walker, "Gibson," 557.

33. James B. Weaver, *A Call to Action: An Interpretation of the Great Uprising. Its*

Source and Causes (Des Moines, 1892), 283. Also see e.g., *Wealth Makers*, April 5, 1894; *Alliance Index* (McPherson, Ks.), January 9, 1891; and "Speech of Mrs. Mary E. Lease in the Great Quadrangle Debate," in *The Great Quadrangle Debate at Salina, Kansas, December, 1893* (Salina, Ks., 1894), 82.

34. Weaver, *Call to Action*, p. 428; and W. Scott Morgan, *History of the Wheel and Alliance, and the Impending Revolution* (Fort Scott, Ks., 1889), 677. For similar sentiments see e.g., *Alliance Index*, March 20, 1891; *Advocate*, December 16, 1891; and *Central Advocate* (Marion, Ks.), October 2, 1891.

35. An old but still useful history of agrarian economic grievances is Fred A. Shannon, *The Farmer's Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897* (New York, 1945).

36. W. A. Peffer, *The Farmer's Side: His Troubles and Their Remedy* (New York, 1891), 186. For other references to "parasites" see e.g., Morgan, *History of the Wheel*, p. 89; *Farmers' Alliance*, October 8, 1891; *Express* (Chicago), December 20, 1890; J. A. Wayland, *Leaves of Life: A Story of Twenty Years of Socialist Agitation* (Girard, Ks., 1912), 56-57; and N. B. Ashby, *The Riddle of the Sphinx: A Discussion of the Economic Questions Relating to Agriculture, Land, Transportation, Money, Taxation, and Cost of Interchange*. . . . (Des Moines, 1890), 61.

37. *Ibid.*, 229-30.

38. *American Nonconformist*, January 19, 1893. For a sample of Populist complaints against railroads see Morgan, *History of the Wheel*, 560-69, 598-609; Weaver, *Call to Action*, 409-23; Ashby, *Riddle of the Sphinx*, 94-142; Hallie Farmer, "The Railroads and Frontier Populism," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 13 (December 1926), 387-97; and Robert Higgs, "Railroad Rates and the Populist Uprising," *Agricultural History*, 44 (July 1970), 291-97.

39. The Omaha Platform is reprinted in Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 439-44.

40. *Advocate*, September 7, 1889.

41. Omaha Platform quoted in Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 441.

42. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 5-6.

43. *Ibid.*, 96.

44. *Ibid.*, 94-95.

45. *Ibid.*, 38, 70.

46. *Ibid.*, 95.

47. *Advocate*, April 29, 1891. Also see e.g., *Farmers' Alliance*, March 3, June 9, 1892 and reprint from *Industrial West* in April 12, 1890; *American Nonconformist*, March 19, 1895; *New Era*, August 14, 1890; *Weekly Progress* (Holdrege, Ne.), May 29, 1896; *Dakota Ruralist*, December 24, 1891; and Weaver, *Call to Action*, pp. 9-48.

48. *Representative*, July 19, 1893.

49. *Home Sentinel* quoted in *Peoples Advocate*, June 26, 1891.

50. For references to the Declaration of Independence see e.g., *Advocate*, August 1, 1894; *Central Advocate* (Marion, Ks.), July 10, 1891; W. A. Peffer, "Let the People Rule," Speech in U.S. Senate delivered July 10, 1894, in *Kansas Collected Speeches and Pamphlets* 15:8, KSHS; John G. Otis, "Sign of the Times," *Voice of True Reform*, 1 (October 1891), 42; N. A. Dunning, *The Farmers' Alliance History and Agricultural Digest* (Washington, D.C., [1891]), 725-28; and Lease, "Speech of Lease," in *Great Quadrangle Debate*, 67-85.

51. *Farmers' Alliance*, July 16, 1891.

52. *Central Advocate*, July 10, 1891.

53. Quoted in *Peoples Advocate*, August 21, 1891.

54. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 111.

55. *Ibid.*, 34.

56. *New Nation*, March 28, 1891.

57. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 55.

58. *Ibid.*, 56.

59. *Ibid.*, 81.

60. *Ibid.*, 137.

61. *Topeka State Journal*, May 30, 1898. Also see *Advocate and News* (Topeka, Ks.), June 1, 1898; and *Topeka Daily Capital*, May 23, May 30, 1898.

62. *Nebraska-Independent* (Lincoln, Neb.), May 26, 1898.